

Beths Grammar School - 16-19 Bursary Scheme



This Policy Statement covers the academic year September 2024 to July 2025

What is the 16-19 Bursary Scheme?

The Government allocates funds to educational institutions to give to students who need financial help to stay in education. Beths Grammar School has been given a fixed budget which it will use to help those students overcome their individual financial challenges.

The Bursary is an annual award, funds awarded to students by purchases made on the student's behalf or re-imbursements into the students bank account. Subject to the completion of a Bursary Application Form and provision of documentary evidence.

No student will automatically be awarded funding without an assessment of the level of financial need they have.

There are two types of bursaries

- **Vulnerable Bursary** – An award of **up to** £1,200 per year for those students defined as a vulnerable group (definition below).
- **Discretionary Bursary** - made at the discretion of the school and dependent on household income. Financial assistance will be provided for a specific educational purpose (e.g. books, equipment, uniform, transport, field trips, University interviews, Open Days).

We must ensure that funding reaches those students who are most in need of financial support. Bursary cannot be used for:

- supporting general household income or a student's general living costs
- 'block' payment for books, equipment etc.,
- rewarding attendance or achievement
- supporting extra-curricular activities where these are not essential to the students' study programme
- providing learning support e.g., counselling, mentoring or extra tutoring
- The purchase or reimbursement of earphones, airpods or headphones. In line with our mobile phone policy.
- The purchase or reimbursement of items being sold on re-selling sites. for example but not limited to vinted, Depop.
- The purchase or reimbursement of high end designer/branded clothing or footwear.
- The purchase or reimbursement of a single item of clothing or footwear over the price of £130.

Am I eligible?

- You must be aged 16 or over but under 19 as at 31 August 2024 to be eligible for help from the bursary fund in this 2024-2025 academic year.
- If you are aged 19 or over, you are only eligible to receive a Discretionary Bursary if you are continuing a study programme you began aged 16 to 18 OR have an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP)
- You must meet the residency criteria as set out in ESFA Funding Regulations. This information can be found via the following link:- <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/advice-funding-regulations-for-post-16-provision>

Generally, accompanied asylum seeking children (those under 18 with an adult relative or partner) and those aged 18 and above are entitled to education, but not to public funds. Unaccompanied asylum-seeking children are treated as looked after children and are eligible for a bursary for vulnerable groups ('in care' group) where they have a financial need

Which Group?

Vulnerable Group Bursary

You are eligible if you are in one of the following categories:

- You are in Local Authority care
- You have recently left Local Authority care (a 'care leaver')
- You are receiving Income Support, or Universal Credit in your own right because you are financially supporting yourself or financially supporting yourself and someone who is dependent on you and living with you (e.g. a child or partner)
- You are receiving **both** Disability Living Allowance or Personal Independence Payments in your own right **and** Employment and Support Allowance or Universal Credit in your own right

It is important to note, however, that students who meet the criteria for bursaries for vulnerable groups are not automatically entitled to a bursary if they do not have financial needs and/or their financial needs are covered from other sources.

Discretionary Bursary

- You are eligible if you are facing financial challenges in participating in your education e.g. meeting the costs of books, equipment etc.
- You may also be eligible if you are entitled to free school meals.
- Household income will be used to help establish the amount of support that will be awarded.
- Awards will vary from student to student as per ESFA funding regulations <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/advice-funding-regulations-for-post-16-provision>

Application Process

- A student can apply for a bursary any time during the academic year. However, most funds are assigned during the autumn term. Any applications received after the allocation of funds will be dependent on the amount of funds remaining.
- Students must (re)apply for a bursary each academic year.
- All applications must be made via the online application form – <https://bethsbursary.applicaa.com/1>.

What forms and supporting documentary evidence will I need to provide?

- 2024-25 Bursary Application Form. **Fully completed** and submitted **online** with **all** relevant supporting documentation (see below)
- Vulnerable Bursary Group
 - written Local Authority confirmation as to your current or previous care status **OR**
 - your DWP letter setting out the benefit(s) to which you are entitled. For students in receipt of Universal Credit, other documents may be required (e.g. tenancy agreement)
- Discretionary Bursary

Examples of evidence that may be requested to assess eligibility and determine household income include (but are not limited to):

- Tax Credit Award Notice (TCAN) for 2024-2025 Tax Year
- Copies of last 3 months statements for Universal Credit
- DWP Benefits Letter
- Universal Credit award notice

Allocation of Bursary Funds

As the level of bursary funding provided to Beths is a fixed amount from the Government, the fund needs to be administered as effectively as possible. We must be able to show we comply with the Government's funding regulations at any audit.

All initial applications received by the 30th September 2024 deadline will be assessed at the same time and the bursary amount awarded to each student will be based on individual financial needs and the number of eligible applications received.

A small amount of the budget will be held back for any students who find their circumstances have significantly changed within the academic year.

Funds can be allocated in exceptional and urgent circumstances to students who do not meet the income threshold criteria. If you are having problems attending school due to financial circumstances, then please ensure you discuss your situation with Mrs Foley or Mrs Adeoye (Head of Year 12 & 13)

Do I need my own Bank Account?

- Yes. Funds will be reimbursed into the student's own bank account. Students can open a basic bank account at age 16.

How often will I receive funds?

- Funds are reimbursed on the basis of requests made or purchases made on behalf of the student where there is deemed to be an educational need.

Are there conditions attached to payments?

- Deductions to Bursary allocation will be made if standards of attendance, punctuality and behaviour are not met.
- Allocated funds will be withdrawn if a student has been absent for a period of 4 continuous weeks or more (excluding holidays).
- Allocated funds will be withdrawn if a student has decided to withdraw from their study programme.
- Allocated funds will be withdrawn and any funds or purchases that have been paid incorrectly will be recovered if it is found that any information given was false or incomplete. This might also result in a referral to the police with the possibility of the student and/or their family facing prosecution.

Can I appeal if my application is unsuccessful?

- If your application is unsuccessful, the reasons will be explained to you (e.g. incomplete application, insufficient documentary evidence, above threshold for financial assistance).
- If, following informal discussions, you wish to make a formal complaint, please following the guidance set out in the school's Complaints Policy (accessed via the school website).

Who do I contact if I have queries?

- Please contact the Bursary admin team (bursary@beths.bexley.sch.uk)
- Further Government Guidance via <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/16-to-19-education-financial-support-for-students>

Confidentiality of Information

Our school aims to ensure that all personal data collected about students and parents and other individuals is collected, stored, and processed in accordance with Data Protection Law and the School's GDPR Policy.

January 2025