



16-19 Bursary Fund Policy 2026-27 for Northampton School for Boys

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1. Aims and scope

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, and this policy refers to both:

- Bursaries for defined vulnerable groups
- Discretionary bursaries

This policy aims to:

- Set out clear and transparent processes for the use and allocation of 16 to 19 bursary funds
- Make sure that bursary funds are administered appropriately and fairly, with due regard to the Equality Act 2010
- Make clear to parents/carers and students the type of support that is available and how to apply for it
- Make clear to parents/carers and students the attendance and behaviour conditions for receiving the funds

2. Guidance

This policy is based on advice from the Department for Education (DfE) on the [16 to 19 bursary fund for the 2026 to 2027 academic year](#).

This policy complies with our funding agreement and articles of association.

3. Definitions

- 'In care' is defined 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)
- 'Looked after child' is defined as: a child in the care of a local authority or who is provided with accommodation by the authority in the exercise of any functions for more than 24 hours ([section 22](#) of the Children Act 1989)
- 'Care leaver' is defined as:
 - A young person aged 16 or 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
 - 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. Roles and responsibilities

4.1 The governing board

The governing board has overall responsibility for

- Approving this 16 to 19 bursary fund policy
- Monitoring the implementation of this policy
- Ensuring compliance with relevant requirements

4.2 The head of sixth form

The head of sixth form is responsible for:

- Making sure that staff are familiar with this 16 to 19 bursary fund policy
- Making sure the policy is being applied consistently
- Setting eligibility criteria for bursary funding and making sure these comply with the Equality Act 2010
- Promoting awareness of the 16 to 19 bursary fund to prospective applicants and their parents/carers

4.3 Bursary panel

The bursary panel is responsible for reviewing applications and supporting evidence in accordance with this policy.

The panel consists of:

- Head of Sixth Form
- Finance Officer

4.4 School business manager/bursar/head of finance

The school's Finance staff are responsible for ensuring that the bursary funding is accounted for accurately.

4.5 Staff

Our staff are responsible for implementing this 16 to 19 bursary fund policy consistently.

4.6 Parents/carers

Parents/carers are also expected to notify staff or the head of sixth form of:

- Any concerns or queries regarding this 16 to 19 bursary fund policy

- Any change in circumstances that might affect eligibility for bursary funding

4.7 Students

Pupils are responsible for completing the bursary application form and meeting the conditions attached to the receipt of any support from the bursary funding.

5. How we use the bursary fund

Financial support is available to eligible students from the 16 to 19 bursary fund. See sections 6, 7 and 8 below for details of our eligibility criteria.

The fund is intended to support students aged 16 to 19 in overcoming specific financial barriers to participation so they can remain in education.

There are 2 types of 16 to 19 bursaries:

- Bursaries for defined vulnerable groups; and
- Discretionary bursaries

We use the fund to provide students with support to fund:

- Transport (public transport only)
- Books
- Equipment
- Field trips that are essential to the course & other course related costs
- The costs of university applications & also attending university open days & interviews
- The costs of travel to formal work experience placements & degree apprenticeship selection events and interviews
- Cost of office dress and specialist clothing required for their courses
- Emergency meal support

Support will be provided either by placing orders on behalf of students or by reimbursing students following a request with a valid receipt.

6. Eligibility criteria for the 16 to 19 bursaries

Please note: the following eligibility criteria will be assessed **in addition** to the individual student's actual financial needs. This means:

- No student will automatically be awarded an amount of funding without an assessment of the level of actual financial need they have
- Funding provided to each eligible student is based on their actual participation needs (supported by evidence) and not a flat or fixed-rate payment that does not reflect the actual costs they face

6.1 Age

To be eligible for either bursary in the 2026 to 2027 academic year, students must be at least 16 years old but under 19 years old on 31 August 2027.

Students aged 19 or over are eligible only for a discretionary bursary (see section 6.6 below) if they:

- Are continuing on a study programme or course that they began when they were aged 16 to 18 years old (19+ continuers)
- Have an education, health and care (EHC) plan

Students aged 19 or over are not eligible for bursaries for defined vulnerable groups.

In exceptional circumstances, where students under 16 years old are on a funded 16 to 19 study programme at our school, we may use our discretion to pay bursaries to these younger students. However, if these students are enrolled at another institution that receives public funding for them, they will not be eligible for bursary funding.

Students aged under 19 enrolled on higher education qualifications are not eligible for support from the 16-19 bursary fund.

6.2 Eligible education provision

Students must be participating in provision that is subject to inspection by a public body that assures quality (e.g. Ofsted). The provision must also fall into 1 of these groups:

- Be funded directly by the DfE, or by the DfE via a local authority
- Be otherwise publicly funded and lead to a qualification (up to and including level 3) that is accredited by Ofqual or is on the DfE's [list of qualifications](#)
- Non-employed students aged 16 to 19 who are participating in a Prince's Trust Team Programme are also eligible to receive a bursary in the same way as any other student participating in an eligible, publicly funded course.

Students are not eligible if:

- They are on an apprenticeship programme
- They are participating in any waged training

Students who are studying via distance learning are not likely to require financial help from the bursary fund. If they do require financial help, we will provide support in kind, such as a travel pass to attend exams. Details of this shall be decided on a case-by-case basis.

6.3 Residency

Students must meet the residency criteria in the [DfE funding rules for 16 to 19 provision](#).

6.4 Asylum seekers

Accompanied asylum seekers under 18 with an adult relative or partner, and asylum seekers aged 18 and above are entitled to education but are not entitled to public funds. If necessary, they can apply to the Home Office for suitable housing and cash for essentials.

We will provide in-kind support such as books, equipment and a travel pass to asylum seekers who have not had asylum refused.

Unaccompanied asylum-seeking children are:

- The responsibility of the local authority
- To be treated as 'looked after' children
- Eligible for a bursary for vulnerable groups, where they have a financial need

When these students reach 18 years old, we will consider their immigration status. They will still be eligible for a bursary as a student from a defined vulnerable group if the asylum claim is in their favour and will be treated as a 'care leaver' until they reach the upper age limit.

7. Bursaries for young people in defined vulnerable groups

Students with a financial need, who meet 1 of the following 4 criteria below, in addition to the criteria outlined in sections 6.1 to 6.4 above, can apply for a bursary for vulnerable groups.

The defined vulnerable groups are students who are:

- In care (N.B. those who are privately fostered are not classed as looked after)
- Care leavers
- 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 (PIPs) in their own right, as well as Employment and Support Allowance (ESA) or UC in their own right

UC has replaced IS, as well as other benefits above, for current and future young people aged 16 to 18.

Students will be funded to reflect the amount of support they need to participate based on an assessment of the actual participation needs and costs they have.

Students who meet the criteria for a bursary for vulnerable groups are not automatically entitled to a bursary.

Students will not receive the bursary if they do not have any actual financial need (for example, because their financial needs are met from other sources and/or because they have no relevant costs). Should we refuse the application on this basis, we will discuss this with the student and their support worker/parent/carer where applicable.

Where a bursary is provided, the funds for study programmes lasting 30 weeks or more. When calculating the amount, cases will be looked at individually and the outcome based on a particular student's needs. Students will only receive the amount they actually need to participate and will not automatically their full allocation if they do not need the full amount.

We can use our discretion, on a case-by-case basis, to provide additional funds per year if it is necessary, in exceptional circumstances, for the student to remain in education. Any such additional payment will be paid either from the school's discretionary bursary allocation or the school's own funds.

If a student's study programme lasts for less than 30 weeks, this will be considered in the assessment for the bursary amount provided as they may not request as much financial support as those on longer programmes. We will also consider the number of hours involved in a student's study programme when deciding the correct bursary amount to ensure it is appropriate.

We will review the student's eligibility position each academic year. Students will only continue to receive a bursary for vulnerable groups if they continue to satisfy the criteria but must still re-apply in each academic year of study.

8. Discretionary bursaries

In addition to the criteria outlined in sections 6.1 to 6.4 above, students can apply for a discretionary bursary if their household income is below £28685.

There will be 2 bands available.

Students with a household income of less than £28685 but more than £21045 will be eligible for band 2 which is £530 for the year.

Students with a household income of less than £21045 will be eligible for band 1 which is £756.

These amounts are given as a guideline; in exceptional circumstances the school can use its discretion to provide further support for an individual student if deemed necessary.

We will review the student's eligibility position each academic year. Students will only continue to receive a discretionary bursary if they continue to satisfy the criteria.

9. Application and payment process

9.1 Applications

Applications should be submitted via the 16-19 Bursary Form, a link to this can be found on the [school website](#).

All application must be made by the bursary holder and can only be completed if signed in to their NSB school IT account.

Applications should ideally be submitted by the 11th September 2026 to allow enough time for our school to assess the overall level of demand and make discretionary awards on a fair basis. This date will be clearly stated on the application form.

However, we acknowledge that students' circumstances may change and therefore the application process will remain open for the whole school year and applications can be made at any time. Students are encouraged to speak to a member of the sixth form team if they have any questions about this.

Applicants will be kept up to date with the progress of their application via their school email. Parents will only be contacted with the initial outcome of their application.

Any enquiries about the application process should be emailed to nsb-sixthformburary@nsbtrust.school or directed either to the Head of Sixth Form, Mr Goswell, or to Mrs Jones in the Finance office.

9.2 Evidence

All applications for 16 to 19 bursaries must be supported by appropriate evidence, which we will verify. Examples of acceptable evidence we may request are:

- A copy of the UC award notice from the Department of Work and Pensions (DWP) and/or evidence of receipt of DLA or PIP, in the student's name
- Documents such as a tenancy agreement in the student's name, a child benefit receipt, birth certificate or utility bills
- Written confirmation of the student's current or previous looked-after status from the relevant local authority

9.3 Payment process

Payments are made using the following process:

- Where possible, school will make purchases on behalf of bursary students. These will be entered onto the student's bursary account as a 'purchase request'. Students will need to email a link of order requests to the 16-19 Bursary email address (nsb-sixthformbursary@nsbtrust.school) being mindful to specify the exact specification/sizes etc for ordering.
- Items purchased by the student as a 'reimbursement request' will require a valid receipt/order confirmation to be uploaded via email to the 16-19 Bursary email address (nsb-sixthformbursary@nsbtrust.school) which will then be authorised by the bursary panel. If authorised the corresponding amount will be credited to the bursary holder's bank account provided on application.

Cash payments cannot be made under any circumstances.

Bank transfers can only be made to the bursary holder's account and cannot be made to other accounts e.g. those belonging to parents.

We reserve the right to refuse any order or reimbursement if the request does not meet the conditions for the receipt of bursary payments (see section 9.4 below). If purchasing items of significant value we always encourage students to speak to their Assistant Year Team Director or Head of Sixth Form to check their eligibility before making a purchase.

9.4 Conditions for the receipt of bursary payments

Payments of the bursary are conditional on students' attendance, behaviour and effort which will be closely monitored by the student's form tutor and Assistant Head of Year. If there are concerns regarding attendance, behaviour or effort this will be discussed with the student and may result in bursary support being withheld.

All students are required to agree to the terms of this policy via the application form at the point of application.

10. Change in circumstances

If there are changes in circumstances that may affect eligibility for a bursary, applicants and/or parents/carers must notify the school without delay.

11. Record keeping and audit

The school will maintain comprehensive and accurate records relating to the 16 to 19 bursary fund. These records will be kept securely and be readily available for audit purposes. Records will include, but are not limited to:

- Copies of application forms and supporting evidence
- Proof that students meet eligibility criteria
- Records of 'zero bursary' students
- Details of assessment decisions and rationale for awards
- Records of all payments made to students, including dates, value and purpose
- Copies of documents signed by students to give formal agreement to the conditions of payment
- Evidence of student attendance and progress monitoring

Records will be retained for 6 academic years after the end of the academic year in which the student completed their programme.

12. Unspent funds

Funding for bursary funding cannot be carried forward by the school for more than 1 year. Unspent funding must be reported to the DfE by the school using the [customer help centre](#), specifying the amount of funding and the year(s) it relates to, no later than 31 March each year. The DfE will recover all unspent funds.

13. Monitoring arrangements

This policy will be monitored by the head of sixth form at the beginning of each academic year.

14. Complaints or Appeals

Where any student or parent is unhappy with how we have managed their application for bursary funding or the support that has been provided, they are free to make a complaint or appeal as per the schools complaints policy.

Policy Review Date: September 2026

Next Review Date: September 2027