Herschel Grammar School

Responsibility • Success • Care

16 to 19 Bursary Fund 2025/2026 Policy

1. Background

The 16-19 Bursary Fund scheme provides financial assistance to those young people who face a financial barrier to continuing in education or training post-16.

The 16-19 Bursary Fund has been allocated by the Education Funding Agency (EFA), the body responsible for funding 16-19 education and training.

This policy sets out the arrangements for how the Herschel Grammar School (the School) will prioritise and administer the 16-19 Bursary Fund in 2025-26.

The School is committed to ensuring the Fund is used to support financially disadvantaged young people taking up or continuing in their education or training post-16 and achieving their learning aims.

The named contact at the School for all 16-19 Bursary support/enquiries is the Bursary Fund Co-ordinator.

2. Bursaries available

There are two types of Bursary available:

i. Vulnerable Bursary

A Vulnerable Bursary is available to all young people who meet the general eligibility criteria *and* who have been identified as being most in need, as set out in this policy.

ii. Discretionary Bursary

A Discretionary Bursary is available to all young people who meet the general *and* additional eligibility criteria as set out in this policy.

3. Bursary funding

The 16-19 Bursary Fund is a limited fund determined by the ESFA. The School will retain at least 10% of the 16-19 Bursary Fund to use as a hardship contingency fund to respond to exceptional or circumstantial in-year changes.

The **Vulnerable Bursary** amounts are up to **£1,200**.

We use the fund to provide students with support to fund:

- Transport – bus pass, train pass etc.
- Books – textbooks, revision guides, novels studied as part of A Level English
- Relevant subscriptions for student's study programme
- Equipment – stationery, notebooks, school bag, subject specific equipment used in subjects such as Design & Technology, scientific calculator etc.
- School trips related to student's study programme e.g. Geography fieldwork, UCAS fair
- Attending University interviews / open days
- Other essential course-related costs

4. General eligibility

To be eligible to receive a Bursary, the student must be aged 16 or over but under 19 on 31 August 2025 and meet the residency criteria in the ESFA Funding Guidance.

5. Additional eligibility for Vulnerable Bursary

Young people in the defined vulnerable groups are usually living apart from their parents/carers, so can get social security benefits in their own right. The defined vulnerable groups are young people who are:

- in care
- care leavers
- receiving Income Support (IS), 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

Students who meet the criteria for bursaries for vulnerable groups are not automatically entitled to a bursary, or to a fixed amount of bursary, if they do not have financial needs and/or their financial needs are covered from other sources. They may receive a lower amount of bursary or no bursary, if they do not have any actual participation costs.

6. Additional eligibility for Discretionary Bursary

A Discretionary Bursary is available to all young people where:

- their **gross** annual household income, as assessed by HM Revenue & Customs in the last Tax Year, does not exceed **£20,000** and/or;
- where the young person, or a sibling, qualifies for Free School Meals (FSM).

7. Those not eligible

Applications to the 16-19 Bursary Fund are not open to young people aged under 16 or over 19 at 31st August 2025.

8. Evidence

All applications to access the 16-19 Bursary Fund must be supported by appropriate evidence. Copies of evidence shall be retained by the School to provide financial assurance as required. All evidence will be treated as confidential and destroyed within 1 year of the young person leaving the School.
Examples of acceptable supporting evidence for the **Vulnerable Bursary** are:

- Statement from the Local Authority confirming the young person's current or previous looked after status.
- Recent entitlement or award statement setting out the benefit to which the young person is entitled, and confirming that the recipient can be in further education or training.

Examples of acceptable supporting evidence for the **Discretionary Bursary** are:

- **A full Tax Credit Award Notice** (TCAN) for the young person's household. This document from HM Revenue & Customs details entitlement to Tax Credits and shows the total income for the year.
- 3 most recent monthly **Universal Credit** award letters that show evidence of income.
- **P60 End of Year Certificate** for all adults in the young person's household who contribute to household costs. This certificate is a statement of earnings from an employer. It must be for the correct adult(s) and for the correct Tax Year (to April 2025). The income will be shown as Total for the Year.
- **Payslips** from the previous 3 months.
- **Self-Assessment Tax Calculation (SA302).** This is the equivalent of the P60 for self-employed people. It must be for the correct adult(s) and for the correct Tax Year (to April 2025). The income will be shown as Total for the Year.
- Evidence of other benefits, pension awards, etc.
- Confirmation from the Local Authority of entitlement to **Free School Meals** (FSM).

Giving false or incomplete information that leads to incorrect/overpayment may result in future payments being stopped and any incorrectly paid funds being recovered. This might result in a referral to the police with the possibility of the student and/or their family facing prosecution.

9. Payments

The majority of the funding will be used to purchase school and educational related resources on your behalf. However, there may be rare occasions when we need to make payments directly to you. These payments will be via BACS to a bank account in the name of the young person. The young person must have a valid account in their name unless there are exceptional reasons which mean an appointee has been named to manage the affairs of the young person.

10. Qualifying condition requirements

Payments of the bursary fund are conditional on students meeting the following conditions in relation to their standards of attendance and behavior:

- Attendance above 95% (subject to exceptional circumstances)
- Following the HGS Sixth Form Code of Conduct
- Maintaining a positive behavior record in line with the behavior policy
- Students must attain an ATL of good, commendable or exemplary in two or more subjects in all their reports.

Eligible young people will need to complete a qualifying learning period of 6 weeks before they are able to receive Bursary payments. However, any eligible young person can make an application ahead of the six-week qualifying period and in a case of extreme hardship, consideration will also be given for payment in advance of the six-week period.
All young people in receipt of a Bursary must meet weekly punctuality and attendance requirements of 95% to ensure continued support. In addition, all young people in receipt of a Bursary must behave appropriately and submit work of an appropriate level and to required deadlines. If the young person does not meet these conditions, the School reserves the right to withdraw or withhold Bursary payments.
These conditions will not be additional to those expected of any young person within the School.

11. Application

Applications for a Bursary must be made using the correct Application Form and should be submitted in full by **Friday 10th October 2025**. Applications made after this date will be considered provided sufficient funds are available. However, once the Bursary Fund has been used, it will not be possible to consider further applications.
Consideration must be given to assisting any young person to make an application where they are unable to do so due to a level of learning difficulty and/or disability. Please see Miss Ali if you require assistance.
Consideration must also be given to assisting any young person in making an application where they are not able to provide supporting evidence due to difficulties with engagement or support from their parent/guardian/carer(s).

12. Process

All applications for a Bursary or to access the contingency fund will be assessed by a 16-19 Bursary Application Panel, consisting of:

- Headteacher
- A member of the Student Support team or any other appropriate member of staff

The Panel will review the application, supporting evidence and any other personal circumstantial evidence and young people will be notified of the outcome within **four** school weeks of the deadline of applications.

13. Appeals

If any young person or their parent/guardian/carer(s) are not satisfied with the outcome of their application, they should write to the Headteacher outlining their reasons why. The Headteacher will convene a 16-19 Bursary Appeals Panel, consisting of:

- Headteacher
- A member of the Governing Body

The Panel will consider and respond to appeals within **three school weeks** of receipt. If the appeal is upheld or partly upheld it will be referred back to the 16-19 Bursary Application Panel with recommendations. If the appeal is not upheld the appealing party will be signposted to the School's Complaints Procedure.

14. Confidentiality

Applications and supporting evidence will be confidential to the 16-19 Bursary Application Panel and in the event of an appeal, the 16-19 Bursary Appeals Panel. The applications and supporting evidence will remain confidential during processing, payment and storage. If it is necessary to obtain additional information to reach a decision, the young person and/or their parent/guardian/carer(s) will be told the reasons why this is necessary prior to sharing any information further.

15. Change of young person's financial circumstances

Any young person in receipt of a Bursary has a duty to inform the School should their financial circumstances, or those of their parent/guardian/carer(s) change (e.g. increase in household income, Free School Meals being withdrawn for a sibling). This does not automatically mean any future Bursary payments will be stopped but would result in a convening of the 16-19 Bursary Application Panel to determine whether the payments continue or be stopped and the funds redistributed.

16. Young person transferring

Where a young person in receipt of a Bursary transfers *out of* the School to another education/training provider in-year, the School will liaise with that provider to ensure continuity of Bursary payments to enable the young person to complete the learning aims.
Where a young person in receipt of a Bursary transfers *in to* the School from another education/training provider in-year, the School will liaise with that provider to ensure continuity of Bursary payments to enable the young person to complete the learning aims.

17. Young person withdrawing

Where a young person in receipt of a Bursary withdraws from the School, and does not transfer to another education/training provider, Bursary payments made prior to the date of withdrawal will not be recovered but any scheduled payments to be made after the date of withdrawal will not be made.

18. Supporting documents

In addition to this policy being openly shared with all young people and their parent/guardian/carer(s) please see the online Application Form – https://herschelgrammarschoolbursary.applicaa.com/1

19. Further information

Further national information on the 16-19 Bursary Fund can be found on the Education Funding Agency website – https://www.gov.uk/1619-bursary-fund