



COLCHESTER COUNTY HIGH SCHOOL FOR GIRLS

47a. POLICY STATEMENT ON THE ADMINISTRATION OF THE Department for Education (DfE) BURSARY

COMMITTEE	Curriculum & Student Matters
LINK GOVERNOR	N/A
SLT RESPONSIBLE	Tina Woodhouse Director of Operations & Sinéad Hughes, Head of Sixth Form
REVIEW	Annually of following changes to Statutory Guidance
POLICY REVIEWED	April 2026
NEXT REVIEW DUE	April 2027
APPROVED BY THE GOVERNING BODY	June 2026
REQUIREMENT TO BE PUBLISHED ON THE CCHSG WEBSITE	Yes

Amendments

Page Number	Amendment
1	Added in guidance from the DfE (link)
2	Added roles and responsibilities
2-7	Dates and costings
3	How do use the bursary fund allocation
4	Additional Eligibility
6	Record Keeping and audit
7	Unspent Funds

Introduction

This document sets out the procedures that will be followed in the administration of the DfE 2026-2027.

Policy statement

The Governing Body is committed to supporting students who face the greatest financial barriers to continuing in education post-16. This policy is based on advice from the Department for Education (DfE) on the [16 to 19 bursary fund for the 2025 to 2026 academic year](#).

Roles and responsibilities

The Governing Board

- Monitoring the implementation of this policy
- Ensuring compliance with relevant requirements

The Principal

- Making sure that staff are familiar with this 16 to 19 bursary fund policy
- Making sure the policy is being applied consistently

The Head of Sixth Form

- Promoting awareness of the 16 to 19 bursary fund to prospective applicants and their parents/carers

Bursary panel

The bursary panel is responsible for reviewing applications and supporting evidence in accordance with this policy.

The panel consists of:

- The Head of Sixth Form and where appropriate the Associate Principals

The Director of Operations

- that the bursary funding is accounted for accurately.
- Setting eligibility criteria for bursary funding and making sure these comply with the Equality Act 2010

Parents/carers

- Parents/carers are also expected to notify Finance, if they have any concerns or queries regarding this 16 to 19 bursary fund policy
- Any change in circumstances that might affect eligibility for bursary funding

Students

- Students are responsible for meeting the conditions attached to the receipt of any support from the bursary funding.

Entitlement

The 16-19 Discretionary Bursary Fund allocation for Colchester County High School for Girls for 2026-2027 is provisionally £29, 717.

Alternatively, students in defined vulnerable groups can apply to the DfE's central vulnerable students' fund, through the school, for a bursary of up to £1,200 based on a financial needs assessment and amount of support required.

Bursary Budget for Colchester County High School for Girls

Discretionary bursaries between £800 and £1,200 Numbers to be determined by application

In-kind support allocations	£ (variable)	Dependent on the previous
Administration	£1,485.85	5% of total
Contingency	£2,971.70	10% of total

How we use the bursary fund

Financial support is available to eligible students from the 16 to 19 bursary fund. See sections 6, 7 and 8 below for details of our eligibility criteria.

The fund is intended to support students aged 16 to 19 in overcoming specific financial barriers to participation so they can remain in education.

There are 2 types of 16 to 19 bursaries:

- Bursaries for defined vulnerable groups; and
- Discretionary bursaries

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

- Transport
- Books
- Equipment
- Essential field trips

Eligibility

It is anticipated that any student in the sixth form and meeting the criteria below will be eligible. However, any terms and conditions in the DfE 16-19 Bursary Fund Guide for 2026-2027 shall apply.

Vulnerable groups

Nominated vulnerable groups are as listed below. Students will need to advise the school if they fall into this group so that the correct application to the DfE can be made on their behalf for bursary funding.

- Young people who are looked after (in care)
- Care leavers
- Young people in receipt of Income Support (or Universal Credit in place of income support) in their own name
- Young people in receipt of Employment and Support Allowance or universal credit and Disability Living Allowance or Personal Independence Payments in their own name

Residency

Students must meet the residency criteria in the DfE funding rules for 16 to 19 provision.

Asylum seekers

Accompanied asylum seekers under 18 with an adult relative or partner, and asylum seekers aged 18 and above are entitled to education but are not entitled to public funds. If necessary, they can apply to the Home Office for suitable housing and cash for essentials.

We will provide in-kind support such as books, equipment and a travel pass to asylum seekers who have not had asylum refused.

Unaccompanied asylum-seeking children are:

- The responsibility of the local authority
- To be treated as 'looked after' children
- Eligible for a bursary for vulnerable groups, where they have a financial need

When these students reach 18 years old, we will consider their immigration status. They will still be eligible for a bursary as a student from a defined vulnerable group if the asylum claim is in their favour and will be treated as a 'care leaver' until they reach the upper age limit.

Discretionary bursaries

Discretionary bursaries will be paid to students who live in a household where the parent (s) / guardian (s) are in receipt of income support or universal credits and whose gross household income is less than £35,000.

Students eligible for Free School Meals from September 2026 are eligible for a discretionary bursary. As per the 16-19 Bursary Found guidance (2026) CCHSG will carry out annual check of bursary fund eligibility to ensure fairness and equity with the distributions of funds.

The value of a discretionary bursary will depend on the number of approved applications and an assessment of the students' actual financial needs. It will be calculated by deducting the administration fee and the contingency from the total allocation and dividing the remainder by the number of applicants (subject to the maximum amount payable).

In-kind support

Care will be exercised in order to prevent diverting funds away from discretionary bursaries. Areas of in-kind support include transport, meals, materials, course-related trips, UCAS fee/travel to open days, sports activities (where these contribute directly to a course) or professional membership fees.

Contingency

The contingency may be used to meet requests for in-kind support and late applications for assistance where a student's financial circumstances deteriorate significantly during the year.

Administration

Students will be invited to apply for a bursary at the start of the Autumn Term and they must apply and provide evidence for eligibility by 11 September 2026. Decisions with regard to the allocation of the Bursary will be made by the end of the fifth week of the Autumn Term.

Evidence for eligibility must include:

- An award letter from the Department for Work and Pensions (TC602) setting out the Income Support benefit the student is entitled to for the financial year April 2026 to March 2027.
- The Local Authority will be able to provide a letter for the school confirming a student in care or as a care leaver.
- Evidence of the family income such as a benefit entitlement or a Tax Credit Award Notice if parents are employed or other certified information if they are self-employed.
- Only the most up to date / correct financial year documentation will be considered as evidence.
- Payments can only be paid direct to the student's personal bank account. Details must be provided as part of the application process.
 - Name of Bank or building society
 - Account number
 - Sort Code
 - Name on the account: - Student name
- a letter or email from Essex County Council confirming free school meal eligibility from September 2026

Funding will be received by the school in two instalments; one in October 2026 and the second in April 2026. Payments to students will be made after assessment in November followed in March & June, by BACS (three payments a year), made payable directly to the student.

Expenditure will be monitored and reported to the DfE in accordance with its requirements. The use of funds will be checked as part of the normal audit process.

Subject to the right of the DfE to reclaim unallocated funds, such funds may either be distributed amongst recipients of discretionary bursaries (subject to the maximum) in the second half of the summer term or carried forward to the 2027-2028 fund.

Student's obligations

Students will need to notify the school if their circumstances change. Money may be claimed back if a student gives information that they know to be false.

Payments of the Bursary will be conditional on the students meeting the expectations as outlined in the Sixth Form Learning Agreement.

Record keeping and audit

The school will maintain comprehensive and accurate records relating to the 16 to 19 bursary fund. These records will be kept securely and be readily available for audit purposes. Records will include, but are not limited to:

- Copies of application forms and supporting evidence
- Proof that students meet eligibility criteria
- Records of 'zero bursary' students

- Details of assessment decisions and rationale for awards
- Records of all payments made to students, including dates, value and purpose
- Copies of documents signed by students to give formal agreement to the conditions of payment
- Evidence of student attendance and progress monitoring

Records will be retained for 6 academic years after the end of the academic year in which the student completed their programme.

Unspent funds

Funding for bursary funding cannot be carried forward by the school for more than one year. Unspent funding must be reported to the DfE by the school using the [customer help centre](#), specifying the amount of funding and the year(s) it relates to, no later than 31 March each year. The DfE will recover all unspent funds.

Appeals

Appeals should follow the school's complaints procedure and should be made by the student.

Appendices

Letter and Bursary Application

Appendix:

July 2026

Dear Student and Parent

DfE Bursary Fund

The DfE Bursary Fund aims to support students who face the greatest financial barriers to continuing in education post-16. This letter sets out the procedures that will be followed in the administration of the 2026-2027 Bursary Fund for students attending the Sixth Form at Colchester County High School for Girls.

Mainstream bursaries, and in-kind support, are paid from CCHSG's 2026-2027 allocation of £29,082 while students in defined vulnerable groups can apply to the DfE's central vulnerable students' fund, through the school, for a bursary up to £1,200.

Nominated vulnerable groups are: (i) young people who are looked after (in care); (ii) care leavers;
(iii) young people in receipt of Income Support (or Universal Credit) in their own name;
(iv) disabled young people who receive both Employment Support Allowance and Disability Living Allowance,
(Personal Independence Payments) in their own name.

Mainstream bursaries will be paid to students with a gross household income of up to £35,000. Students eligible for free school meals will be eligible for a mainstream bursary. The value of the bursary will be dependent on the number of approved applications.

Areas of in-kind support include: transport, meals, materials, course-related trips and UCAS fee/travel to open days. The amount of bursary available for this category will depend on the number of applications for mainstream bursaries and will be allocated on an "as needs arise" basis.

The deadline for applications for nominated vulnerable groups and mainstream bursaries will be **Friday 11 September 2026** and applicants will need to provide evidence for eligibility of a bursary (see below). Decisions with regard to the allocation of the Bursary Fund will be made in **October 2026**. Payments will be made after assessment in autumn and at the beginning of the spring and summer terms, by BACS. The School Business Manager, will oversee the administration of the bursary.

Evidence for eligibility must include:

- a letter from the Department of Work and Pensions (TC602) setting out the Income Support benefit
the student is entitled to for the year April 2026 to March 2027.
- the Local Authority will be able to provide a letter for the school confirming that the student is in care
or is a care leaver.
- evidence of the family income such as benefit entitlement or Tax Credit Award
Notice if parents are employed or other certified information if they are self-employed.

Students will need to notify the school if circumstances change. Money may be claimed back if information is given that is known to be false. Appeals should follow the school's complaints procedure and should be made by the student. Payment of the Bursary will be conditional on applicants meeting the expectations as outlined in the Sixth Form Learning Agreement.

Please return the attached reply slip with any appropriate evidence to the School Office by **Friday 11 September 2026** in an envelope marked DfE Bursary Fund.

Yours sincerely



Mrs S Hughes
Associate Vice Principal: Head of Sixth Form

CCHSG DfE Bursary Application

Student's (applicant) Full Name

Form

Tick all that apply

I wish to apply for an DfE Bursary in the following category:

- ☐ Nominated vulnerable group
or
☐ Discretionary bursary
- ☐ I am eligible for free school meals
- ☐ I attach the following original document(s) for the year 2025-2026 in support of my claim:
Please list documents below, these will be copied and returned when bursaries are announced.

Brief Description eg 'Tax Credit Award Letter'

1	
2	
3	

Please give bank details of the applicant

Name on Bank Account	
Bank/Building Society	
Account Number	
Sort Code	

Please return your form with any appropriate evidence to the School Office by **Friday 11 September 2026**.