



STAFFORD

SIXTH FORM

Stafford 14-19 Partnership

16-19 Bursary Policy

2026-27

Signature: M Winkle Name: M Winkle Date: 24/06/2026

Chair of Partnership Governance Forum

Signature: M Mason Name: M Mason Date: 24/06/2026

Chair of Partnership Executive Group

To be reviewed annually

CHANGE CONTROL

Date	Issue	Details of Change
	1.0	Initial Approved Version Controlled Document

Stafford 14 – 19 Partnership

16 – 19 Bursary Fund Policy 2026-27

Introduction

Sixth Form students who need financial support to stay in education, can apply to their school for help from the 16-19 Bursary Fund. The 16–19 Bursary Fund can be used to help with costs students face to attend education during the academic year. Examples of what a bursary could be used for include:

- Essential equipment and materials (such as books and lab coats)
- Essential course related events and trips
- Travel to university/college open days or work experience
- UCAS application fees
- Food (where students cannot receive Free School Meals)
- Transport to and from school
- Childcare costs (for students in receipt of Care to Learn)

Funding is not intended to support extra-curricular or non-compulsory activities that are not essential to a student's study program, or to provide learning support such as counselling, mentoring or extra tutoring. It is also not intended to provide living costs support.

Types of Bursary

Two types of bursary are available:

- A bursary of up to £1,200 per year may be available to eligible students in defined vulnerable groups.
- A discretionary bursary may be available to other students, who meet the discretionary bursary eligibility criteria.

Eligibility

Students must meet the following eligibility criteria to be considered for a bursary grant:

a) **All students:**

- be within one of the following age groups:

- Be over 16 and under 19 years of age on 31st August 2026, or
- Be aged 19 or over, but continuing with a course they began aged 16 – 18, or
- Be over 19 with and Education, Health and Care Plan

(Students aged 19 or over are only eligible for the Discretionary Bursary.)

- meet the ESFA's residency criteria (schools can check this)
- be an asylum seeker who has not had their application for asylum refused or be an unaccompanied asylum-seeking child up to the ages detailed above
- be enrolled at their chosen school

b) Vulnerable Groups Bursary

To be considered for a vulnerable groups bursary, students must meet the criteria of section a) and be included in groups identified as most vulnerable by the government:

- in care,
- care leavers,
- 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 a child or partner
- receiving Disability Living Allowance or Personal Independence Payments in their own right as well as Employment and Support Allowance or Universal Credit in their own right

c) Discretionary Bursary

To be considered for a discretionary bursary, students must meet the criteria of section a) and have a household income of up to £30,000.

Important Notes

- Students who meet the criteria for bursaries are not automatically entitled to a bursary if they do not have financial needs and/or their financial needs are covered from other sources. There is a possibility of no award or a limited award.
- Accompanied asylum seeking children may be considered for in-kind support only. Unaccompanied children will to be considered for a bursary for vulnerable groups until they reach the age limits detailed above. Asylum and immigration status will be considered in making a decision regarding bursary support.

- In the event that a school does not receive any or sufficient applicants who meet the income level detailed in the discretionary bursary eligibility criteria which will enable it to distribute its bursary funding allocation, that school may decide to make funding available to the next most suitable candidates. In this circumstance the school in question will release further details and invite applications.

Applying for a bursary grant

Information about how to apply for a 16–19 bursary will be available from the head of sixth of the student's chosen school, via school websites and the Stafford 14-19 Partnership website.

Students who need any additional information, guidance or support with regard to bursary grants should contact their Head of Sixth for assistance.

All discussions about and applications for bursary grants will be treated with the strictest confidence.

Students who wish to be considered for a bursary grant must complete a Stafford 14-19 Partnership Bursary Grant Application Form and return it to their Head of Sixth Form by Friday 11th September 2026.

Students who are applying for a bursary grant for the first time, or whose household circumstances have changed since their last application must complete a 'New applicants/Change of circumstances' application form. Application forms must be accompanied by the documents needed to support the application; a list of acceptable documents is provided on the application form. An assessment can only be made if the documents are supplied.

Students who have previously received a bursary grant and whose household circumstances have not changed since the previous application, must complete an 'Application where household circumstances have not changed' form. Additional documentation is not required with this form, unless it is specifically needed by the school, in which case the school will contact the applicant to request it

Receipt of bursary funding does not affect receipt of other means-tested benefits paid to families, such as Income Support, Jobseeker's Allowance, Child Benefit, Working Tax Credit, Housing Benefit or, generally, Universal Credit. (Please refer to the Universal Credit section of the full guidance for more detail about this benefit).

If a student is in receipt of Disability Living Allowance (or Personal Independence Payments) and Education and Support Allowance, parents can no longer receive certain household/family benefits for that student, such as child benefit.

The student's bank account details must be included on the application form so that any agreed payments can be made directly to the student's own bank account.

Students who have received a bursary grant in the previous school year must apply again for the next school year.

Should a student have a change of circumstance or have an emergency need at any time, they should contact their head of sixth for information, support and guidance.

Awards Payments and Appeals

Applications will be assessed at the student's school within 2 weeks of receipt.

Schools will make their decisions about whether a student will be granted a bursary and the amount to be granted based on the following considerations:

- the eligibility of the student for the grant they have applied for
- assessment of the student's individual circumstances and their actual financial need; needs will vary from student to student, and a variety of factors such as household income, the distance travelled to school and the requirements of study programmes will be considered
- the amount of funding the school has available from which it can make awards; schools only have a limited funds available from which awards can be made

The Head of Sixth of the applicant's school will work with the School Business Manager to approve applications. Approved applications will be authorised by the Headteacher of the applicant's school or their nominated officer(s). Applicants will be advised of the outcome of their application in writing.

Where bursaries are granted, these will be paid in-kind wherever possible. Where a cash payment is granted, this may be paid in one or more instalments. Where a grant of money is made, this will be paid directly into the student's own bank account and dates for when the payment(s) can be expected will be advised in the communication confirming the outcome of the application.

If a student's application has not been processed to their satisfaction, they should follow their school's own complaints procedure.

Conditions of bursary grants

Bursary grants are made on the understanding that recipients will meet the standards that they have agreed to in the Learning Agreement they have signed. This Agreement sets out the learner's obligations regarding attendance and expected standards of behaviour and effort.

In line with Stafford 14-19 Partnership Disciplinary Policy, payments will be reduced or withdrawn as a result of a breach of the Learning Agreement or school's disciplinary policy.

- Attendance: payments will be reduced pro-rata for any period of unauthorised absence, or any period of absence over one week.
- Behaviour: At the discretion of the Head of Sixth, payments may be withheld if learners breach the disciplinary code and are in receipt of a Referral.

Where a payment is withheld, the student's Head of Sixth will discuss the matter with the student and any reduction or withdrawal of funding will be confirmed in writing. Where a decision has been taken that a student should not receive a payment, the learner has a right of appeal, using the school's normal complaints procedure.

For further confidential information, advice and support regarding bursary funding:

	<u>Blessed William Howard High School</u> Head of Sixth: Rachel Broomhall Telephone Number: <u>01785 244236</u> Email: rab@bwh.staffs.sch.uk
	<u>King Edward VI High School Stafford</u> Head of Sixth: Dave Abel Telephone Number: <u>01785 258546</u> Email: abel.d@kevi.org.uk
	<u>Sir Graham Balfour School</u> Head of Sixth: Regan Jones Telephone Number: <u>01785 223490</u> Email: rjones@sirgrahambalfour.staffs.sch.uk
	<u>Weston Road Academy</u> Head of Sixth: Chris Gibbard Telephone Number: <u>01785 413600</u> Email: cgibbard@westonroad.staffs.sch.uk

Further reading:

For student and parents: <https://www.gov.uk/1619-bursary-fund>

For schools <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/16-to-19-bursary-fund-guidance/16-to-19-bursary-fund-guide-2026-to-2027>