



SIXTH FORM STUDENT BURSARY POLICY

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Aims

1. Bourne Grammar School aims to:
 1. Have clear and transparent processes for the use and allocation of 16 to 19 bursary funds
 2. Make clear to parents and students the type of support which is available and the means of applying for it
 3. Make clear to parents and students the attendance and behaviour conditions for receiving the funds

Guidance

1. This policy is based on advice from the Department for Education (DfE) on the <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/16-to-19-bursary-fund-guidance/16-to-19-bursary-fund-guide-2026-to-2027>

Introduction

1. The 16 to 19 Bursary Fund provides financial support to help students overcome the specific financial barriers to participation they face so they can remain in education.
2. There are 2 types of 16 to 19 bursaries:
 - Vulnerable Groups A bursary of up to £1,200 a year for young people in one of the defined vulnerable groups: in care, care leavers, in receipt of Income Support or

Universal Credit because they are financially supporting themselves or financially supporting themselves and someone who is dependent on them and living with them, such as a child or partner. Receiving Disability Living Allowance or Personal Independence Payments in their own right as well as Employment and Support Allowance or Universal Credit in their own right.

- Discretionary bursaries which institutions award to meet individual needs, for example, help with the costs of transport, school trips, Sixth Form Dress, meals, books and equipment. To be eligible for the discretionary bursary, students must be facing financial barriers to participation and need help to stay in education.
3. Bourne Grammar School will determine the assessment criteria for eligibility for discretionary bursaries and the frequency of and conditions for payments for all awards.
 4. The needs of individual students will be assessed and only those students in one of the defined vulnerable groups, or those experiencing the greatest financial disadvantages and /or course-related costs, will be supported using the 16-19 Bursary Fund and in compliance with the DfE guidelines.
 5. The Bursary Fund is not intended to provide learning support – services that you give to students, for example, counselling or mentoring – or to support extra-curricular or non-compulsory activities that are not essential to the students’ study programme or to provide living costs support.

The Sixth Form Bursary Fund Committee

1. The Sixth Form Bursary Fund Committee comprises of the Head of Sixth Form, the Sixth Form Bursary Administrator, and the Director of Finance.
2. The Sixth Form Bursary Fund Committee will meet in September to consider and review applications.
3. Applications will need to be submitted as soon as possible at the beginning of the Autumn term.
4. Where an application is received mid-term and approved, payment cannot be backdated.

Eligibility for the 16 to 19 Bursary

1. Students must satisfy one or more of the following criteria:
 1. Be aged 16 or over and under 19 at the start of the academic year in which they start their programme of study (the start of the academic year is 31 August 2026).
 2. Students should be participating in provision that is subject to inspection by a public body that assures quality (e.g. Ofsted) and must also be funded within the relevant guidelines.
 3. Meet the residency criteria as set out in the DfE Funding Regulations.

Residency Qualifications

Students must meet the residency criteria in [DfE Funding Regulations](#) for post-16 provision in the 2026-27 academic year. The regulations set out the evidence that institutions must see to confirm eligibility.

Proof of Income

1. Most recent proof of evidence will be required to support the application and could include:
 1. Tax Credit Award Notice (form TC602) (for the period April 2025 to April 2026).

2. Certified letter from Her Majesty's Revenue and Customs regarding benefits including Housing Benefit and Disability Allowances and/or household income (for Universal Credit please supply the most recent 3 monthly award statements, i.e. June/July/August 2026 for a September application) Other means tested certification.
 3. P60 for the latest Tax Year 2025-26 and last 3 months' payslips, i.e. June/July/August 2026 for a September 2026 application
 4. Benefits in Kind Form P11D for tax year 2025-26
 5. Self-Employment Income evidence (Self-assessment Tax Calculation [form SA302](#)) for tax year 2025-26.
 6. Certified letter from the Local Authority regarding Free School Meals
 7. Certified letter from the Department of Work and Pensions
2. Please note that Gross household income includes any benefits of which you may be in receipt of (excluding Child Benefit). Please refer to the Declaration note at the end of this document.

Assessment of Applications and Allocation of the 16 to 19 Bursary Funding

1. The 16 to 19 Bursary Fund is a limited fund and the School will prioritise allocation. There will be two groups, categorised as vulnerable or discretionary.
2. Initially students who are eligible for any level of funding should complete the online application form as soon as possible after admission in September.
3. The closing date for applications will be Friday 2 October 2026. Applications will be considered after this date if household circumstances change.
4. The Sixth Form Bursary Fund Committee will meet to consider all applications.
5. Students who are deemed eligible to receive support should be aware that to continue to receive their full allocation of bursary/funding they must fulfil the attendance requirements and maintain acceptable levels of behaviour, as outlined in the Sixth Form Student Agreement.
6. For all levels of support the cost of an annual bus pass will be met in full (fuel costs may be met up to the value of an equivalent annual bus pass). Please note this is residential postcode dependent and evidence must be provided before payment can be reimbursed.
7. The Committee will review remaining bursary funds during the year. Where funds remain available, the School may invite further applications or consider additional evidenced support for eligible students, provided the support relates to actual participation costs and complies with DfE rules.

Vulnerable Support (up to £1,200 Bursary)

1. You may be eligible for this if you are in one of the following categories:
 1. in care
 2. care leavers
 3. receiving Income Support (IS), or Universal Credit (UC) because they are financially supporting themselves or financially supporting themselves and someone who is dependent on them and living with them, such as a child or partner
 4. receiving Disability Living Allowance (DLA) or Personal Independence Payments (PIP) in their own right as well as Employment and Support Allowance (ESA) or UC in their own right.
 5. The Sixth Form Bursary Fund Committee will verify each student's eligibility and need for a bursary in the vulnerable group category before submitting any funding claims to the DfE. Students will not be automatically awarded £1200.

2. Students meeting the Vulnerable Support group are not automatically entitled to financial support if they do not have financial needs and/or their participation needs are covered from other sources. They may receive a lower amount of bursary or no bursary funding, if they do not have any actual participation costs.

Discretionary Support

Students may be eligible for discretionary support where they have actual financial barriers to participation and one or more of the following applies:

1. gross annual household income is £45,000 or below, excluding Child Benefit;
2. the student is in receipt of Free School Meals;
3. the household receives income-based means-tested benefits;
4. the student has significant participation costs, such as transport, essential course equipment, Sixth Form dress requirements, university open days/interviews, industry placements, essential field trips, UCAS fees or digital access;
5. the student experiences a change in circumstances causing financial hardship, including loss of income, illness, bereavement, family breakdown, caring responsibilities or other exceptional circumstances.

Meeting the criteria does not guarantee support. Awards will be based on individual need, evidence supplied, actual participation costs, available funding and DfE rules. The Committee may consider applications above the £45,000 threshold where there is clear evidence of financial hardship or significant participation costs.

Making an Application

1. If you think that you are eligible for vulnerable support please complete the online application form.
2. If you think that you are eligible for discretionary support, please complete the online application form as you may be eligible for a contribution towards specific educational purposes (receipts will be required) which can include:
 1. Meals in school - if not in receipt of Free School Meals (FSM)
 2. Books and equipment. *If a laptop, iPad or internet dongle is purchased then the student must return it once they have completed their study programme so it can be used again by another student.*
 3. Contributions to the costs of attending industry placements (work experience), including University open days and interviews
 4. [Sixth Form Dress](#)
 5. Costs of transport
 6. Essential field trips to achieve or support study programme goals or objectives.
 7. UCAS application fees
3. All applications are treated in the strictest of confidence. For audit purposes, however, computerised copies of all documentation for learner support will be kept for a period of six years and will be held securely and in compliance with the UK GDPR and Data Protection Act 2018. The information will be made available for audit purposes.

4. Receipt of bursary funding does not affect receipt of other means-tested benefits paid to families.
5. Support may be provided in advance, in-kind or by reimbursement, depending on the student's circumstances, so that students are not prevented from participating because they cannot pay costs upfront.

Attendance Requirements

1. Students will only receive their bursary payment/re-imburement if they have secured satisfactory attendance at School.
2. There must be no unexplained unauthorised absences during the School day or lateness to registration or lessons.
3. For any planned absences, a Sixth Form Proposed Absence Form must be completed in accordance with the Sixth Form Attendance Guidelines.

Behaviour

1. Students will only receive their bursary payment/re-imburement if they abide by the standards of behaviour and effort agreed at the start of the School year as detailed in the Sixth Form Student Agreement.

Changes in Circumstance

1. A student receiving any support level of the Bursary must immediately inform the Sixth Form Bursary Administrator of any changes in family circumstance that may affect their 'Support Level'.

Payments

1. Notification confirming the receipt of the student's application for the 16 to 19 Bursary and outlining the support allocation awarded by the Bursary Fund Committee as well as its payment/re-imburement will be provided to the student.
2. Cash payments will not be permitted. Payments will be made as a bank transfer into the student's bank account.
3. Claims will be considered for approval on request and paid as a bank transfer into the student's bank account providing the student has satisfied all the requirements of eligibility (receipts will be required at all times), and the student has funds remaining. Students will be informed of any non-payment via their School email.
4. Claims will be subject to review by the Bursary Fund Committee and may be declined if attendance and/or behaviour are deemed unsatisfactory. Claims for Year 13 students will be considered up to and including the final week of their public examinations.

Appeals

1. Any student wishing to appeal against the Support Level allocated should do so in writing within 2 weeks of receiving their letter of Support Allocation.
2. Appeals should be made to the Headteacher via the Sixth Form Bursary Administrator.
3. It is expected that further evidence to support the funding request will be provided by the student if called upon.

Contingency Fund

Bourne Grammar School will retain a small emergency fund to support students who face exceptional circumstances during the year due to a change in their situation.

Administration Costs

We are permitted to use up to 5% of our 2026-27 academic year discretionary bursary allocation for administrative costs relating to the 16-19 Bursary Fund.

Unspent Funds

Funding for the 16-19 Bursary Fund cannot be carried forward for more than 1 year. Unspent funding must be reported to the DfE using the online enquiry form, specifying the amount of funding and the year/s it relates to, no later than 31 March each year. The DfE will recover all unspent funds.

Declaration

Students and their families should be aware that giving false or incomplete information that leads to incorrect/overpayment may result in future payments being stopped and any incorrectly paid funds being recovered. This might result in a referral to the police with the possibility of the student and/or their family facing prosecution. Significant fraud, including fraud over £1,200 or fraud that is novel, unusual, systemic or complex, will be reported to DfE.