



Thinking Schools Academy Trust

“Transforming Life Chances”

16-19 Bursary Fund

Goodwin Academy



This policy was adopted in September 2025
The policy is to be reviewed September 2026

Bursary and Discretionary Funds

The 16 to 19 Bursary Fund provides financial support to help students overcome the specific financial barriers to participation they face so they can remain in education.

There are 2 types of 16 to 19 bursaries:

- Level 1 bursaries for defined vulnerable groups
- Level 2 discretionary bursaries

Eligibility

A student must be aged 16 or over but under 19 at 31 August 2025 to be eligible for help from the bursary fund in the 2025 to 2026 academic year.

Students aged 19 or over are only eligible to receive a discretionary bursary if they are continuing on a study programme they began aged 16 to 18 ('19+ continuers') or have an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP).

Students must meet the residency criteria in ESFA funding regulations for post-16 provision.

Student eligibility is dependent on the following:

- Maintaining attendance of at least 95% except in exceptional circumstances.
- Adhering to the Code of Conduct and Sixth Form Agreement

Any student who fails to meet either of these two criteria may have their bursary award limited, withheld until these criteria are met or withdrawn completely.

Level 1 bursaries for defined vulnerable groups

These students will receive up to £1200 per year, based on financial need. The defined vulnerable groups are students who are:

- in or have recently left local authority care
- receiving Disability Living Allowance (DLA) in your name and either Employment and Support Allowance (ESA) or Universal Credit
- receiving Personal Independence Payment (PIP) in your name and either ESA or Universal Credit

Level 2 discretionary bursaries

Awards for the Level 2 bursary in 2025/26 range from £600 to £1,200, and all awards are based on financial need. Students may apply for a one-off payment or for a sum that can be used throughout the year. Eligibility will be determined on a case-by-case basis. The following list details some of the key factors which will be considered when determining eligibility for the bursary:

- Whether they or their parent(s) are in receipt of Universal Credit, income support or other means-tested benefits
- The total monthly and yearly take-home income of the family
- Eligibility for Free School Meals in year 11
- The number of dependents in the family
- The distance travelled to and from school

Level 2 bursaries will be allocated according to household income: These thresholds have been temporarily raised to support the current economic situation.

Gross annual household income	Bursary value
Up to £14,999	Up to £1,200
£15,000 – £19,999	Up to £1,000
£20,000 – £24,999	Up to £800
£25,000 – £29,999	Up to £600

Payments will also be made on an “as needed” basis after consideration by the Bursary Fund Committee.

Application process

The application form for the 16-19 Bursary is available to collect from the Academy Office. All 16-19 bursary fund applications should be submitted to Mr G Dixon in order to allow for these applications to be processed swiftly and to allow for purchases to be made in a timely fashion. All applications should be accompanied by evidence to support the information provided. All information provided will be kept confidential and will only be shared with the Bursary Committee.

A small amount of the Bursary Fund will be retained in order to support applications due to change in circumstances, and therefore in year applications will be accepted, but will only be awarded if there is sufficient funding available, and awards will reflect the contact time remaining in the school year.

Awards and payment of the 16-19 Bursary

The Bursary Committee will convene at the close of the day on the 1st October and on the 1st of each month thereafter to consider any applications. This will consist of the Executive Business Manager, Bursary Coordinator and Administration Officer. Awards will be granted based upon financial need, considering all information provided in the application, and considering the relative need of all applicants. Students will be notified of the outcome of their application in writing in the following week.

As the 16 to 19 Bursary Fund is intended to provide financial support to help students overcome the specific financial barriers to participation they face so they can remain in education, any items purchased using the bursary should have a clear educational purpose. Any items requested that do not have this will be denied.

Payment will be made in kind, through direct ordering or purchasing of items on the students' behalf. All items will be delivered to the school, and we will aim to do this within 5 working days of receipt of the full information.

Where students would like to purchase items directly and request reimbursement, it is advised to check with the Bursary Coordinator prior to purchase that the item will be authorised, as this is not guaranteed. Any claims for reimbursement must be accompanied by clear, valid proof of purchase, and the applicant should be aware that they may be asked to present the item in order to verify the purchase. In some instances, only part reimbursement may be available. Requests for reimbursement should be made no longer than 2 months after the purchase was made. Reimbursement will be made via BACS payment into the student's bank account.

The Bursary Committee will set a cap for any large items (e.g. laptops) when they convene on the 1st October 2025 and this will be conveyed in the letter notifying students of their award.

Authorisation of purchases / orders will initially be authorised by the Bursary Coordinator. The full Bursary Committee will be consulted on any items which are not authorised.

What can the bursary be used for?

The 16 to 19 Bursary Fund provides financial support to help students overcome the specific financial barriers to participation they face so they can remain in education. The 16-19 bursary may be used to purchase a range of items, including, but not limited to, the following:

- Reasonably priced items from the dress code, e.g. suits, school ties, school shoes.
- Public Transport Travel costs for getting to and from school*, work experience, or university visits
- University applications
- Books required for courses or to support revision
- Graphical Display Calculators
- A laptop / tablet
- Educational School trips
- Repayment of funds spent in the canteen
- Stationary and supplies related to your courses

* Please note that if you intend to apply for a 16+ Travelcard and wish the cost to be covered by bursary, then your bursary application must be submitted at the same time as your Travelcard form.

Internal Appeals Process

Students have a right to appeal against a decision if they have evidence that the school has made a mistake and that they have behaved in accordance with the terms of the 16–19 Bursary Fund contract. Appeals should be made to Mr G Dixon (Bursary Coordinator) in the first instance. If a further appeal is to be requested then this will be heard by a Governor's sub-committee of 2 members including: a school governor and a neutral member of staff.

Fraud

Where the Bursary Committee believes that a claim or application has been made fraudulently, or on the basis of information provided which is deemed to be false, access to the bursary fund may be withheld for a fixed period or withdrawn completely, and any money may be claimed back.