16 TO 19 BURSARY FUND STATEMENT
ACADEMIC YEAR 2026-27

Creative Education Trust

16 to 19 Bursary Fund

The 16-19 Bursary Funds are paid by the Department for Education (DfE) to Schools so that they can provide financial assistance to students whose access to education might be inhibited by financial barriers.

The 16 to 19 Bursary Fund has 2 elements:

Bursary for young people in defined vulnerable groups:

- Eligible students within the defined vulnerable groups, will receive a bursary of up to £1,200 per year if they are on a study programme that lasts for 30 weeks or more and if they need that amount of support.

Discretionary Bursary:

- These awards are targeted towards those young people who face financial barriers to participation in education, such as the costs of transport, meals, educational visits, smart clothing, books, and equipment. The awards are aimed to fit the needs and circumstances of individual students and are at the discretion of the person appointed by the Principal to manage the School's bursary funds. The 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.

Who is eligible to receive the bursary?

Age

To be eligible to receive a 16 to 19 Bursary in the 2026/27 academic year the student must:

- Be aged 16 or over and under 19 on 31st August 2026; or
- Be aged 19 or over at 31st August 2026 and have an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP); or
- Be aged 19 or over at 31st August 2026 and continuing a study programme they began aged 16 to 18.

The last two groups are only eligible for discretionary bursary.

Residency

- The student must meet the residency criteria in DfE funding regulations.

- Accompanied asylum seeking children - as long as they have not had their application for asylum refused, the student may receive in-kind student support such as books, equipment, or a travel pass. Cash will not be paid directly under any circumstance unless they are an unaccompanied asylum-seeking child.

- Unaccompanied asylum seeking children – If they are an unaccompanied asylum-seeking child, then they will be treated as looked after child and be eligible for a bursary for vulnerable groups ('in care' group), where it is identified that they have a financial need.

In addition, they must be eligible in one of the following categories:

Bursary for Defined Vulnerable Groups

The following students may be eligible for a bursary of up to £1,200 (with the actual amount dependant on the specific financial needs they have) if they are on a study programme which lasts for 30 weeks or more in the academic year:

- They are in, or have recently left, local authority care.
- They are receiving Income Support, or Universal Credit because they are financially supporting themselves or financially supporting themselves and someone who is dependent on them and living with them (such as child or partner).
- They are receiving Disability Living Allowance or Personal Independence Payments as well as Employment and Support Allowance or Universal Credit. However, as Universal Credit has now been fully rolled out, young people aged 16 to 18 will no longer be in receipt of these other benefits and these legacy benefits will only impact students aged 19 and over.

If a student is on a study programme which lasts less 30 weeks in an academic year, then the £1,200 will be pro-rated to the number of weeks of study.

Funding for this bursary is held centrally by the DfE. Students who qualify for this bursary might experience a short delay while the School applies to draw down the funding. The bursary will be payable in regular instalments.

Where a carer has responsibility for the young person's finances, meetings should be set up with them to decide how payments should be made. All students who qualify for a vulnerable bursary will be offered budgeting training to help ensure his or her support delivers the maximum benefit.

Discretionary Bursary

The fund allocated to the school is a fixed and finite sum and allocations may therefore not exceed the total sum available. The amounts paid will be subject to the number of students in the categories below and the availability of the funds.

Priority of students for discretionary bursaries will be considered based on household income as follows:

- A proportion of the funds allocated to the School will be distributed amongst the students who face the greatest financial hardship. These students are likely to be those who are eligible for free school meals and whose household income is below £16,190 (per government Free School Meal eligibility criteria).

- Further applications will be considered on an individual basis and where the household income is between £16,190 and £25,000.

- It is intended that the fund could also support students who suffer a change in circumstances causing hardship during the academic year. Students should contact the Head of Sixth Form in the first instance.

- In cases of severe hardship, under the DfE guidance, the fund can also support students considered to be in real need and the School is able to provide food support whilst a student attends their study programme, without undertaking the checks on household income or gathering other evidence that would normally be required.

The provision of financial support will be monitored by the School and if it is deemed that it is not supporting academic progress than alternative support may be put in place following discussions with parents/guardians and student.

Other key information

- If IT/specialist equipment or bus passes required, then the School will purchase this, and the cost deducted from the student's overall award.
- Most discretionary bursary allocation payments will be 'in kind', based on need, which may include but are not limited to:

- Essential books.
- Travel passes.
- IT/specialist equipment.
- Vouchers or credits for food.
- School trips.
- Clothing to meet the dress code of the sixth form.
- Travel to open days or university interviews.

- Any student who is in receipt of Free School Meals will continue to be entitled to Free School Meals under the bursary scheme.
- Reimbursements will be made to students following submission of receipts as proof of purchase, these will be held on file and payments will be made directly to students via BACS transfer.
- Where a School purchases books and equipment for a student, the student is expected to return books and equipment to the School at the end of the student study programme so that they may be used again by another student where appropriate.

Qualifying Conditions

Bursary fund payments will be subject to meeting the attendance and behaviour requirements of the School:

- Qualifying Period – satisfy a qualifying period of study, i.e., at least six weeks.
- Attendance – a minimum of 95% attendance (subject to exceptional circumstances). The Bursary payment will be reduced or even removed if attendance falls below 95%.
- Behaviour – no cause for concern and no staff perusing a level of the behaviour policy.

Application Deadline

- Bursary for Defined Vulnerable Groups **–** there is no deadline. However, we will be able to help and arrange regular payments if you apply for the funding early in the year.

- Discretionary Bursary **–** We encourage students to submit their applications at the start of the September term, however the closing date for application is Friday 16th October 2026. The discretionary bursary is a limited sum of money allocated to the School. Once the allocation has been allocated to students, no further applications for support can be considered. All applications will be dealt

with on a first-come, first-served basis. We will retain a proportion of the funding as a contingency for students who suffer a change in circumstances causing hardship during the academic year.

Application Process

All students joining or continuing with the Sixth Form at the start of September will be given information about the bursary. Copies of all documentation and the application form can be found on the website and can be collected from the Head of Sixth Form who can also provide assist to complete.

A new application form must be submitted each year for consideration. There is no guarantee that funding will be available for future years, even if you are eligible for the current year.

All applications will be kept in the strictest confidence.

Supporting Evidence

The supporting documents needed to verify household income are outlined in the application form.

Signed Declaration

At the end of the application form, students and their parent/carer must sign a declaration.

Students and their families should be aware that if false or incomplete information is submitted, the matter may be referred to the Department for Education and/or the police, with the possibility of prosecution. The Sixth Form will seek to recover any payments the student is not eligible for.

We must be notified in writing of any changes to the information provided, which may affect the eligibility of the bursary. If the student leaves the Sixth Form or fails to abide by the Sixth Form's attendance and behaviour policies, we may ask for the award to be returned or withhold payments.

Process following submission

The application form and supporting documents will be checked. They will be stored securely and will only be used for the purpose of assessing their eligibility for the Bursary Fund. In line with the DfE guidance, the documentation will be retained for 6 years.

The person appointed by the Principal to manage the School's bursary funds will then consider each application.

Details of all successful applications will be passed to the Finance Department, together with level, timing and conditions of the bursary awarded.

Right to Appeal

If you are not satisfied with the outcome of your application, you have the right to appeal against the decision. You should follow the School's normal complaints procedure.

Further Information

For further information see https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/16-to-19-bursary-fund-guidance/16-to-19-bursary-fund-guide-2026-to-2027
~~https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/16-to-19-bursary-fund-guidance/16-to-19-bursary-fund-guide-2025-to-2026~~

The terms of this scheme are reviewed on an annual basis.

Please note the information above may be subject to change following guidance from the Department for Education.