

16-19 Bursary Fund Application Information 2025/2026

The Sixth Form Bursary Fund is money that the government has given to schools to give to disadvantaged students. Its purpose is to provide financial support to help students overcome specific barriers to participation, so they can remain in education.

The government identify two different types of bursary:

- A vulnerable bursary for young people in one of the defined vulnerable groups
- A discretionary bursary that Kings of Wessex Academy is able to award to meet individual needs

Vulnerable bursaries

Eligible groups identified by the government include students who are:

- in care*
- care leavers**
- receiving income support or universal credit in their own right
- receiving Disability Living Allowance (DLA) in their own name and either Employment and Support Allowance (ESA) or Universal Credit
- receiving Personal Independence Payments (PIP) in their own name and either ESA or Universal Credit

*in care means children looked after by a local authority on a voluntary basis (section 20 of the Children Act 1989) or under a care order (section 31 of the Children Act 1989). Section 22 of the Children Act defines that term 'looked after child'.

**care leavers means young people aged 16 and 17 who were previously looked after for a period of 13 weeks consecutively (or periods amounting to 13 weeks), which began after the age of 14 and ended after the age of 16. Or a young person who is aged 18 or above who was looked after prior to becoming 18 for a period of 13 weeks consecutively (or periods of 13 weeks), which began after the age of 14 and ended after the age of 16.

The government state that young people in these groups are eligible of a bursary of up to £1,200 but that they would not usually expect the award to be more than £1,200. Students may be paid more than £1,200 if they need extra help to remain in education. The Kings of Wessex Academy will pay a quarterly bursary, into these students' bank accounts, to meet the costs of accessing post-16 education. In addition, if they are entitled to free school meals, this entitlement will continue. Any additional costs such as the cost of educational trips may also be claimed from the discretionary bursary.

In general, students eligible for this bursary will be identified through the work the school does with the local authority. The Kings of Wessex Academy will require proof that a student is eligible. This proof could be for example:

- a letter from DWP saying which benefit the young person is entitled to
- for students who are in care or a care leaver, written confirmation of the young person's current or previous looked-after status from the local authority

Discretionary bursaries

These are awards made to individual students. They are targeted on overcoming the individual barriers to participation that a student faces. They can be for whatever amount is deemed necessary to do this. Students must apply for an award by the deadline shown on the application form. If the application is for a change in circumstances the application may be submitted at any time during the school year. Each student will be assessed individually and awarded a bursary based on their actual financial need. As the assessment must be documented, students applying must present evidence with their claims.

Any student whose total household income is less than £30,000 per annum may be eligible for a bursary in order to help them access their post-16 education. The Kings of Wessex Academy can take into account any benefit payments and unearned income such as shares/investments, savings, pension income and rental income when assessing whether students should receive a discretionary bursary.

Students can apply more than once if their circumstances change. If this happens, they are reassessed.

Students aged 18 or over can apply for a Discretionary bursary if they have an [Education, Health and Care Plan \(EHCP\)](#) or are continuing on a course that they started aged 16 to 18 (known as being a '19+ continuer').

The Kings of Wessex Academy has decided on three key groups who are eligible for a bursary award -

Group 1

Students who are in receipt of Free School Meals. For these students, prior documentation and evidence will be used to evidence eligibility but further evidence may be required.

Bursary allowance: The Academy receives one allocation of bursary funding per year. The actual amount an individual student will receive depends on the number of successful applications received each year. Bursary payments are made directly into the student's bank account. It is divided into four payments as follows:- first Autumn Half Term, second Autumn Half term, Spring Term and Summer Term.

This is to cover the costs of day to day education such as travel costs, books, equipment, stationary, university open days, clothing etc. Any students who has access to free school meals will continue to be eligible for this. Any additional expenses such as school trips can also be claimed and these claims will be dealt with on an individual basis dependent on the nature of the expense and the funding available.

Group 2

Students living in a household where there is a total income of less than £30,000 per annum. In this case, evidence of salary will be required, such as a P60 or original tax credit award from HMRC/ Self-Assessment Tax Calculation or 6 months' payslips. Evidence of any benefits received into the household or unearned income such as shares/investments, savings and income on savings, pension income and rental income will also be required. In the case of Universal Credit, copies of the 3 most recent monthly award statements will be required. The take-home pay figure in addition to the amount of Universal Credit after all deductions will be used to calculate a total monthly income. Using 3 months statements will act as a guide to the household income for a quarter of a year from this assumed income for a full year will be estimated.

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Group 3

Students in exceptional circumstances. Examples of exceptional circumstances may include a student's role as a care-giver for relatives, or if a student is in a family where there are a lot of other children. In this case the total income threshold of £30,000 may be increased to take account of the additional financial burden on the family.

Bursary allowance: Payments to this group will be determined by individual student needs.

Students will only be eligible to make a claim through one of the three groups above.

Conditions

All bursary payments may be withheld should the conditions below not be met:

- The level of unauthorised and unexplained absence from lessons must be no greater than 10%
- Complete compliance with the terms of the Sixth Form Learning Agreement
- All progress effort grades achieved to be “good” or “outstanding” and subject teachers must be satisfied that sufficient progress is being made

Payments

All payments will be made by BACS transfer as outlined. Payments will be backdated to the beginning of the last payment period in which the application is received. Continuing payments are subject to the student satisfying the conditions as set out.

If a payment has been withheld, you may appeal against this decision. Appeals must be in writing to the Head of Sixth Form, Miss Beacham or Operations Manager Mrs Buffham.

Frequently Asked Questions

What can I apply for?

The bursary could help you with any education-related costs that may arise during the school year, including essentials such as books, formal dress; educational visits clothing or equipment for your course, and transport to and from school.

Can the school tell me what to spend my bursary on?

Yes. Your bursary is to help pay for things you really need to stay on at school. We can insist that your bursary is spent on items you really need to study your courses.

Can the school stop my payments if I don't attend or if I misbehave?

Yes. We can certainly set conditions on your bursary. These are rules that you will need to stick to, such as attending classes regularly or behaving well. If you do not stick to these conditions, we can stop payments.

If I can't attend because of illness or an authorised absence will I still receive my bursary?

If you are ill or have been allowed an authorised absence, it will normally not affect your payment, but this is at the school's discretion. It is important to note though, that these payments are designed to ensure students are able to access education.

Once I have received a bursary payment- do I need to apply again?

You need to apply for a discretionary bursary at the start of each year of your sixth form study.

All awards are reviewed in October, January and April and payments may be adjusted as the numbers of students claiming may change. You will be notified in advance of any change in payments. Generally, it would be expected that your entitlement is agreed for the full academic year.

If you have additional items to claim for, or your circumstances or household income changes during the year in any way that might affect the assessment of your bursary payment, you must inform the school.

If at any point during your studies, a lack of funding prevents you from completing them you should inform the school.

Will I get the same amount each year?

The fund will be used by the school to try to support students in their studies across the whole sixth form. It is a fixed amount of money and the amount you receive will be governed by the amount the school has, the number of applicants, and the needs of those students applying.

Will everyone know that I am getting a bursary?

No. We will make sure that you are not singled out in any way and that your application is handled confidentially.

Should I keep receipts?

Yes, if you are **not** receiving a 'four times a year' payment or if you **are** receiving a 'four times a year payment' but would like to apply for an additional expense you will need to provide evidence of what you have paid for, in the form of receipts. Please ensure you get approval for the expense before purchasing the item.

Can a bursary payment for a student be made into anyone else's bank account?

Not normally, no. Therefore, it is important that a student claiming a bursary has a bank account.

How do I know if I am eligible for a Group 3 Special Circumstances payment?

If you believe you may be eligible, please contact the Head of Sixth Form to discuss a bursary payment.

What if I have to pay a large amount for my bus pass for the full year in September?

If you have purchased a bus pass and then are found to be eligible for a bursary, the amount will be reimbursed to your account and will then be deducted from any award you receive. For example, if you are assessed as being entitled to receive a quarterly payment of £100 during term time, but your bus pass is £300 paid in September, you will receive the £300 as soon as your claim is agreed. This amount will then be deducted from your annual payment.

Who do I see for help and advice or an application form?

Further help is available from Miss Beacham, Head of 6th Form or The Finance Office.



Applications for all payment types should be made using the 16-19 Bursary Fund Application Form and addressed to The Finance Office. Applications and any supporting documents can be posted into the Student Post Box in reception or sent FAO Finance Office, Kings of Wessex Academy, Station Road, Cheddar, Somerset, BS27 3AQ

