



**Reynalds Cross Vision:**  
*Reynalds Cross is a safe, supportive and fun environment  
that nurtures individuality and enables  
every child to flourish to be the best that can be.*

# 16 - 19 Bursary Fund Policy<sub>t</sub>

**Date adopted:**

**December 2025**

**Next Review date:**

**December 2026**



## Introduction

The Government has set aside some money for schools, colleges and training providers to allocate to young people who need financial support to participate in post 16 education or training. This is called the 16-19 Bursary Fund. It is good practice to allocate the fund in kind rather than providing cash payments. There are two elements to the fund: a nominated vulnerable learner bursary and a discretionary award both of which must be applied for.

The Bursary Fund could help with any education-related costs that may arise during the school year, including essentials like a meal during the day or transport to school, college or training provider. Extra help might be needed to buy additional books, clothing or equipment for a course, or pay for meals or educational visits.

## Who is eligible?

The young person must be aged 16 and under 19 at the start of the academic year (the start of the 2024/25 academic year is 31 August 2024). Where a young person turns 19 during the academic year, 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.

All students applying (whether for a vulnerable learner bursary or a discretionary award) need to make their needs and the cost clear on the application form. Guidance on a student's needs and any costs can be discussed with the school at any stage of the process.

## Vulnerable Learners

To be eligible to apply for a vulnerable learner bursary students must fall into one of the following groups:

- Young people who are looked after (see definitions below) aged 16-19.
- Unaccompanied asylum seekers are treated as looked after children
- Disabled young people who are in full time education and are in receipt of Income Support (**IS**) or Universal credit or Employment Support Allowance (**ESA**) and Disability Living Allowance (**DLA**) or a Personal Independence Payment (**PIP**).

**Please note:** Students claiming because they get DLA or PIP must also be claiming ESA, Universal Credit or Income Support as well. These benefits **MUST** be in combination.

**Please note:** It is the young person who must be in receipt of benefits and not other family members. Evidence of the benefit will be required and will be checked by the school.

## Definitions of young people who are looked after

- Eligible children ('looked after'): this is a child who is looked after, aged 16 or 17, and has been looked after for a period of 13 continuous weeks or periods amounting to 13 weeks, which began after s/he reached 14 and ended after s/he reached 16.
- Relevant children ('care leavers'): this is defined as a child who is not looked after, is aged 16 or 17, and was, before s/he ceased to be looked after, an eligible child.
- Former relevant children ('care leavers'): this is defined as a young person who is aged 18 or above, and has been either a relevant child and would be one if s/he were under 18, or immediately before s/he ceased to be looked after at 18, was an eligible child.

### Type of evidence that is needed

Type of Benefit	Evidence Required
Young People who are looked after	Personal Education Plan (PEP) or Pathway Plan
Income Support (IS) (or Universal Credit)	Letter dated within 12 months showing name, address, benefit received and period of claim
Employment Support Allowance (ESA)	(This is not normally paid to young people in full time education unless the young person is in receipt of DLA). Letter dated within 12 months of application showing name, address, benefit received and period of claim.
Disability Living Allowance (DLA) or Personal Independence Payment (PIP)	Letter dated within 12 months of application showing name, address, benefit received and period of claim.

### Conditions

Receipt of a bursary for vulnerable learners will be conditional on the student meeting certain agreed standards:

- At least 95% attendance.
- Acceptable standards of behaviour including no fixed term or permanent exclusions.

It should be noted that where attendance falls below the required level the amount of bursary awarded may be reduced proportionally, for example if attendance is 85% the bursary awarded will be 85% of £400 per term. Exceptional circumstances on both conditions can be agreed at the headteacher's discretion, for example if high levels of absence are due to medical appointments.

### How will the bursary money be distributed?

At the end of every term the attendance of eligible pupils may be verified and a review process may be triggered to ensure that the original circumstances still remain. Once the school is satisfied that all the criteria continue to be met payments in kind or a cash payment will be made to the young person's bank account.

### The school will require details of a relevant bank account. Discretionary Awards

As before young people must be aged 16-19 and in years 12-14 however in administering the discretionary element of the fund the school will adhere to the following principles; due to the limits based on budgets, in order to have the greatest impact on learners, discretionary awards will be targeted at those facing the greatest financial hardship. The following priority groups will be used to manage applications:

**Priority One:** Learners in receipt of Free School Meals

**Priority Two:** Learners who may not be in receipt of Free School Meals but may be from a low income family who may receive one of the following state benefits:

- Universal Credit in prescribed circumstances;<sup>6</sup>
- Income Support (IS);
- Income Based Jobseekers Allowance (IBJSA);
- support under part VI of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999;
- Child Tax Credit, provided that Working Tax Credit is not also received and the family's income (as assessed by His Majesty's Revenue and Customs) does not exceed £16,190 (financial year 2013/14);
- the guarantee element of State Pension Credit;
- an income related employment and support
- Working Tax Credit run-on - paid for 4 weeks after you stop qualifying for Working Tax Credit

Evidence of one of these benefits may be required to support applications to the 16-19 Bursary Fund.

Applications will also be accepted from learners who can demonstrate financial hardship. Evidence to support such applications should be submitted to the School Business Manager and will be treated in strictest confidence.

Satisfying these eligibility criteria cannot guarantee funding to any learner and the school will need to consider other factors including the purpose for which the funding support is requested and the budget available. In the first instance discretionary awards will be allocated to help learners meet costs in relation to transport to and from school with any remaining funds being used for other essential items related to their individual course of study such as equipment, trips and meals whilst attending school.

### **Conditions**

Receipt of a discretionary award will be conditional on the student meeting certain agreed standards:

- At least 95% attendance
- Acceptable standards of behaviour including no fixed term or permanent exclusions.

As with the vulnerable learner bursary exceptional circumstances will be considered in respect of both conditions and can be put aside at the headteacher's discretion.

In respect of discretionary awards, it should be noted that the school must establish the number of students who have applied for financial support and then match this with the funding available. Inevitably some students will not qualify or will not receive the level of discretionary funding we would like to provide. Funds will be allocated in line with current 16-19 Bursary Guidance.

### **Administration costs**

The school will retain 5% of the total discretionary bursary allocation to administer the scheme.

### **Monitoring and reporting**

The Headteacher reports through the Governors’ resources committee and the full governing body on all matters relating to finance. Should a young person or family feel aggrieved about how their request for a bursary was handled, they should follow the school’s normal complaints policy which is available on request.

**Additional Information about the 16-19 Bursary Fund can be found at:**

[www.direct.gov.uk/16-19bursary](http://www.direct.gov.uk/16-19bursary)

**Application Form - Vulnerable Learners**

**The deadline for initial applications is included in the letter inviting applications, however applications made after this date will still be considered.**

Students are reminded that their application will be treated in the utmost confidence and we would encourage students to maintain this confidentiality with other members of the school community.

Funds will be made available in line with the 16-19 Bursary Policy, attendance and behaviour criteria.

Name of student	Date of Birth
Are you looked after by a local authority?	Yes/No
Do you (the student) receive Disability Living Allowance (DLA) or a Personal Independence Payment (PIP) and Employment Support Allowance (ESA) or Income Support or Universal Credit?	Yes/No
What do you need the award for? Please provide as much detail as possible.  Item or service?  Cost?	

If you have answered yes to any of the above you will need to send in additional evidence of the allowance that is dated within 12 months showing name, address and benefit plus a bank statement dated within 3 months.

Student or Carer's signature.....

Name..... (please print)

Date .....

**Please return the completed form to the school office**

**Application Form for a Discretionary Award**

**Applicants are reminded that this form is for consideration only and does not guarantee entitlement.**

**The deadline for initial applications is included in the letter inviting applications, however applications made after this date will still be considered.**

Students are reminded that their application will be treated in the utmost confidence and we would encourage students to maintain this confidentiality with other members of the school community.

Funds will be made available in line with the 16-19 Bursary Policy and attendance and behaviour criteria.

Name of student	Date of Birth
Please refer to guidance when responding to the following questions.	
Do you receive free school meals?	Yes/No
Are you in receipt of one of the state benefits set out in Priority 2?	Yes/No If so, which benefit are you in receipt of? .....

<p>Alternatively is your family facing financial hardship?</p>	<p>Yes/No</p> <p>If yes please provide details in support of your application on the back of this form.</p>
<p>What do you need the award for? Please provide as much detail as possible.</p> <p>Item or service?</p> <p>Cost?</p>	

Student or Carer's signature.....

Name..... (please print)

Date .....

**Please return the completed form to the School Business Manager via the school office.**