



16-19 (Sixth Form) Bursary Procedure

2025-2027

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**Policy level			
1	Trust wide	Single policy relevant to everyone and consistently applied across all schools and departments, with no variation. e.g. Complaints procedure	Statutory policies approved by the Board of Trustees (or designated Trustee Committee). Non-statutory policies approved by the CEO with exception of Executive Pay.
2	Trust core values	This policy defines the Trust core values in the form of a Trust statement to be incorporated fully into all other policies on this subject, that in addition contain relevant information, procedures and or processes contextualised to that school. e.g. Safeguarding, Behaviour	Statements in statutory policies approved by the Board of Trustees (or designated Trustee Committee). Statements in non-statutory policies approved by the CEO. Policy approved by Local School Board.
3	School/department	These policies/procedures are defined independently by schools as appropriate. E.g. Anti-bullying	Approved by Local School Board.

Note:

1. Purpose

The Government has set aside some money for schools to allocate to young people who need financial support to access their studies and stay on in further education or training. This is called the 16-19 Bursary Fund. It 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 and from school. Alternatively, it may support the cost of additional **books, clothing or equipment** required, or to pay for **educational visits, university trips or work experience**. This procedure outlines how The Alliance Schools Trust administers the 16-19 Bursary Fund to support eligible students in the sixth form at the Trust secondary schools.

2. Objective

2.1. To provide financial support to students who face barriers to participation in education.

2.2. To ensure fair, transparent, and consistent allocation of bursary funds. We are dedicated to:

2.2.1. Distributing 16-19 bursaries via a fair and equal process that is transparent, accountable and easily understood.

2.2.2. Ensuring that information regarding the application, award and administration of 16-19 bursaries is available to all.

2.2.3. Widening access to, and participation in, 16-19 education.

2.2.4. Ensuring all students who are eligible for funding have access to it.

3. Types of Bursaries

Type of Bursary	Criteria	Award
Vulnerable Bursary	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• In local authority care or care leavers.• In receipt of Income Support or Universal Credit in their own name.• In receipt of Disability Living Allowance (DLA) or Personal Independence Payment (PIP) plus Employment and Support Allowance (ESA) or Universal Credit.	Up to £1,200 per academic year if study programme lasts for 30 weeks or more (pro-rata for shorter study periods). Additional funds may be granted from the school's discretionary bursary allowance or its own funds.

If a student meets the above criteria, but the School believes a bursary is not required as they do not have any financial need and do not need further support, the School may decide not to distribute a bursary to this student. This may include, for example, where:

- A student undertakes a distance learning programme and there are no financial barriers to participation e.g. no travel costs or food costs.
- A student is in LA care and education costs are covered in full by the LA.
- A student is financially supported by their partner.

Where a vulnerable bursary is refused, the School will explain to the student and/or the student's parents, carer or support worker the aim of the bursary funding and why it is appropriate not to award any in this instance.

In all cases, the school will consider the particular circumstances of each case and may choose to award a reduced amount e.g. where the financial help needed is limited.

Discretionary Bursary	You may be eligible for a discretionary bursary based on: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Your individual financial needs Household income Other personal circumstances 	Variable, dependent on need and available funding.
Level 1:	For students facing genuine financial barriers (e.g. whose gross household income is below £22,000 as assessed by HMRC, who were in receipt of free school meals in Year 11, or other exceptional circumstances).	
Level 2:	Students whose gross household income is between £22,000- £28,000 as assessed by HMRC may apply for support with items required for their course(s) and will receive a cost reduction on associated trips, subject to meeting agreed attendance and punctuality targets up to an indicative target of £300 depending on the level of applications.	
Other:	Applications from households with a net income exceeding £28,000 are not normally considered. However, if a student is facing financial hardship due to emergency exceptional circumstances that will impact their ability to participate in education, they should submit an application, together with a supporting statement, and any evidence of serious financial difficulties being experienced. Evidence of the student's eligibility, the individual assessment and their actual participation costs will be held for audit purposes as for any other bursary award.	

Bursary funds for vulnerable bursaries are allocated first. The allocation of funds to discretionary bursaries will be decided once all the applications have been processed to ensure fairness and equality. This is because the funding provided by the government is limited and is also allocated to the school in advance, so it is not based on the number of applications.

Note: The school will make clear in its application form that there is the possibility of no award or a limited award and that all claims for purchases will require receipts which must be authorised by the Head of Sixth Form. Please use the form provided and return to the Sixth Form Administrator.

4. Eligibility Criteria

- 4.1.** Bursary support is awarded based on students meeting the eligibility criteria. The government sets out specific criteria for the vulnerable bursary which entitles students to the funding, whilst the eligibility criteria for the discretionary bursary is determined by the school. In both cases, the school is responsible for determining whether a student's application has been successful. All information submitted is treated in strict confidence.
- 4.2.** To qualify for student bursary, you must be:
- Aged 16–19 on 31 August of the academic year.
 - Students aged 19 or over are not eligible for the vulnerable bursary, although the school may decide the student is eligible for a discretionary bursary, if they are

continuing on a study programme, they began aged 16 to 18 or have an EHCP and need support to continue their participation.

- Enrolled in an eligible full-time or part-time course at a Trust school.
- Meet UK residency requirements

4.3. Any young person in receipt of a Bursary has a duty to inform the School if their financial circumstances, or those of their parent/guardian/carer(s) change (e.g. increase in household income, Free School Meals being withdrawn for a sibling). This does not automatically mean any future Bursary payments will be stopped but would result in a review to determine whether the payments continue.

4.4. If a student experiences extreme hardship during the academic year or their financial circumstances change, we encourage students to discuss this with the Head of Sixth Form.

4.5. Once awarded a bursary, the school will request, for subsequent years of study, confirmation that there have been no changes in circumstances that would require a review of eligibility.

5. How to Apply

5.1. Application Form:

Students complete the Application Form (see Appendix 1) and provide the necessary supporting documentation (see Appendix 2) to the Head of Sixth Form via the Sixth Form Administrator. Application Forms are available from the School website and Finance Office/Sixth Form Administrator.

5.2. Assessment:

The bursary panel, drawn from the Sixth Form Leadership Team and Business Manager reviews applications confidentially and allocates funds based on individual need.

5.3. Notification:

Applicants are informed of the outcome in writing, including details of the award and payment arrangements.

6. Use of Bursary

Bursaries may be used and will be prioritised for:

6.1. Transport costs

- Essential equipment, books, or uniform
We reserve the right to request that if a student has had books, laptops, or equipment loaned or bought for them through the Bursary Fund, they return it at the end of their study programme. We may also request that the equipment is kept on school site. Further conditions may be levied.
- Meals in school – (schools may require additional evidence of entitlement to verify an application for FSMs)
- Curriculum linked field trips or course-related activities
- University visits and interviews and/or work experience

7. Payment Arrangements

7.1. Payments are usually made by BACS transfer to the student's bank account, on approval of a valid claim with receipt(s). Initial payment will only be made after first 6 weeks of attendance on the course(s).

- 7.2. Payments for Free School Meal support will be made via ParentMail up to a maximum set annually by the school.
- 7.3. If a student leaves the school/course(s) mid-term, any overpayment will need to be repaid straight away.

8. Monitoring & Appeals

- 8.1. Awards are reviewed termly.
- 8.2. Students may appeal decisions in writing to the Headteacher outlining their reasons why they are unsatisfied with the outcome. If the appeal is upheld or partly upheld, it will be referred to the Head of Sixth Form with recommendations. If the appeal is not upheld the appealing party will be signposted to the School's Complaints Procedure.

9. Conditions for receiving the bursary – Attendance and Behaviour

- 9.1. To qualify for the additional payments, students must meet and continue to meet the agreed standards for attendance and behaviour set by the school.
- 9.2. Authorised absences will not affect eligibility for the bursary; however, holiday breaks and unauthorised absences are not permitted during school, time and will affect eligibility.
- 9.3. Payments will be withheld where:
 - A student is absent for a period of four consecutive weeks or more, excluding holidays or if there is evidence the student intends to return.
 - A student is not demonstrating consistent punctuality to all lessons
 - A student is not engaging appropriately with their learning, for example (but not limited to) missing deadlines, acting as a positive role model.
 - A student withdraws themselves from a study programme.
 - Money is not being spent for the reasons it was awarded.
 - A student breaches any of the conditions of payment.
- 9.4. Before withholding any payments, the school will consider the effect that this may have on a student's individual circumstances.
- 9.5. Receipt of the bursary will not affect the receipt of other means-tested benefits paid to families, e.g. Income Support.

10. Confidentiality and Auditing

- 10.1. The 16-19 Bursary Fund is subject to the normal school auditing procedures, and records of bursary expenditure must be retained. Therefore, evidence of the student's eligibility, their individual needs assessment, and their actual participation costs will be held by the school for a period of 6 years.
- 10.2. Any applications or income assessments will be held by the school with the strictest levels of confidentiality.

APPENDIX 1 – APPLICATION FORM FOR SIXTH FORM BURSARY



Application Form for Sixth Form Bursary

Part 1: Student details

School name:			
Student name:		Date of Birth:	
Contact Address: Please enter full postal address inc. Postcode			
Parent Name & Contact Number:			

Please complete Part 2 or Part 3 to confirm your eligibility.

Part 2: Vulnerable Bursary Group	Mark (X)
Young People in Care	
Care Leavers who are living independently	
Young people <u>personally</u> in receipt of income support or Universal Credit	
Young people <u>personally</u> in receipt of Disability Living Allowance (DLA) or Personal Independence Payments (PIP) as well as Employment and Support Allowance or Universal Credit.	

Part 3: Discretionary Bursary Group	Mark (X)
Students in receipt of free school meals	
Students in exceptional financial circumstances	

If applying for Discretionary Bursary please complete Part 4, for vulnerable Bursary applications, please move onto part 5.

Part 4: Please confirm which of the following statements is correct	Mark (X)
Current household income is below £22,000	
Current household income is between £22,000 and £28,000	
Current household income above £28,000 but facing emergency exceptional circumstances	

Part 5: Please outline which supportive evidence you are providing (See Appendix 2 for recommended evidence)

Part 5: Banking details	
Applicant Name:	
Name of Bank:	Branch & Address:
Sort Code: <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/>	Account Number:

Part 6: Declaration:

I declare that the statements made on this form are true, and to the best of my knowledge and belief, are correct in every respect. I undertake to supply any additional information that may be required to verify the particulars given. I understand that if I refuse to provide information relevant to my claim, the application will not be accepted. I also undertake to inform the school of any alteration to any of the particulars in writing.

- I agree to repay the school in full and immediately any sums/resources advanced to me if the information I have given is shown to be false or deliberately misleading.
- I am aware that should my attendance, general conduct and/or punctuality drop below that which is required and expected, my grant payments can be significantly reduced, or even fully withdrawn and I agree to abide by any conditions set by the school outlined in points 6 and 9.
- I am aware that the funding covers only this school year and that I must provide confirmation in subsequent years that there has been no material change in eligibility. There is no guarantee that of funding for future years even if I am eligible for the current year.
- I am aware that there is the possibility of no award or a limited award and that all claims for purchases will require receipts which must be authorised by the Head of Sixth Form.

Students and their families should be aware that if false or incomplete information is submitted, or if they do not tell institutions about any part of their income that is relevant, the matter may be referred to the Department for Education or the police. The student and/or their family could face prosecution, and institutions will seek to recover any payments the student is not eligible for.

I have read and agree fully to the terms and conditions of this grant

I have attached original evidence as required

Signed (Student): **Date:**

Student Name:

Signed (Parent/Carer): **Date:**

Parent Name:

APPENDIX 2 – QUALIFYING EVIDENCE TO SUPPORT APPLICATION

All Applicants:

- Birth Certificate or Passport to confirm their date of birth.
- Document to confirm the student's current address, such as their bank statement or a Child Benefit letter.

For Vulnerable Bursary

Students must provide one or more of the following:

- **For students in Local Authority care or who have recently left Local Authority care:** written confirmation, such as a letter or an email, or current or previous LAC status from the relevant LA (the LA that looks after them or provides their leaving care services)
- **For students in receipt of income support:** a copy of the Income Support award notice, which must evidence that the student is entitled to the benefit in their own right, and confirm that the student can be in FE or training
- **For students in receipt of Universal Credit:** copies of the Universal Credit Award notice from the last three months, which must evidence that the student is entitled to the benefit in their own right, as well as additional documentation to confirm their independent status, e.g. a tenancy agreement in the student's name, a child benefit receipt, children's birth certificate, or utility bills
- **For students in receipt of Universal Credit or ESA and Disability Living Allowance or Personal Independence Payments:** a copy of the Universal Credit or ESA award from the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP), as well as evidence of receipt of Disability Living Allowance or Personal Independence Payment.

For Discretionary Bursary

Students applying for a discretionary bursary will need to provide the type of evidence needed to verify their household income and transport/educational costs. Evidence of Free School Meals is not required as the Local Authority provides the school with confirmation of all students granted Free School Meals.

We can accept paper or electronic copies of the supporting documents. If submitting a scan or photograph, it must be a complete and unaltered image of the underlying paper document.

Qualifying Benefit	Acceptable Evidence
Household income totals no more than £28,000	Your household's last 3 wage slips.
Universal Credit (annual take home + UC payment totalling no more than £28,000)	Your household's last 3 full universal credit statements (these can be accessed from your universal credit account)
Income Support	Letter from the benefits agency dated within the last 3 months or a current bank statement showing income support payments. Bank statements must show the account holder's name and be currently dated.
Working Tax Credit and/or Child Tax Credit (annual net income + tax credits not totalling more than £28,000)	HMRC – Tax Credit Award Letter dated within the last 12 months. Please provide ALL PAGES of this letter.
Job Seeker's Allowance (income related)	Letter from the benefits agency dated within the last 3 months. If the letter is more than 3 months old, please also provide a current bank statement showing the JSA payment(s). The bank statement must show the account holder's name and be currently dated.
Employment and Support Allowance (income related)	Letter from the benefits agency dated within the last 3 months. If the letter is more than 3 months old, please also provide a current bank statement showing the ESA payment(s). The bank statement must show the account holder's name and be currently dated.
Pension Credit	Letter from the benefits agency dated within the last 3 months or a current bank statement showing the pension credit payment(s). The bank statement must show the account holder's name and be currently dated.

General Guidance for Applicants

- All documents should be current (within the last 3 months, where possible).
- Copies are accepted, but originals may be requested for verification.
- All evidence will be treated in strict confidence.
- Deliberate understatements of income may result in payments being stopped, reclaimed and if necessary, reported to the Police as an incidence of fraud.

Further Information

- Further details and guidance is available on the government website:
<https://www.gov.uk/1619-bursary-fund>