Coombe Wood School

16-19 Bursary Fund Policy

Coombe Wood School is part of the Greenshaw Learning Trust.
The Greenshaw Learning Trust is a charitable company limited by guarantee registered in England and Wales, company number 7633694, registered at Greenshaw Learning Trust, ORU Sutton, Throwley Way, Sutton, SM1 4AF.

Coombe Wood School 2026-2027

16-19 Bursary Fund Policy

Policy Area

Key Document

Author

Finance Officer

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Statement of intent

At Coombe wood School our motto 'per ardua ad summa' means 'through difficulties to the heights'. Students attending our sixth form need to reach those heights and we need to help them through the difficulties. We know some students face financial difficulties which hinder their ability to do well and so our aim is to help them overcome this specific barrier while they remain in our sixth form by promoting the 16 – 19 Bursary Fund.

We are dedicated to:

- Distributing 16-19 bursaries via a fair and equal process that is transparent, accountable and easily understood.
- Ensuring that information regarding the application, award and administration of 16-19 bursary is publicly available via the school website and from the sixth form administrator at coombe wood school.
- Widening access to, and participation in, 16-19 education.
- Monitoring and reviewing our policies to ensure effectiveness.
- Setting high targets and objectives to develop a culture of continuous improvement.
- Ensuring adequate resources are available to implement policies, as much as is reasonably practicable.
- Sharing and acquiring best practice through partnerships with neighbouring settings.

Overview of the 16 – 19 Bursary Fund

The Department for Education (DfE), are the body responsible for funding the education and training of 16–19-year-olds. The 16 – 19 Bursary Fund provides support to help students overcome specific barriers while in education. Coombewood School is regulated by the DfE in the administration and management of the 16 – 19 Bursary Fund. The policy has due regard for the relevant legislation and statutory guidelines, but not limited to DfE 16 – 19 Bursary Fund Guide 2026 to 2027 click here to read further and the Equality Act 2010.

This policy works in conjunction with Coombewood School' Attendance policy, Behaviour policy, Complaint Procedure policy and the Data Protection policy.

There are two types of bursaries available:

- Vulnerable Bursary is available to specific students who meet the eligibility criteria and have been identified as most in need as defined in the vulnerable group as set out by the DfE to receive up to £1200. Further information on eligibility criteria can be found on the next page.
- Discretionary Bursary is available to all students in our sixth form and the fund is awarded to students who meet the school's eligibility criteria as set out in this policy. The eligible student can request to use the bursary award to meet their needs to cover the cost of travel, books, equipment. The student can make a request to the school, for consideration, if the request is required to meet their educational needs staying within the DfE guidelines.

Eligibility Criteria: bursaries for vulnerable groups

I. **Age** - A student must be aged 16 or over but under 19 years on 31 August before the academic year in question to be eligible for help from the bursary fund for this academic year. (Students aged 19 or over on 31 August 2026 are only eligible if they have an Education, Health and Care (EHC) Plan or are 19+ continuers).

II. **Residency** - Students must have the legal right to be resident in the United Kingdom at the start of their study.

III. **Defined vulnerable group** are students who are:

- in care
- care leavers
- receiving legacy benefits such as Income Support (IS) if still applicable, 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 (PIP) in their own right as well as Employment and Support Allowance (ESA) or UC in their own right

IV. **Evidence of eligibility** –

- For students who are in care or a care leaver, written confirmation of their current or previous looked-after status from the relevant local authority – the local authority looks after them or provides their leaving care services. The evidence could be a letter or an email but must be clearly from the local authority.
- For students in receipt of IS or UC, a copy of the IS or UC award notice. This must clearly state the claim is in the student's name/confirm they are entitled to the benefits in their own right. The evidence must not state any conditions that prevent them from participating in further education or training. For students in receipt of UC, then the school must also see a document such as a tenancy agreement in the student's name, a child benefit receipt, children's birth certificates, utility bills and so on.
- For students receiving UC/ESA and Disability Living Allowance (DLA) and Personal Independence Payments (PIP), a copy of their UC claim from DWP. Evidence of receipt of DLA or PIP must also be provided.
- Students applying for the first time must complete an application form and provide relevant evidence. Any student previously in receipt of the bursary fund may be asked to complete a new application form providing current evidence or will be asked to sign and date a self-declaration form to confirm their household circumstances are unchanged. The Finance Officer will inform those students on a case-by-case basis.

We may decide that although a student may be eligible for a bursary because they are in one or more of the defined vulnerable groups, they do not have any actual financial needs. This might be because their financial needs are already met and/or because they have no relevant costs. We may refuse a student's application on this basis.

Students will only receive the amount they actually need to participate in their studies and will not automatically be awarded £1,200 if they do not need the full amount.

Eligibility Criteria: discretionary bursaries

I. **Age** - A student must be aged 16 or over but under 19 years on 31 August before the academic year in question to be eligible for help from the bursary fund for this academic year.

II. **Residency** - Students must have the legal right to be resident in the United Kingdom at the start of their study.

III. **Gross Household income** –

- Gross household income is less than £16,190 per annum. The parents are in receipt of benefits and evidence that the student received free school meals in Year 11 or Year 12.
- Gross household income is more than £16,190 – less than £20,817
- If it is more than £20,817 less than £32,000
- If you have No Recourse to Public Funds capital threshold £22700 per annum – no money will be given only items in kind

IV. **Evidence of eligibility** –

- Please see appendix 1. 16 – 19 Bursary Fund Overview
- Students applying for the first time must complete an application form and provide relevant evidence. Any student previously in receipt of the bursary fund may be asked to complete a new application form providing current evidence or will be asked to sign and date a self-declaration form to confirm their household circumstances are unchanged. The Finance Officer will inform those students on a case-by-case basis.

Financial Needs

Students will need to provide a list of items they will require financial assistance for the school's consideration. The student will need to explain why they need the items, which will enable them to attend sixth form and participate in their studies. Funding will be considered for:

- Travel cost based on the distance travelled by the student to attend CWS sixth form. The Sixth form is set up with TFL for the 18+ TFL Oyster Zip card. You can request consideration for financial support for the 18+ card on your application form.
- Please check the statutory transport duty for your local authority. Each local authority must publish an annual transport statement that sets out the arrangements they will make to facilitate participation in education for students aged 16 – 19.
- Textbooks
- Uniform to meet the sixth form dress code for one suit, a pair of shoes, and three shirts or blouses. The maximum total spend on uniform is £200.
- Trips / visits that are essential part of achieving the student's course subject qualification.
- Travel cost to attend university open days or interviews. Each request will need to be preapproved and authorised by Head of 6th Form. See the Sixthform administrator for further details.

- Specialist equipment such as, scientific calculator or a graphical calculator. We do not accept requests for purchase of a laptop or printers, ink cartridges nor software programmes.
- Meals provisions – will only be provided on a short-term basis in a severe emergency situation. If the student will have to provide evidence of eligibility for free meals in post 16 education.

The school will either purchase the items for the student to use for the length of time of their studies or make a BAC payment to the student's bank account. Any items purchased by the school will have to be returned at the end of the student's study.

The bursary fund is not intended to provide learning support, counselling or mentoring, or to support extra-curricular activities where it is not an essential part of the student's studies.

Conditions

Students are expected to satisfy the following conditions:

- The student's level of attendance is expected to be above 95% and 96% punctuality.
- Unless there are satisfactory mitigating circumstances.
- The school reserves the right to withdraw funding if attendance falls below 95%
- Prolonged absence must be supported by medical evidence (if attendance falls below 95%)
- The student must be up-to-date with all work commitments
- The student must not have broken the terms of the sixth form Home School Agreement Contract or the Behaviour policy

Commitment to Raising Awareness of the Bursary Fund

The school will bring to the attention of students the 16 – 19 Bursary Policy in the following ways:

- Publish the 16 – 19 Bursary Fund policy and application form on the 6th Form page of the school's webpage
- On the welcome letter
- On Induction Day
- Insert in the Home School Agreement
- Information posters in the sixth form block
- Contact any students who were in receipt of free school meal in Year 11 or have an EHC plan
- Send reminder emails in the summer term to current bursary students to reapply ● Provide Head of Year 12 & 13 bursary application forms for any student wishing to apply.
- Provide Director of sixth form application forms for any urgent application.

Application Process

I. Students must complete an application form whether for the Vulnerable or Discretionary Bursary fund as soon as they start sixth form in the first 3 weeks of September, along with all the supporting documentation

II. In-year application forms will be considered from students whose circumstances have changed and are in need of financial assistance. This is subject to remaining funds being available. The 1619 Bursary is funded every year via the Department for Education.

III. Any student previously in receipt of the bursary fund may be asked to complete a new application form providing current evidence or will be asked to sign and date a self-declaration form to confirm their household circumstances are unchanged. The sixth form administrator will inform those students on a case-by-case basis.

IV. All application forms and supporting documentations will be assessed and eligible students will be awarded bursary funds according to their needs. Students will be sent an award letter.

V. For students who may need support when faced with exceptional circumstances during the year that may impact their ability to participate can submit an application

VI. Applicates not eligible will be sent a letter explaining why and invited to a meeting.

Appeal Process

There will be application forms which the school will assess do not meet the eligibility criteria for any of the 16-19 Bursary Funds. Students are welcome to make an appeal to the Head of Sixth Form in the first instance explaining why they need the bursary fund, outlining the specific circumstances with supporting documentation.

Further appeals should be made using the Trust Complaints Policy, which is available from the school's website.

Fraud

Should it become known that false/incomplete information was given at the time of applying or thereafter, then we will investigate. If fraud is identified, then we will immediately notify the DfE and withdraw all funds from the student.

Recycling Bursary funds

Coombewood School will always refer to the DfE guidelines on how and when bursary funds can be reused, returned to the DfE or accrued. Please refer to the DfE 16 – 19 Bursary Fund Guide 2026 to 2027.

How We Handle Your Data

All data will be handled confidentially and stored securely in line with our Data Protection Policy which complies with the Data Protection Act 2018. Should you require further information you can contact the school office or our Data Protection Officer:

The GLT Data Protection Officer is: SchoolPro TLC
Address: Unit 1b Aerotech Business Park, Bamfurlong Lane, Cheltenham, United Kingdom, GL51 6TU
Email: DPO@schoolpro.uk
Web: www.schoolpro.uk
Lead Contact: Ben Craig

Appendix 1. 16 – 19 Bursary Fund Documentations

BURSARY GROUP	ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA	DOCUMENTATIONS REQUIRED
For defined vulnerable groups	The defined vulnerable groups are students 16 – 19 who are in: ● In care or a care leaver ● Receiving income support or universal credit in their own name as they financially support themselves. ● Receiving Disability Living Allowance (DLA) or Personal Independence Payments (PIP) or Employment Support Allowance (ESA) In some cases, a student may meet the eligibility criteria for the defined vulnerable group; however, they are not in need of the financial support or may not have any relevant costs.	● In care or a care leaver are required to provide written confirmation of their current or previous status from the relevant local authority. Either a letter or email clearly showing it from the local authority. ● If you are 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, as well as evidence of your receipt of Disability Living Allowance or Personal Independence Payment.
Discretionary Bursary Fund	For students aged 16 – 19 Have a gross household income less than £16,190 OR Are entitled to Free School Meals	Evidence of household income such as: ● P60 AND last 3 months' payslips ● Self-employment income evidence ● Benefit award notice from DWP dated in the last 3 months. Older notices accepted **if** accompanied with recent bank statements naming benefit received ● Working Tax Credit/Child Tax Credit award notice ● Universal – 3 most recent monthly award statements to estimate assumed income for the full year ● Company or private pension statement if in receipt ● Support under VI of the Immigration Act 1999 award letter Certified letter from the Local Authority regarding Free School Meals
Discretionary Bursary Fund	For students aged 16 – 19 Have a gross household income more than £16,190 and less than £20,817	Evidence of household income such as: ● P60 AND last 3 months' payslips ● Self-employment income evidence ● Benefit award notice from DWP dated in the last 3 months. Older notices accepted **if** accompanied with recent bank statements naming benefit received

Discretionary Bursary Fund	For students 16 – 19 Have a gross household income more than £20,817 and less than £32,000. No Recourse to Public Funds capital threshold £22700 per annum – no money will be given only items in kind	● Working Tax Credit/Child Tax Credit award notice ● Universal – 3 most recent monthly award statements to estimate assumed income for the full year ● Company or private pension statement if in receipt ● Support under VI of the Immigration Act 1999 award letter