



Inspire Education Trust

Together we achieve, individually we grow

Sixth Form Bursary Policy

Blue Coat CE Secondary School

Policy Date: February 2026

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Document History

Version	Status		Date	Author	Summary Changes
V1			February 2026	Jen Davoile	

Introduction

At Blue Coat Church of England School, our vision is “Living life in all its fullness”. We exist to equip our students to ‘live life in all its fullness’ by providing excellent education, which is distinctively Christian and inclusive of all. At the heart of this education are the values of Care, Hard Work, Respect, Integrity and Servanthood, working Together for the good of all individuals, the school and wider communities. The conviction that we are created and sustained by God for living together in families and communities is at the root of our dedication to educating for life together.

Bursary Overview

The bursary fund is intended to help students with the essential costs of participating in their study programme, to help with the cost of essential books or equipment or with the cost of travelling to school or college, for example. The bursary 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.

What is the 16-19 Bursary Fund?

The fund is made available by the government via the Department for Education (DfE) to provide assistance to students whose access to, or completion of, education is inhibited by financial constraints or barriers.

This policy is based on advice from DfE: [16 to 19 Bursary Fund guide: 2025 to 2026 - GOV.UK](#)

Level of Support from the 16-19 Bursary Fund

A student must be aged 16 or over but under 19 on 31 August to be eligible for help from the bursary fund in the up-and-coming academic year.

The only exceptions for the discretionary bursary are students aged 19 and who are continuing on a study programme they began aged 16 to 18 (19+ continuers) or students aged 19 or over who have an Education, Health, and Care (EHC) Plan.

Students must satisfy residency criteria in the DfE funding for eligibility Bursaries from the fund will be awarded as follows:

- **Vulnerable Bursary**

A bursary of up to £1,200 per year will be awarded to students who meet one of the following criteria:

- Students who are in care, including unaccompanied asylum-seeking children (UASC)
- Students who are care leavers
- Students who receive Income Support (IS) or Universal Credit (UC) in their own right because they are financially supporting themselves (and a dependent, such as a child or partner)
- Students who receive Disability Living Allowance (DLA) or Personal Independence Payment (PIP) *in their own right*, and also receive Employment and Support Allowance (ESA) or Universal Credit (UC) in their own right

Evidence for this tier must include either:

- written confirmation from the local authority of the student’s current or previous Looked-After status, **or**
- a letter from the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) confirming the benefits the

- o young person receives.
 - o AND confirmation that the young person is allowed to participate in education/training (because some benefit claimants cannot)
- **Discretionary Bursary**
The school receives an annual allocation from the Department for Education (DfE) to support students who face financial barriers to participation in education. Awards are made based on individual financial need, priority groups, and the availability of funds. Students will be notified of the outcome of their application.

The DfE requires that discretionary bursaries:

- o must not be awarded automatically to students based on category alone
- o must be based on an assessment of actual financial need
- o must be targeted at students who need the most help

The criteria below reflect these requirements.

Category 1 - Indicators of Low Household Income (including FSM eligibility):

- o Students who are currently eligible for Free School Meals (FSM), or whose household income is typically below £25,000, may be considered for support. FSM status is used as an indicator of potential financial hardship but does not provide automatic entitlement to a bursary. Required evidence may include:
 - A Local Authority letter confirming FSM entitlement, or
 - Data provided directly to the school by the Local Authority
 - Additional evidence requested to assess financial need

Category 2 - Households Receiving Means Tested Benefits (not eligible for FSM):

- o Students who are not eligible for FSM but live in households receiving means tested benefits may also be considered. Applications in this category will be assessed after Category 1 and are subject to remaining funds. Required evidence (from the previous tax year):
 - Tax Credit Award Notice (if applicable)
 - Universal Credit (UC) award notice
 - Evidence of income related benefits from the Department for Work and Pensions
 - A letter from Jobcentre Plus confirming benefits received
 - Information on the number of dependent children in the household may be taken into account

Students who face extreme, or unexpected, financial hardship.

These awards may be given to students, at any point in the school year, who find that their circumstances, or those of their parents, have changed after the initial bursary application procedure takes place. Payments for this category will be dependent on monies remaining in the school's Bursary Fund for the current year. Applications can be made via an online application. Discretion for awarding this category lies with the panel.

Reviewed by: Jen Davoile February 2026

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Approved by Directors: 02.03.26

Signed:



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