



16-19 DISCRETIONARY BURSARY FUND 2025/26

This guide covers the 2025/26 Discretionary Bursary Fund, which is available to support those young people who face the greatest financial barriers to continuing in education or training post-16.

What is the 16–19 Discretionary Bursary Fund?

In September 2011 the 16-19 Bursary was introduced to replace EMA (Educational Maintenance Allowance). In September 2012, WCHS began administrating the 16-19 Discretionary Bursary Fund for our own Year 12 and 13 students independent of the Local Authority.

How do I qualify?

To qualify you must be:-

- aged 18 or under on the 31st of August in the academic year in which you start your programme of study (where a young person turns 19 during their programme of study, they can continue to be supported to the end of the academic year in which they turn 19, or to the end of the programme of study, whichever is sooner)
- a student in Year 12 or Year 13 at Woodford County High School.

There are three levels of Bursary and you can apply for one only:

Level 1 – Vulnerable Learner Priority Group: For those most in need, such as young people in care, care leavers, young people receiving income support, and disabled young people receiving both Employment Support Allowance and Disability Living Allowance, can apply for a Bursary of up to £1,200 per year. **Documentary evidence will be required.**

Level 2 – Student currently in receipt of Free School Meals*: Level 2 Bursary can be allocated to students who need support to overcome financial barriers that might prevent them continuing in full time education. This Bursary is for students who were eligible for Free School Meals* in Year 11 and continue to meet these criteria in the Sixth Form. They will receive a Bursary according to need, for identified and agreed costs outlined in the application process. **Documentary evidence will be required.** Amounts paid will be subject to the number of applicants and the availability of funds.

*Free School Meals criteria – do you qualify? Parents or guardians receiving the following benefits:

- Income Support
- Jobseekers Allowance (Income Based)
- Income Related Employment & Support Allowance
- Child Tax Credit with an annual taxable income of less than £16,190.
- Pension Guarantee Credit
- Universal Credit

Please contact the Redbridge Awards & Support Team on 020 8708 3114, should you require any further information regarding Free School Meals.

Level 3 – Student whose current total household income is less than £35,000 per annum including benefits (where there is one child under 19 in the household including the applicant) or £40,000 per annum including benefits (where there are two or more children under 19 in the household including the applicant): Level 3 Bursary is for those students whose current total household income is less than specified above including benefits (and that no other income is available from another household to support the student) **Documentary evidence will be required to confirm income, benefits and number of children under 19 (child benefit statement).** Amounts paid will be subject to the number of applicants and the availability of funds.

N.B: The Bursary payment to schools is a fixed sum and not awarded on a per student basis. WCHS may have to vary the amount of bursary payment awarded per student to deal fairly with the numbers of eligible students in its Sixth Form. Amounts paid will be subject to the number of applicants, the level of need and the availability of funds. Awards will be dependent on meeting agreed standards of academic progress and excellent attendance (no unauthorised absence from lessons). Approved applicants will need to complete a 16-19 Student Bursary Fund Learner Agreement on collection of their first payment.



What can the money be spent on?

The Discretionary Bursary is intended to assist students with costs needed to help a young person stay in education such as books, equipment, specific clothing required for subject related purposes, eg lab coat for science subjects or one black and white outfit required for formal school occasions (maximum cost £40 per item), travel to and from school, refreshments whilst at school, higher educational visits and open days, academic enrichment activities (e.g. Villiers Park) and, where appropriate and recommended, examination re-sits. Where funds are awarded, the school will facilitate payments to students on an individual basis dependant on the needs of the student and associated costs.

Students accepted to receive the bursary **may be** eligible to claim additional costs associated with specific activities, eg open days etc. Such requests must be made in writing to the Head of Sixth Form and are not guaranteed.

If I am in one of the eligible groups what evidence will the school need to see?

Please see the application form for full details of evidence/documentary support required.

How do I apply?

You should apply by completing the application form below. Completed applications should be addressed to the Head of Sixth Form and returned to Mrs. Myers, by hand, with supporting evidence/documentation. Please note that all supporting evidence provided must be original documents which will be photocopied and returned.

The deadline for receipt of applications is **Friday 19 September 2025**. Should a student's financial circumstances change part way through the year, late applications will be considered although we are unable to make back payments. Such requests should be brought to the attention of Mrs. Myers. All applications and evidence will be treated with the strictest confidence.

16-19 Discretionary Bursary Fund Panel

Our School 16-19 Discretionary Bursary Fund Panel will comprise the Head of Sixth Form, the School Business Manager and the Sixth Form Administrator. Decisions of the panel may be subject to scrutiny by the Head Teacher. The panel will sit at the end of September 2025 to review the applications, assess each claim and authorise payments.

When will decisions be made?

Decisions will be communicated in October 2025 via email. Students will need to complete a 16-19 Student Bursary Fund Learner Agreement in order to receive first and future payments.

How are payments administered?

Payments will be made on a financial need basis and will be calculated for each eligible student individually. Decision letters will include the maximum amount allocated to the student and the amount available to spend each term. Once the 16-19 Bursary Learner Agreement has been signed and returned, students may receive a small payment to cover start of year upfront costs. Following this initial payment, students will be required to complete a reimbursement form to claim money from their bursary to cover the cost of any items. Claims will be processed once per half term – the claim form should be completed, with receipts for purchases attached, by the deadline dates stipulated each half term, for payment in the first two weeks of the following half term. Should students need help with purchasing a larger item which they would prefer the school to pay for upfront, they should speak to Mrs Myers to discuss this further.

Applications approved will be monitored and evaluated throughout the year and reports given to the Bursary Panel regarding students failing to meet the conditions of the Bursary. The Bursary may be withdrawn at any time a student fails to meet the criteria in accordance with the Learner Agreement.

Please note that students will need to have their own bank account in order to receive Bursary payments via bank transfer. Students aged 16+ are able to open a basic bank account to facilitate this. Bursary payments will not be made payable to another person's account, except in exceptional circumstances where a student is unable to administer their own account. Students will be notified via email, once payments have been made.

WCHS Sixth Form may choose to pay the Bursary either as a cash payment or to provide 'in kind' support, for example, by purchasing books that eligible students need for particular courses or paying re-sit examination fees.



16-19 DISCRETIONARY BURSARY FUND 2025-26
Application Form

1. Student Details

Surname:	
First Names:	
Tutor Group and Year:	
Date of Birth:	
Address:	
Post Code:	
Email address:	
Home Phone:	
Mobile Phone:	

2. Level of Bursary

2.1 **Level 1 - Vulnerable Learner Priority Group**

Students may be eligible to receive up to £1200 if at least one of the following applies:

Vulnerable Bursary – Vulnerable Students	Tick	Supporting Documents Needed
Student in care or care leaver		Letter or email from care home/social worker/local authority
Student in receipt of Income Support (or Universal Credit in place of Income Support) in their own name		Supply one of the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Original paperwork confirming entitlement to Income Support (dated within the last 3 months) • Universal Credit award notice (dated within the last 3 months)
Student in receipt of Employment and Support Allowance or Universal Credit and Disability Living Allowance or Personal Independence Payments in their own name		Supply one or more of the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Original paperwork confirming entitlement to benefits (dated within the last 3 months) • Universal Credit award notice (dated within the last 3 months)

If you have ticked any of the above, please go straight to section 4



2.2 Level 2 - Student currently in receipt of Free School Meals

Current Free School Meals	Tick	Supporting Documents Needed
Student currently in receipt of free school meals		None required

If you have ticked the above, please go straight to section 4

2.3 Level 3 - Student whose household income is less than £35,000 per annum including benefits (where there is one child under 19 in the household including the applicant) or £40,000 per annum including benefits (where there are two or more children under 19 in the household including the applicant)

Student whose household income is less than £35,000 or £40,000 per annum including benefits	Tick	Supporting Documents Needed
Student whose current total household income is less than £35,000 per annum where there is one child under 19 in the household including the applicant (and that no other income is available from another household to support the student)		Please see section 3 for full details of evidence required
Student whose current total household income is less than £40,000 per annum where there are two or more children under 19 in the household including the applicant (and that no other income is available from another household to support the student)		Please see section 3 for full details of evidence required

If you have ticked the above, please complete section 3

3 Financial Assessment

3.1 Parental/Carer Details (include details of all parents/carers supporting student)

Details	Parent/Carer 1	Parent/Carer 2
Surname:		
First Names:		
Address (if different from student's):		
Relationship to Student:		
Email address:		
Home Phone:		
Mobile Phone:		
Individual Income p.a.		
Total combined Household income p.a:		



3.2 Parental/Carer Employment Status

Details	Employment Status	Yes/No	Supporting Documents Needed
Parent/Carer 1:	Are you in employment (employed or self-employed)?		If yes, please submit either P60 for tax year 2024-25, or week 52 (last week in March 2025) payslip or month 12 (March 2025) payslip or self-assessment tax return
Parent/Carer 2:	Are you in employment (employed or self-employed)?		If yes, please submit either P60 for tax year 2024-25, or week 52 (last week in March 2025) payslip or month 12 (March 2025) payslip or self-assessment tax return

3.3 Parental/Carer Benefits and other income

Please tick the relevant boxes to indicate any benefit(s) and other income received.

Benefit and other income received	Parent/Carer 1	Parent/Carer 2	Supporting Documents Needed
Universal Credit			Entitlement/award letter – dated within the last 3 months
Income Support			Entitlement/award letter – dated within the last 3 months
Income-based Jobseeker’s allowance			Entitlement/award letter – dated within the last 3 months
Income-related Employment and Support allowance			Entitlement/award letter – dated within the last 3 months
Personal Independence Payment			Entitlement/award letter – dated within the last 3 months
Carer’s Allowance			Entitlement/award letter – dated within the last 3 months
Housing Benefit			Entitlement/award letter – dated within the last 3 months
Council Tax Benefit			Entitlement/award letter – dated within the last 3 months
Working Tax Credit			Working Tax Credit Award Notice marked 2024-25 or 2025-26. Must provide full award notice including all pages
Child Tax Credit			Child Tax Credit Award Notice marked 2024-25 or 2025-26. Must provide full award notice including all pages
Child Benefit			Award letter (compulsory for Level 3 applicants)
Grants or Bursaries			Relevant paperwork detailing entitlement and amount paid
Any other income/benefit (please specify)			Relevant paperwork

This list is not exhaustive and we may request other specific documents and proof as deemed appropriate. We will need to have sight of original documents, which we will photocopy, and return the originals to you.



4 Support required

Please indicate the type of support required by completing the details below:-

Support	Tick	Details
Transport		
Essential trips and visits related to the subjects you are studying		
Essential materials for subjects you are studying, inc. essential textbooks		
Meals		
Other (such as UCAS fee etc.)		

5. Declaration

Please read the declaration below carefully before signing:

- I declare that the statements made on this form are true and to the best of my knowledge and believe are correct in every respect. I undertake to supply any additional information that may be required to verify the particulars given. I understand that if I refuse to provide information relevant to my claim the application will not be accepted. I also undertake to inform the school of an alteration to any of the particulars in writing. I agree to repay the school in full and immediately any sums advanced to me if the information I have given is shown to be false or deliberately misleading.
- I am aware that the funding covers only this school year and that I must re-apply next year; there is no guarantee that I will receive funding for future years even if I am eligible for the current year.

Student signature:	Date:
Parent/Carer (1 or 2) signature:	Date:

The completed application form and evidence/supporting documents should be addressed to the Head of Sixth Form and must be handed in to Mrs. N. Myers, Sixth Form Administrator, by the Student.

The deadline for receipt of applications is Friday 19 September 2025.

For office use only	
Date received:	Approved: Yes/No
Signed:	Date: