



16-19 BURSARY

GUIDANCE NOTES FOR APPLICANTS 2025-2026

Please read guidance notes in full before you fill in your application form. Failure to complete your form in full could lead to your application being delayed or rejected.

1. ABOUT THE SCHEME

The 16-19 Bursary Fund is designed to help support those young people who face the greatest barriers to continuing in education or training post-16. It is a “something for something” scheme and students who work hard and attend all lessons and sessions punctually will receive all of their Bursary payments.

2. DO I QUALIFY FOR A BURSARY?

To be eligible to receive a bursary the young person must be aged under 19 on 31 August in the academic year in which they start their programme of study. You may be eligible for an award if you meet either of the criteria listed below:-

| Bursary for Vulnerable Groups | Discretionary Bursary |
|---|--|
| <p>Any <u>student</u> who meets the following criteria <u>may</u> be entitled to payments from the fund:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •in care •a care leaver •is in receipt of Income Support or Universal Credit in their own right because they financially support themselves and/or someone who is dependent on them such as a child or partner. •is in receipt of 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. | <p>A student who lives in a household where the gross annual household income is £27,000 or less <u>may</u> be entitled to payments from the fund.</p> |

The amount of Bursary a student receives will vary each year depending on the number of applicants as the school receives an overall allocation to be shared between all applicants, not per student funding.

Students applying for further support in Year 13 should not assume they will receive the same level of payment that they received in Year 12.

3. HOW DO I APPLY FOR A BURSARY?

In order to assess your eligibility for support certain details of circumstances and income are necessary, so we ask you to complete an application form which is available to download from our website at

<https://www.poyntonhigh.org.uk/sixthform/financial-support>

4. WHEN DO I APPLY?

You may apply as soon as you have enrolled at School and all applications must be handed in by Friday 3rd October 2025. Applications may be made throughout the year, particularly if your financial circumstances change, but the School cannot guarantee that funds will still be available for applications received later in the year or that a student will receive the same level of funding, pro-rata, that students applying at the start of the year receive.

Please ensure that you have completed all relevant fields on the application form and that you submit all appropriate supporting evidence with your application. Failure to fully complete your form or to provide correct evidence with your application will result in your application being delayed or rejected.

5. WHEN WILL I KNOW IF I WILL RECEIVE A BURSARY?

We will notify all applicants by the week commencing 13th October with all decisions and awards where appropriate.

6. WHAT IF MY APPLICATION IS TURNED DOWN?

You have the right to appeal. You should put your case in writing and address it to Mr Bennett, Director of Sixth Form, at the school address. Any appeal must be made within seven working days of being advised of the decision.

The school will help as many students as possible with the funding allocation we receive and will prioritise those most in need. Until the closing date for applications of the 3rd October, we do not know how many students will be requesting assistance. Although we will endeavour to help as many students as possible, we cannot guarantee financial assistance to all those applying for a Discretionary Bursary.

7. HOW WILL I RECEIVE MY BURSARY? WHAT CAN I SPEND MY BURSARY ON?

We will pay the bursary half termly in arrears throughout the school year. Qualification for each Bursary payment is dependent on certain criteria being met (see point 8). Payments will be made to the student directly into their bank account so students will need to have their own bank account. The Education Skills Funding Agency (ESFA) states in its guidance that they would not expect the Bursary to be paid into another person's bank account, except in exceptional circumstances where a student is unable to administer their own account.

Bursary payments must be spent on school related items such as transport, books, equipment, meals and drinks, school trips, transport to university open days etc and we will require students to provide details and receipts of their expenditures on receipt of each payment.

8. ARE THERE ANY REASONS WHY I MIGHT NOT QUALIFY FOR MY PAYMENT ONCE I HAVE MADE A SUCCESSFUL APPLICATION?

The ESFA state in its guidance that student's qualification to receive a bursary payment should be conditional on the student meeting agreed standards. These standards are set by the awarding institution (in this case Poynton High School) and relate to attendance, standards of behaviour and effort in a student's studies. By completing and signing the application form you are agreeing to the following conditions:

The Sixth Form Support Officer will review the student's attendance and any progress reports issued during the relevant half term period and will then calculate the following deductions if applicable. These deductions will be made in the order listed.

- 1) If the student has been subject to any formal disciplinary procedures such as written warnings for attendance or behaviour in the half term preceeding a Bursary payment the student may lose up to the full amount of the first Bursary payment following the disciplinary procedure. This is at the Head of Year's discretion depending on the circumstances and nature of the disciplinary incident.
- 2) The Bursary is to assist with the costs of attending school. The student's attendance across all lessons, registration periods, assemblies and Student Development Days in the preceeding instalment period must be 90% or more and there must be no unauthorised absences on the student's attendance record. Failure to meet one of these criteria (attendance below 90% OR unauthorised absences) will result in a deduction of 5% from the student's total Bursary payment for that instalment period. Failure to meet both (attendance below 90% AND unauthorised absences) will result in a 10% reduction. We reserve the

right to make further deductions to a student's Bursary where attendance falls below 80% to reflect the additional time missed.

- 3) The student is expected to achieve the highest grades for 'approach to learning' across all of their chosen subjects on all of their progress reports. If a report has been issued in the period preceeding a Bursary instalment and the student has not achieved the highest grades for 'approach to learning' (A*,A, B), deductions will be made as follows:
- A **10%** deduction will be made for each C grade
 - A **20%** deduction will be made for each D grade.

NB: C grade approach to learning denotes 'Inconsistent'
D grade approach to learning denotes 'Poor'

9. WHAT SHOULD I DO IF I THINK A PAYMENT IS STOPPED UNFAIRLY?

You should advise your Year Leader immediately if you believe that the decision about ineligibility for payment is based on factually incorrect information.

Your Year Leader will investigate, if necessary, and will clarify the situation for you. If, as a result of this, there is a reversal of a decision, this will be conveyed to the Finance Office so that the payment can be made.

If you wish to challenge the decision made by your Year Leader about your eligibility for a payment, you may appeal to Mr Bennett, Director of Sixth Form whose decision is final. If his judgment is that the payment should be authorised, you will be informed and he will alert the Finance Office so that the payment can be made.

10. OTHER FINANCIAL HELP – FREE SCHOOL MEALS

Eligibility for Free School meals can continue into Sixth Form and does not affect the level of 16-19 Bursary support. If you think you are eligible all you have to do is phone the Free School Meals Helpline - 0300 123 5012 and they will let you know if you are entitled to Free School Meals. Alternatively you can complete the Free School Meals enquiry form online on the Cheshire East website. Your entitlement will be credited to your cashless dining account every day and can only be used to purchase food in the school dining areas.