



## What is the 16-19 Bursary Fund?

The 16-19 Bursary Fund is a government funded scheme intended to help support those young people who face the greatest financial barriers to continuing in education or training after age 16. Individual schools and colleges are free to establish their own assessment and award criteria within broad guidelines set out by the government. The main restriction is that the funds must be used to assist with costs directly associated with attending school or college and cannot be used to support a student's general living costs. Schools and colleges receive a fixed sum of money each year to allocate to students which can mean that the amount of financial support an individual student receives may vary from year to year depending on the number of qualifying applications that are received.

## Do I qualify for a Bursary?

You should be eligible to receive a bursary if you are aged under 19 on 31 August in the academic year in which you start your programme of study and you fall into one of the categories of bursaries below;

- Vulnerable Bursary – bursaries for defined vulnerable groups are assessed based on financial need to support participation at the college, such as transport costs, meals or equipment
- Discretionary Bursary – discretionary bursaries awarded to meet individual needs such as transport costs, meals, essential books and equipment and assessed based on taxable household income

<p><b>Vulnerable Bursary</b></p>	<p>Any student who is:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• in care</li> <li>• a care leaver</li> <li>• receiving Income Support, or Universal Credit 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</li> <li>• receiving Disability Living Allowance or Personal Independence Payments in their own right <b>as well as</b> Employment and Support Allowance or Universal Credit in their own right</li> </ul> <p><b>Bursary provided:</b> based on a financial needs assessment</p>
<p><b>Discretionary Bursary</b></p>	<p>A student who lives in a household where the <b>gross annual taxable household income is £27,000 or less</b> may be entitled to payments from the fund.</p> <p>(Taxable income is any income that HMRC would include when calculating how much income tax you pay each year)</p> <p>The amount of Bursary provided will be confirmed following your application. At Sir John Deane's Sixth Form College we will be giving priority to transport costs to try to ensure that you are able to get to College.</p> <p><b>Bursary provided:</b> based on an assessment of circumstances and actual financial need</p> <p>For 2024-2025 only, as a one-off cost of living consideration, we are also encouraging families with a taxable household income of up to <b>£30,000</b> to make an application for help from the Discretionary Bursary towards <b>transport costs only</b></p>

## How do I apply for a Bursary?

Applications are made online using this link <https://sjdc.paymystudent.com/portal/>. This link is also available on the College website <https://www.sjd.ac.uk/student-support/financial-support/>.

If for any reason you are unable to upload the evidence of your family household income, please send a copy of the evidence to Jane Richardson, Finance Department, Sir John Deane's Sixth Form College, Monarch Drive, Northwich CW9 8AF or by email to [bursary@sjd.ac.uk](mailto:bursary@sjd.ac.uk) Please make sure you provide the student name with the evidence.

If for any reason you have difficulties in making an online application, please contact Jane Richardson on 01606 810040 who will be happy to help.

All applications will be treated as confidential, and the College will adhere to the requirements of the Data Protection Act 2018 and the General Data Protection Regulation in its handling of your application.

## What am I entitled to apply for?

As mentioned above the 16-19 Bursary Fund is intended to assist students in meeting the costs associated with attending College. It cannot fund general living expenses. You may request assistance with any of the following.

- transport costs between Home and College;
- lunches in the College cafeteria;  
(This is separate from Free College Meal eligibility. Students who receive Free College Meals will not be entitled to this additional help for meals from the Bursary)
- the cost of visits, field trips etc. which form an essential part of your courses;
- the cost of stationery, printing, essential books or other materials;
- we may be able to provide assistance for other costs related to your studies not included in this list.

Not all categories are relevant to all students. For example, some students may walk to College and therefore do not need assistance with transport costs but would find some assistance with the cost of materials or buying food from the College cafeteria helpful.

## How much will I receive?

Under the current rules of the scheme students who qualify for the **Vulnerable Bursary** may receive a bursary of up to £1,200 per year based on a financial needs assessment and the amount of support required to participate at the College. There is the possibility the award may be limited or assessed as not required.

Amounts paid to students qualifying for the **Discretionary Bursary** can vary from year to year depending on the amount of funding the College receives, the number of applicants and their individual needs. Our aim is to try to allocate the funds we have as fairly as possible and linked to individual need.

Receipt of both categories of bursary in full is dependent on agreed standards of attendance and behaviour.

For many students the biggest cost and barrier to attending College is the cost of transport. For 2024-2025 we will, therefore, again be prioritising help with transport costs and our aim is to meet these costs in full for qualifying students, wherever possible. For those applying for help from the Discretionary Bursary whose taxable household income is above the £27,000 threshold but below £30,000, the help provided is likely to be a proportion of the total transport cost.

For this reason we ask you to provide details of how you plan to travel to College.

#### **Public Bus Services**

- Students using a **Warrington's Own Buses CAT 9** service will need to buy their annual pass from Warrington's Own Buses, and claim back the cost. A copy of the receipt will need to be sent to Jane Richardson.
- Students using the **D & G Bus** commercial services from Chester (82 service) and more locally the 49 service (Weaverham/Rudheath), 31 & 37 services (Crewe/Sandbach/Middlewich/Winsford) will be issued with electronic tickets. We will ask you to download an app to your mobile phone and the bus operator will upload tickets to the app for you to use when you travel.
- Students using the **Warrington's Own Buses N4** (Barnton/Winnington) service will be paid at the end of each month in advance for the cost of the weekly tickets for the following month. Tickets can be bought on the bus.

#### **College buses (from Warrington, Congleton, Tarporley/Bunbury, Halton, Helsby/Frodsham, South Manchester, Macclesfield/Knutsford, Nantwich/Crewe/Sandbach)**

- If students are travelling on **buses arranged by the College** we will normally make the payment towards transport costs on the student's behalf.

We will use the funds available after providing assistance with transport to help with lunches and essential course materials and we will also hold a contingency fund to assist students during the year with the cost of educational trips and visits linked to their courses. Students can request help with the cost of trips as they arise, although depending on demand and the amount of funds available we may need to place a limit on the total assistance available to an individual student.

#### **When do I apply?**

You can apply at any time from May 2024 for the academic year 2024/2025 and we encourage early applications. You do not have to have enrolled at College before you can apply. If you apply early we can confirm if you will qualify for financial support before you start your course. Applications should be made as soon as possible to be processed ready for September. **The earlier you apply the sooner you will know how much support we are able to provide and the earlier you will receive your first payment if your application is successful.**

We will accept applications throughout the year (particularly if your financial circumstances change), but we cannot guarantee that funds will be still be available for applications received later in the year.

#### **When will I know if I will receive a Bursary?**

We will normally email you within approximately two weeks of receiving your fully completed application to confirm whether or not you qualify for financial support (it may be a little longer during holiday periods) and providing your application has been received by the end of the first week of term we will make a first payment before the end of September.

For students applying for help whose household income is above the £27,000 Discretionary Bursary threshold but below £30,000, this may take a little longer as we will need to assess the funds available to provide support.

#### **When and how will I receive my Bursary payments?**

Where regular payments are agreed (such as for college lunches) we will make payments each month between September and June (10 months). **Government guidelines expect payments to be made directly into the student's bank account so if you haven't already got a current bank account you will need to open one.** If you do not have

a bank account when you apply online, continue with the application and amend your application as soon as you have the bank account details or contact Jane Richardson with the information.

### **What if my application is turned down?**

You have the right to appeal. You should put your case in writing and address it to the Assistant Principal (Achievement & Support) at the College address. Any appeal must be made within seven working days of being advised of the decision.

### **What will be done to check that I am eligible for each payment?**

We will check that you have met the conditions set out in the application declaration and followed all College procedures during the designated period before each payment is made. If, for example, you do not have 95% attendance we may withhold some or all of the following month's payment.

You must also not have been subject to any formal disciplinary procedures and you must have attended any public examinations and satisfactorily submitted any final coursework you were scheduled to complete in this period.

### **What should I do if I think a payment has been stopped unfairly?**

You should contact your Progress Mentor in the first instance if you believe that the decision about ineligibility for payment is based on factually incorrect information.

Your Progress Mentor will investigate if necessary, and will clarify the situation for you. If, as 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 Progress Mentor about your eligibility for a payment, you may appeal to the Assistant Principal (Achievement & Support) whose decision is final.

Further details about the fund can be found at:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/16-to-19-bursary-fund-guide-2024-to-2025-academic-year/16-to-19-bursary-fund-guide-2024-to-2025-academic-year>



Students may apply for a Free College Meal. Students who received a free school meal in Year 11 should tick the box on the online application via this link <https://sjdc.paymystudent.com/portal/>. Students who already received free meals on or after 1<sup>st</sup> April 2018 will continue to be eligible for free meals up until March 2025 and then until the end of their phase of education. Evidence of entitlement may be required such as a copy of a previous entitlement letter or an email from the student's high school confirming receipt of free school meals.

The rules for eligibility for a Free College Meal have been set out by the Government and are different from those for the 16-19 Discretionary Bursary. It is likely that if you are eligible for Free College Meals you will also be eligible for a 16-19 Discretionary Bursary. Eligibility for the Bursary will be assessed separately from that for Free College Meals. Eligibility for a Discretionary Bursary is dependent on your parents' or carers' total household taxable income. Eligibility for Free College Meals will be assessed based on you or your parent/s or carer/s providing evidence of receipt of certain state benefits specified below or if you can provide evidence of entitlement to free school meals in Year 11 at your previous school.

The same online application is used to apply for Free College Meals and the 16 – 19 Bursary.

The value of a Free College Meal for 2024/2025 will be £4.00 per day and a meal deal is available from the cafeteria for this price. You may also receive this allowance if you are off site, attending a work placement or on work experience.

To be eligible for Free College Meals, you or your parent/s must be in receipt of one or more of the following benefits:

- Income Support
- Income based Jobseekers' Allowance
- Income related Employment and Support Allowance (ESA)
- Support under part VI of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999
- the guarantee element of the State Pension Credit
- Child Tax Credit (**provided they are not entitled to Working Tax credit**) and have annual gross income of no more than £16,190, as assessed by Her Majesty's Revenue and Customs.
- Working Tax Credit run on – paid for 4 weeks after you stop qualifying for Working Tax Credit. Working Tax Credit is not a qualifying benefit for Free College Meals
- Universal Credit with net earnings not exceeding the equivalent of £7,400 pa (after tax and not including any benefits you get)

### **How do I apply ?**

You should complete the online application that is used for both the 16-19 Discretionary Bursary and Free College Meals using the same link <https://sjdc.paymystudent.com/portal/> or through the College website. If you have any difficulties with the application, please contact Jane Richardson on 01606 810040 who can help.

### **How will the system be administered?**

We currently use a token system, so if you qualify for Free College Meals you will be given tokens with a value of £4.00. (Similar tokens are used throughout the College for student rewards and college visitors). You can use these in the cafeteria to pay for a meal deal at this price or you can pay the difference in cash if you wish to buy a meal that exceeds the £4.00 value of the token.

Further information can be obtained by emailing [bursary@sjd.ac.uk](mailto:bursary@sjd.ac.uk) or by contacting Jane Richardson or any member of the Finance Department. Details can also be found on the College website <https://www.sjd.ac.uk/student-support/financial-support/>