

16-19 Student Bursary Fund Policy (2026-27)

The 16-19 Student Bursary Fund is a cash-limited fund to support learners who would benefit from financial support to help overcome specific barriers to participation so they can remain in education. The award is dependent on DfE funds available to the Academy and individual students' personal circumstances. The bursary is a separate payment from free school meals which you may be eligible for and can apply for directly through your local authority.

There are two elements to the Bursary Fund: Vulnerable Bursary and Discretionary Bursary. Students must be aged at least 16 and under 19 years of age on 31/08/26 to be considered for an award and must be studying a state funded full-time course at an academy within Redhill Academy Trust. In addition, students must meet the Government's residency conditions.

The majority of students who apply for bursary will be applying for group 2- the discretionary bursary.

Group 1 - Vulnerable Bursary grant up to £1,200 per academic year

Up to £1,200 per academic year is available in essential educational costs to students who are in care, a care leaver, receiving Universal Credit because they are supporting themselves, 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 Independent Payments in their own right, as well as Employment and Support Allowance or Universal Credit in their own right. This grant is only available for direct educational costs.

Group 2 - Students eligible for discretionary bursary based on low household income

Students facing financial barriers to participation may be eligible for a discretionary bursary to help with education related costs such as cost of transport to school, equipment and books and meals. Applications are invited from students with a total annual household income of £32,000 or less.

What the bursary can be used for

Department for Education guidance on bursary states that it can only be used for essential equipment and services that a non-bursary student would reasonably expect to have that would otherwise prove a barrier to education or attendance. The key services that bursary can be used for are listed below. There must be a stated need, meaning the student or family must tell us they need these services and that need must be assessed by us, e.g. Distance from school.

The Bursary may be used to provide financial support for:

1. A stationery pack, on request

A stationery pack will include ring binders, paper, pens, pencils, a basic calculator and other common items. This will be provided where a student indicates on their application form that they will need this. This pack can only be provided once a student's bursary application has been approved.

2. On-going transport costs (e.g., through the purchase of a bus pass)

This will only apply to students who live 2 miles or more from the school site and who incur a daily cost for bus or tram travel to study at the sixth form. The bursary will not fund train travel and reasonable cost limits will apply. Exceptional circumstances may be considered. Where possible the preferred method is purchase of a term-time travel card on behalf of the student.

3. Purchasing equipment or resources for identified individual learners (e.g., specialist protective or course related equipment)

Equipment to be provided will be identified by the school subject leader as being essential for subject study and provided to bursary recipients.

4. Costs of meals

Students eligible for Free School Meals will receive these. Students who qualify for bursary but do not qualify for free school meals can request canteen credit if needed. This can be done on the bursary application form.

5. Assistance with costs of educational visits or trips (e.g., field trips, university interviews, work placements)

Reasonable cost limits will apply. Trips supported under bursary must be essential to the curriculum, the qualification could not be completed without the trip.

6. One-off payments linked to specific costs where students would otherwise be prevented from participating in further education.

For example, Application to UCAS or travel to university interviews/ open days

Examples of services bursary cannot be used for:

- Extracurricular or enrichment activities
- 1-1 tuition
- Overseas or domestic enrichment trips
- Laptop or tablet for subjects
- Provision of learning support
- Supporting general household costs
- Prom tickets, year books, leaver's hoodies etc.
- Duke of Edinburgh

This is a non-exhaustive list and any service or item that is not essential to the courses cannot be purchased with bursary funding.

How do I apply?

If you wish to apply for either or both of the above funds you need to:

- Check you meet the eligibility criteria within this policy or contact the 6th Form office for advice
- Complete the Bursary application form available electronically via the sixth form office communications
- Provide the necessary evidence to support your application
- Submit your application by the deadline of **20th September 2026**

Evidence you are required to submit to assess eligibility for bursary

The Department for Education guidance states that schools and sixth forms must assess a student's eligibility for bursary. For discretionary bursary, this means evidencing a household income of £32,000 per annum or less.

On the form we will request total income and evidence from:

- Employment income (please provide latest P60)
- Self-employment income (please provide tax return)
- Income from savings, shares, investments, trusts, dividends etc. (please provide official evidence)
- Pension income (please provide latest P60)
- Any other household income (please provide evidence)
- Universal/Tax credit (please provide official evidence)
- Child Support Maintenance (please provide evidence)
- Housing benefit- whether this is paid to your landlord directly or paid directly to the household
- Other benefits (e.g. PIP/ESA/Income support/Carers Allowance) – please specify.

What will happen once I have applied?

We will aim to process your application within 28 days, and you may be contacted during this time to discuss your needs. You will be notified in writing about the outcome of your application.

Appeals can be made directly via the 6th Form office in writing, explaining your reason for appeal and why you believe the decision does not meet the policy.

How will the bursary award be paid?

If the bursary application is successful an award will be made via purchase of equipment through the Trust's approved suppliers, with direct payment made to the suppliers.

If required, direct payments for supplies will only be made to students with proof of expenditure, by BACS to a bank account in the student's name unless there are exceptional circumstances.

Initially awards will be made in Term 1. Any additional awards will be made at the beginning of Terms 2 and 3 subject to conditions:

- Have achieved 95% attendance in the previous term
- Have not been the subject of any exclusion/formal warning

- Have a positive engagement with learning (as agreed by Head of Sixth Form)

Any students who do not meet all three of these criteria termly may be subject to bursary support being withdrawn