



Whitburn Church of England Academy (Sixth Form)

16-19 Bursary Fund Guidance Notes

Read all of this information carefully before completing the [form online here](#). If you have any queries, please contact the Sixth Form via 5293712.

1. What is a 16-19 Bursary Fund?

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.

There are 2 types of 16 to 19 bursaries:

1. bursaries for defined vulnerable groups
2. discretionary bursaries which institutions award using policies they set, in line with these funding rules

The bursary fund is intended to help students with the essential costs of participating in their study programme, so to help with the cost of essential books or equipment or with the cost of travelling to school or college, for example. The bursary fund is **not** intended to support costs not related to education (living costs), extra-curricular activities or provide learning support – services that institutions give to students – such as counselling, mentoring or extra tutoring.

As we have a limited amount of funding to allocate, please be mindful that there is a possibility of no award or a limited award.

2. Who is eligible to apply for a 16-19 Bursary Funding?

Whitburn CofE Academy Sixth Form will target the 16-19 Bursary Fund to ensure that it reaches students who face significant barriers to participating in education and will target funds to help the students in greatest need. Eligible students are those who satisfy the following criteria:

- Students must meet the residency criteria detailed in [sections 32-43 of this document](#).
- A student must be aged 16 or over but under 19 on 31 August 2026 to be eligible for help from the bursary fund in the 2026 to 2027 academic year.
- Students aged 19 or over are only eligible to receive a discretionary bursary if they are continuing on a study programme they began aged 16 to 18 or have an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP).
- These 2 groups of aged 19+ students can receive a discretionary bursary while they continue to attend education (in the case of a 19+ continuer, this must be the same programme they started before they turned 19), as long as their eligibility continues and their institution considers they need the support to continue their participation.

3. Allocation of the Bursary Fund at Whitburn CofE Academy Sixth Form:

There are two types of bursary available as outlined below:

Bursary	Amount of payment	Criteria for eligibility
Bursaries for young people in defined vulnerable groups	Variable, based upon assessed need. <i>There is a possibility of no award or a limited award.</i>	• in care* • care leavers • student is <i>themselves</i> 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 • 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
Discretionary bursaries	Variable, based upon assessed need. <i>There is a possibility of no award or a limited award.</i>	• Students who were eligible for free school meals throughout Year 11 (whether or not they claimed them) or are eligible for FSM on starting Sixth Form. Eligibility can be checked here. • Any other student experiencing financial hardship will be supported based on needs assessment. • There is no set figure for parental income and we will support any student experiencing difficulty if funds allow, and we can evidence a need.

*The 16 to 19 Bursary Fund defines 'in care' as 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 1989 defines the term 'looked after child'.

A 'care leaver' is defined as:

1. a young person aged 16 and 17 who was 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
2. a young person aged 18 or above who was looked after prior to becoming 18 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.

4. How do students apply for the Whitburn CofE Academy Sixth Form 16-19 Bursary?

Students are encouraged to apply as soon as possible after formal enrolment in August. There is no deadline for applications although as the funding is finite, earlier applications are more likely to be successful.

Application is made online via this link. Any evidence required for the needs assessment such as P60s or UC Award notifications can be sent to Mr Craggs via Teams or handed to Mrs Townsley in the Sixth Form office. All evidence is treated in the strictest confidence and can be copied and returned upon request.

Each application will be reviewed by the Bursary Fund Application Panel and successful applicants notified within two working weeks. The Bursary Fund Application Panel will consist of: Head of Sixth Form and School Business Manager.

All payments, where possible, will be 'in-kind' via the loan of text books, laptops, or the provision of vouchers. Any cash payments can only be made directly into the student's own personal bank account via BACS payment.

If financial circumstances change for a family during the academic year and a student becomes eligible for Free School Meals, a late application for bursary payment is encouraged.

Students need to declare that there has been no change in circumstances upon moving from Year 12 into Year 13 for bursary support to continue.

5. Equality, Confidentiality and Appealing a decision

The Academy will take all applications made for bursaries into consideration irrespective of age, race, disability, gender, marital status, sexual orientation or faith.

Please note that Whitburn Church of England Academy Sixth Form guarantees that all personal information, including bank details and household earnings, will be stored securely and will remain strictly confidential. Information provided in a 16-19 Bursary application form will only be shared with appropriate members of staff. Personal data will be used for funding purposes; information will not be passed to any other third party without your consent, except when the Academy is required to do so by law.

If a student wishes to appeal against the allocation of the 16-19 bursary fund the reasons for the appeal need to be put in writing, along with any documentary evidence to Mr J Crowe, Principal, Whitburn CofE Academy Whitburn, Sunderland, SR6 7EF.

Each appeal will be reviewed on a case-by-case basis against the published criteria for eligibility.

6. Terms and Conditions – Please read carefully

We will communicate the outcome of the application to the student (the amount of bursary they have been awarded and for what types of costs, for example, travel) in writing within two working weeks of the application. The letter will detail how the costs will be paid, so in kind or by payments to their bank account.

Please note carefully in the bursary guidance and application form the terms that must be adhered to for students to continue to benefit from this scheme.

Please note the evidence required to support your application. Applications submitted without the necessary evidence will be returned to applicants for re-submission.

As per ESFA guidance, we will stop any regular payments (such as school lunches, or travel expenses) where students have been absent for a period of 4 continuous weeks or more (excluding holidays) and where students have decided to withdraw from a study programme. We will also seek to take money back from students if they have not spent it for the reasons it was awarded to them.

Any books or equipment loaned to a student as part of the bursary scheme must be returned on completion of their course in usable condition such that it can be re-issued to another student. Charges may be issued for the replacement of any item not returned, or returned in unacceptable condition.

Any student or parent who is unhappy with how an institution has managed their application for bursary funding should initiate an appeal by putting the reasons for the appeal in writing, along with any documentary evidence to Mr J Crowe, Principal, Whitburn CofE Academy Whitburn, Sunderland, SR6 7EF.

Receipt of bursary funding does **not** affect receipt of other means-tested benefits paid to families, such as IS, Jobseeker's Allowance, Child Benefit, Working Tax Credit, Housing Benefit or, generally, UC.