

Policy Statement – 16-19 Bursary Fund 2026/7 Academic Year



Approved by SLT: 15 September 2026

Review: May 2027

Purpose

The bursary scheme exists to provide financial support to remove barriers to participation in Post 16 Learning. The college has a cash-limited fund, allocated by the Department for Education, which will be used wherever possible to provide support to those most in need in order to enable students to continue and complete their course. Funding is dependent on the continuation of this national scheme.

Types of Support Available

Two types of award are available and students must meet any of the criteria shown (providing documentary evidence where required) in order to be eligible.

Award for Vulnerable Learners: The following learners may be eligible to receive a maximum bursary of £1200 a year - Children/Young people in Care; Care Leavers; Young People in receipt of Income Support or Universal Credit because they are financially supporting themselves or themselves and someone dependent on them and living with them; and Disabled Young People in receipt of 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.

Discretionary Awards

Due to the limited funds available, Discretionary Awards will be targeted at those who are facing the greatest financial hardship. The following priority groups will be used to manage applications:

Priority Group 1: Learners in receipt of Free School Meals (FSM). To be eligible for FSM the family must be in receipt of one of the following benefits:

- Income Support
- Income-based Jobseekers Allowance
- Income-related Employment and Support Allowance
- Support under Part VI of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999
- The guaranteed element of State Pension Credit
- Universal Credit (household income restrictions apply)

Priority Group 2: Learners who are not in receipt of Free School Meals but who are from a low income family who receive the following state benefit:

- Child Tax Credit/Working Tax Credit
- Universal Credit with household take-home pay of less than £1,500 per month (3 month average)

Priority Group 3: Learners who are not in receipt of Free School Meals but who are from a low income family and can demonstrate that they have:

- Household take-home pay of less than £30,000

Evidence of entitlement

If students have a current entitlement to FSM, the College requires no further evidence to support a Bursary application. If students are not entitled to FSM, evidence will be required to support an application to the 16-19 Bursary Fund. Acceptable evidence for 2026/27 applications will be the Universal Credit Monthly Award for 3 consecutive months between April and September 2026, the 2025/26 Tax Credit Award, or other evidence of take-home pay for all working parents/carers in the household. Originals **must** be submitted with this Bursary application form. They will be returned once we have noted the contents.

Discretionary Awards will be used to help learners meet costs related to participation in their individual course of study, for example transport, books, equipment, materials, essential trips and overseas visits, meals whilst attending their course etc.

DCC Post 16 Transport

Devon County Council does not provide transport for all students over the age of 16. You may request a place on a school bus if a seat is available, but this will be at a cost of approx £600, which might exceed the cost of public transport. Whatever arrangements are made, the Bursary can contribute to the costs depending on category and eligibility.

DCC Transport Information Website <https://new.devon.gov.uk/educationandfamilies/guide/post-16-transport>

If seeking support with transport costs, students should provide details of the costs they will incur, either by payment to DCC or by means of public transport.

Application Process

The completed application form and supporting evidence should be returned to the sixth form office **by Friday 2nd October 2026**. In exceptional circumstances, later applications will be considered if all available funds have not already been disbursed. All applications will be acknowledged, and students advised of the outcome within three weeks of receipt.

Assessment & Terms of Payment

Successful applicants will be issued with details of the level of award made and the terms and conditions that apply.

To receive monetary payments, applicants must have a bank account in their own name.

Payment Dates

Payments to students accounts will normally be made on the following dates. Other dates will be considered and accommodated in an emergency.

- w/b 9th November
- w/b 22nd February
- w/b 7th June

Attendance and Behaviour Conditions

Learning progress will be assessed against the following criteria:

1. Completion of relevant coursework and for assignments on time.
2. High levels (over 95%) of attendance and participation.
3. Consistent effort and commitment for Post-16 education.

Appeals

Appeals regarding the outcome of an application or the withholding of payments should be made in writing to the Head of Sixth Form. Upon receipt of the appeal an appointment will be made for the student to discuss their appeal with the Head of Sixth Form. If this appeal is not upheld, you have the right to have your appeal heard by the Principal and a member of the governing body and their decision will be final.

Fraud

Students found to make fraudulent claims will be required to refund all payments received and will receive either a fixed term or permanent exclusion from Sidmouth College.

Definitions

For the purposes of the 16 to 19 Bursary Fund, the definitions are:

“children/young people in care” means:

- 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). Section 22 of the Children Act 1989 defines the term ‘looked after child’

“care leavers” means:

- either young people aged 16 and 17 who were 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 who is aged 18 or above who was looked after prior to becoming 18 for a period of 13 weeks consecutively (or periods of 13 weeks), which began after the age of 14 and ended after the age of 16.

Date of Policy Review May 2027