
16-19 Bursary Policy

The DFE operates bursary fund for those studying at a public funded school or college in England, aged between 16-18. You could also get a bursary if you are 19 and are either continuing on a course you started aged 16-18 or have an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP).

The 16 to 19 bursary fund provides financial support to help students overcome specific barriers to participation so they can remain in education.

There are two types of bursary funding available:

- A bursary for students in vulnerable groups – you could be eligible for a bursary of up to £1,200 a year.
 - A discretionary bursary - You could be eligible to receive a discretionary bursary if you need financial help but do not qualify for a bursary for students in vulnerable groups. The school sets its own eligibility criteria for the discretionary bursaries and the terms and conditions under which they are awarded.
- The 16-19 Bursary funding is ring-fenced and will only be spent on eligible bursary students who meet the criteria set out by the Department of Education.
 - All applications and awards are subject to available funds.

1. Eligibility

To be eligible to apply you must be:

- a student must be aged at least 16 and under 19 on 31st August 2025 in the academic year they start their course. Where a young person turns 19 during their year of study they can continue to be supported until the end of the academic year or end of the course (whichever is sooner).

Below are the eligibility criteria for both schemes:

Bursary for Students in Vulnerable Groups

Up to **£1,200 bursary** could be available to our most vulnerable student, if at least one of the following applies:

- you're in or you recently left local authority care
- you get Income Support or Universal Credit because you're financially supporting yourself

- you get Disability Living Allowance (DLA) in your name and either Employment and Support Allowance (ESA) or Universal Credit
- you get Personal Independence Payment (PIP) in your name and either ESA or Universal Credit

The amount you may get depends on the costs you have and what you need for your course. This might include money for books, equipment or travel costs to school or college.

Eligibility under this category will be verified using the following documents:

- written confirmation of the young person's current or previous looked-after status from the local authority which looks after them or provides their leaving care services;
- a letter setting out the benefit to which the young person is entitled.

A Discretionary Bursary

Students are deemed 'Eligible to Apply' if they are in receipt of Free School Meals **or** the combined household income is **less than £24,000**.

Students eligible to apply for the Discretionary Bursary will be EITHER:

- **Eligible for AND IN RECEIPT OF Free School Meals** (based upon the level of parental income as outlined on DirectGov website);

OR will be

- Students with a **combined household income of £24,000 or below**.

2. The Application Process

From September 2025, we have introduced a new online system for students to apply for the bursary fund. This will be through Applicaa – <https://thornleighsixthformbursary.applicaa.com/>

A welcome email will be sent out to all students to outline the eligibility criteria and enable them to apply if they believe they meet the criteria set out above.

Appropriate documentation as proof of eligibility, must be submitted through the portal. For the discretionary bursary, students/parents must also have submitted an application to the Local Authority and been awarded Free School Meals before they submit their application **or** be able to prove their family income (via copies of P60, benefit/award documentation, etc.). Free School Meal eligibility will be verified with the Local Authority. Students may submit an

application **at any point** during the academic year as their financial/home situation dictates but payments cannot be back-dated.

3. What the bursary provides

Travel

Greater Manchester resident students aged 16-18 could be eligible for free travel using GM Our Pass.

Our Pass is a UK first, a simple scheme that ensures all eligible 16-18 year olds in Greater Manchester have the chance to become an Our Pass member – and gain access to two things: free bus travel, and exclusive experiences. For a one-off £10 administration fee, Our Pass provides free travel on most local buses across Greater Manchester. It also gives members half-price off peak one day and weekend travel cards on Metrolink. Students must apply for their own pass, once the receipt for the pass has been submitted to the finance office, the cost will be reimbursed.

However, if you use other types of public transport to travel to 6th Form or live outside of Greater Manchester, funds may be available to assist you with travel costs if your bursary application is successful. Please enquire for more details.

Chromebook

All students who are successful in a bursary application will have the opportunity to apply for the loan of a chrome book for use during their studies. These will be issued after October half term and students must sign an agreement confirming they will continue to adhere to the rules of the bursary and acceptance that failure to do so will result in the return of the Chromebook or repayment of the cost of the Chromebook. It may not be possible to loan all bursary students a Chromebook and applications will be assessed on an individual needs basis.

Essential Educational Trips

All students who are successful in a bursary application can apply to have the costs of essential education trips covered. This includes trips essential for the completion of a course and careers related trips such as university visits attended with Thornleigh 6th Form. Students must take the responsibility for completing the google form to cover the costs prior to the trip.

Educational Equipment

All students who are successful in a bursary application can apply to have the costs of any necessary equipment covered. This list includes items such as stationary, books or materials necessary for the completion of a course.

Enrichment Trips

All eligible bursary students can apply for financial support to participate in and attend non-essential enrichment trips. Payment of or towards these trips is not guaranteed and will be dependent on available funds.

Hardship Bursary

Hardship Bursary applications can be made at any point in the year if a particular need arises. Students can apply for any of the above and each application will be considered on a case by case basis and will be influenced by available funds. This would be applicable for students who do not meet the thresholds for the full bursary but may have a particular need. This application should be made as required, if a need arises, and does not need to be made at the start of the year.

Any bursary awarded will be subject to attendance reviews. Payment can stop at any time if a student fails to attend school or attendance is below a satisfactory level (at the Headteacher's discretion).

Applications last the duration of the academic year and students will need to resubmit an application each year to be awarded a bursary.

Students in receipt of bursary funding are required to make the school aware of any change in financial/home situation as they arise. Parents/students are required to sign to this effect in the application form and if upon review it is found that individuals have falsified documents, submitted inaccurate information or been claiming money fraudulently the school may take legal action including recovery of the money and referral to the police.

3. The Appeals Process

Students have the right to appeal a decision. Students, or their parent/guardian, will be required to put any appeal in writing within 21 days of receiving confirmation of an award or a rejection. The letter should set out the reasons for the appeal and be sent to the Head of Sixth Form. The appeals panel will consist of the Headteacher, Head of Sixth Form, School Business Manager and Assistant School Business Manager. Their decision will be given within 14 days of receiving the written appeal.

4. Complaints Procedures

Should a student/parent wish to make a formal complaint regarding the 16-19 Bursary application and decision process they should follow the School Complaints Procedure which is available on the school website.

5. 16-19 Bursary Terms and Conditions

Students must:

- Attend timetabled lessons, sessions or activities (at least 95% attendance, unless there are exceptional circumstances).
- **Have no unauthorised absence.**
- Achieve positive Commitment to Learning grades (4 or 5).
- Conduct themselves in a professional manner within the school community.

Should a student not meet the conditions above, their Bursary will be revoked and the school may ask for the return of any items provided or repayment.

6. Data

The School is required to track data on each student who submits an application. This information will be audited by Education Funding Authority (EFA).

For audit purposes students applying for the discretionary bursary are required to identify why they require the bursary (e.g. laptop, fieldwork/visit, transport, meals, etc.). Any information regarding this (along with application forms) will be stored. The data will be disposed of securely after 7 years.

7. Other information

The EFA (Education Funding Agency) requires information from school about use of the 16-19 Bursary funding. For information, they want to know:

- How many vulnerable students were allocated the 16-19 £1200 bursary and how much did they actually receive?
- How many were in each of the following categories:
 - Young people in care;
 - Care leavers ;
 - Students claiming Income Support or Universal Credit;
 - Students in receipt of the other benefits mentioned above.
- How many applied for the 'Discretionary Bursary'?
- How many were awarded the 'Discretionary Bursary' and what was the allocation?
- How much did these students actually receive?
- How much was spent on Discretionary Bursaries in total?
- For what reasons was each bursary allocated:
 - Books/equipment
 - Additional Costs
 - Transport
 - Meals
 - Clothing necessary for the course
 - Materials necessary for the course
 - Course-related trips
 - Exam resit fees
 - UCAS/open day costs
 - Sports activities (where they directly relate to a course)
 - Professional membership fees
 - Other miscellaneous – specifying what
- The EFA will audit the 16-19 Bursary.
- It is expected that if a student changes provider that the information regarding their Bursary Award is communicated to the new provider by TSC.
- All Bursary payments will be used to support the student's education.

How do I apply

Initially all applications must be completed using the new online portal:

<https://thornleighsixthformbursary.applicaa.com/>

All students will use their Applicaa login.

If accepted as a bursary student all expense claims will be processed through this portal.

Travel Applications – Once accepted as a bursary student, students should create their own Our Pass account and pay the £10 fee. <https://ourpass.co.uk/>

This can then be claimed as an expense through the applicaa portal.