ST BENET BISCOP
CATHOLIC ACADEMY

16-19 Bursary Application

Supporting Information

2026-27

16-19 Bursary Scheme

Introduction

The 16-19 Bursary Scheme provides financial help to young people aged 16 to 19 who face financial barriers to participating in education or training, provided they meet agreed standards of attendance and behaviour.

Only students in defined vulnerable groups, or experiencing the greatest financial disadvantages and course-related costs, can be supported using the 16-19 bursary funds.

The 16-19 Bursary Fund has two alternative options:

- **Vulnerable Bursary** – A bursary of up to £1,200 per year for young people in the following defined vulnerable groups: in care; care leavers; young people in receipt of Income Support or Universal Credit; and disabled young people in receipt of both Employment Support Allowance and Disability Living Allowance/Personal Independence Payments.

- **Discretionary Bursary** – The school may award a discretionary bursary to students to help with educational expenses. This award can vary due to the individual circumstances of the student. The basic eligibility criteria are for those students in Year 12 and 13 who are currently in receipt of free school meals.

Students who do not meet these criteria but are experiencing hardship should in the first instance speak to the Head of Sixth Form regarding their circumstances.

Eligibility

To be eligible to receive a 16-19 Bursary in the 2026/27 academic year, the young person must be aged 16 or over on 31 August 2026. 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.

If you do not qualify for a standard bursary it is still possible to make limited awards to help students purchase materials that will be directly relevant to their programme of study, especially in the Arts, etc.

For smaller payments related to study contact should be made with the Head of Sixth Form.

Vulnerable Bursary

In 2013, there was a phased introduction of two new benefits; firstly, Universal Credit, to replace both Income Support and Employment Support Allowance; and secondly Personal Independence Payments, which replaces Disability Living Allowance.

There may be some 16–19-year-old students affected by these benefit changes and therefore students in the following situations are also now eligible for a vulnerable student bursary:

- Young people who receive a Universal Credit payment in their own name.
- Young people who are disabled and receive Employment Support Allowance and a Personal Independence Payment in their own name.

Therefore, the defined vulnerable groups are:

- Young people who are looked after (in care);
- Care leavers;
- Young people in receipt of Income Support (or Universal Credit) in their own name;
- Disabled young people in receipt of both Employment Support Allowance and Disability Living Allowance (or Personal Independence Payments).

Young people in the defined vulnerable groups are eligible for a bursary award of up to £1,200 per academic year, dependent upon their financial need.

St. Benet Biscop Catholic Academy is responsible for identifying young people who are eligible for a vulnerable student bursary payment. To do this, evidence must be provided by the student and copies of evidence must be retained for potential financial inspection of the school by the Educational Funding Agency. Confidentiality will be respected by the school throughout.

The following are examples of appropriate evidence:

- a letter setting out the benefit to which the young person is entitled, ideally confirming that the terms of their benefit entitlement allow them to participate in further education or training (institutions should be aware that there are circumstances in which a young person on benefits is prohibited from participating and should take steps to ensure this is not the case).
- written confirmation of the young person's current or previous looked-after status from the local authority which looks after them or provides their leaving care services.

Discretionary Bursary

To be eligible for a Discretionary Bursary, students must meet all four of the following conditions:

1. Attend St. Benet Biscop Catholic Academy.
2. Be starting/have started a programme of study in Year 12 or 13 in September 2026.
3. Be aged between 16 and 18 on 31 August 2026 (note exceptional circumstances of EHC plan).
4. Living in a household currently entitled to Targeted Free School Meals or with a total annual household income in the 2025/26 tax year (including benefits) below £ 25,000 (please provide proof income i.e. Tax Credits Award, most recent P60)

If students are eligible for the Discretionary Bursary, they will be awarded an allowance which is redeemable throughout the school year. The total allowance will be dependent upon the number of applications during the current school year.

Assessment and Payment of Bursaries

In determining arrangements for assessment and payment of the 16-19 Bursary Fund, St. Benet Biscop Catholic Academy is subject to equalities legislation and will not discriminate against students, either directly or indirectly, on the basis of their protected characteristics. St. Benet Biscop Catholic Academy is also subject to the public sector equality duty in section 149(1) of the Equality Act 2010.

New government guidance means that schools should no longer pay a flat rate into student bank accounts, as the bursary is designed to support their education rather than to support living costs.

In light of this the following education related expenses can be redeemed against the monthly awarded allowance:

- Transport to and from school
- Uniform
- Books
- Equipment
- Transport/expenses related to university open days/careers fairs
- Educational visits

This list is not exhaustive and should you be unsure of whether a particular expense can be reimbursed, please encourage your child to speak to their Head of Progress.

Expenses claimed through the provision of receipts will be reimbursed via student bank accounts by the end of each month. Claims of reimbursement ***must be submitted by the 10th of each month for reimbursement at the end of the month****. For example, a claim must be submitted by 10th December for reimbursement at the end of December.*

Items that can be funded by bursary payments

To receive reimbursement for a claim a receipt must be produced for the item and presented to the Finance Office. Receipts must be produced for all claims. For some expenses, these must be arranged with the Finance Office or ordered through the Finance Office in advance.

Examples of items that can be funded are listed below. These are for the named student only. Parents and siblings cannot be funded through the bursary award.

Uniform

The bursary can be redeemed against items of appropriate school uniform, upon presentation of a valid receipt to the Finance Office. Please see the sixth form dress code for further guidance. A summary of allowances for each item is listed below:

- Tops including shirts, polo shirts, blouses, jumpers (up to the value of £25 each) – *maximum of four per academic year*
- Trousers/skirts (up to the value of £30 each) – *maximum of three per academic year*
- School coat (up to the value of £60) – *maximum of one per academic year*
- School bag (up to the value of £30) – *maximum of one per academic year*
- School shoes (up to value of £60) – *maximum of two pairs per academic year*

Sportswear

For students who study BTEC Sport, the bursary can be redeemed against appropriate items of sportswear, upon presentation of a valid receipt to the Finance Office.

- Tops including t-shirts, sweatshirts, hoodies (up to the value of £25 each) – *maximum of three per academic year.*
- Bottoms including shorts/tracksuit bottoms (up to the value of £30 each) – *maximum of three per academic year.*
- Trainers/sports shoes (up to the value of £60) – *maximum of one pair per academic year.*

Items bought in addition to these allowances may be claimed at the discretion of the school. Please ask your child to discuss this with the Head of Sixth Form.

Students in year 13 should not be claiming for uniform after the Easter break.

Equipment

The bursary can be redeemed against equipment and materials which are necessary for educational purposes, upon presentation of a valid receipt to the Finance Office. These include:

- Stationery
- Folders, paper, pens, calculator, etc.

The bursary can also be redeemed against additional educational materials, the order of which must be arranged with the Finance Office in advance. These include:

- Academic books, revision guides and workbooks
- Materials for resource intensive subjects like Art, Drama, Product Design etc – *maximum total of £50 per half term and on production of a receipt.*

Educational Visits

- Educational visits (up to the full amount)
- Related items of clothing, e.g. waterproofs (up to the value of £50 per item) – *maximum of one of each item.*
- Education related costs, e.g. exhibition entry, etc – *please discuss this with the Finance Office in advance.*

Travel

The bursary can be redeemed against the cost of travel to and from school upon presentation of a valid receipt to the Finance Office.

Careers

The bursary can be redeemed against expenses related to careers whilst students are researching their next steps. All expenses of this nature must be booked in advance with the Finance Office. These include:

- Annual railcards for visits (and cost of 2 train tickets to events directly related to studies or university visits). Rail tickets must be booked through school and agreed in advance. Any travel costs and railcards will need to be booked in advance (ideally at least 2 weeks) through the Finance Office in Main School. We cannot guarantee tickets on shorter timescales.
- Training courses - booked online through the Finance Office e.g. UKCAT or BMAT training courses; Oxbridge; Apply days etc.
- UCAS fees.

Celebrations

The bursary can be redeemed against the cost of one Leavers' Ball ticket and one leavers' hoodie.

Discretionary funding for those not in receipt of a bursary but in need of additional funding can be distributed on a case-by-case basis. Reasons may be needed to support with this funding (e.g. change in home situation; low income; changes in employment status; number of UCAS interviews, etc).

Please discuss these needs with the Head of Sixth Form.