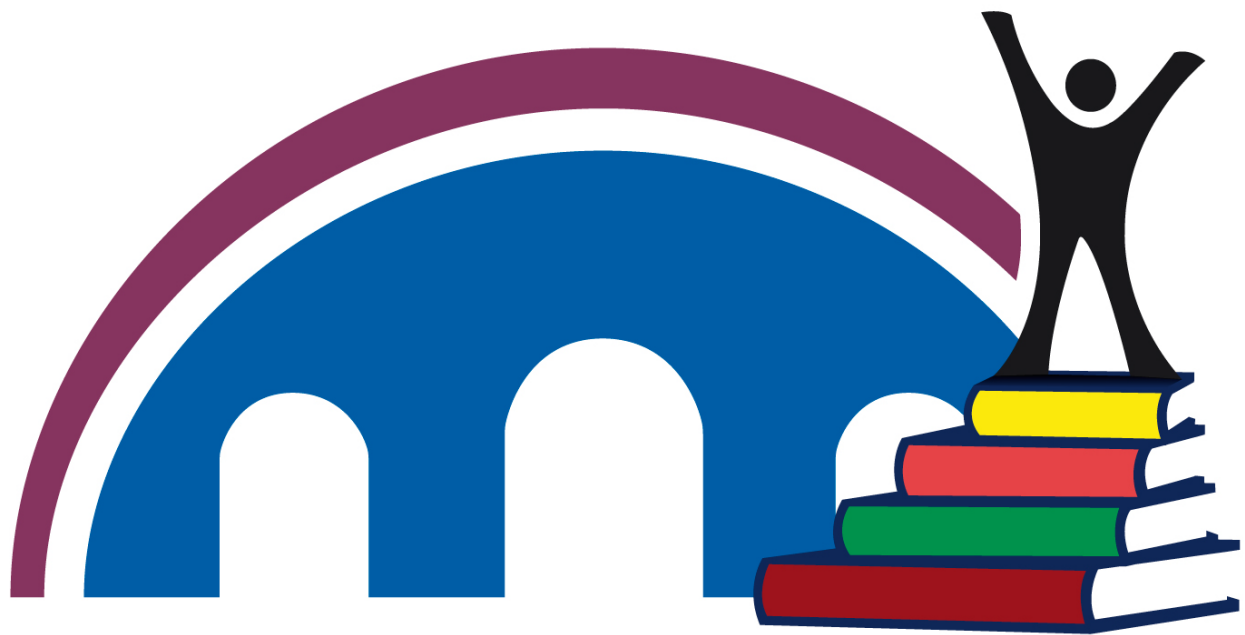




Bridge Academy Trust

16-19 BURSARY POLICY

September 2026

Summary of Changes

Section Number	Current wording	Proposed Amendment
1 - 4	n/a	Added Introduction, Scope. Roles & Responsibilities and EIA
5 – Eligibility	n/a	Added Definitions section as per the model policy on 'The Key'
5.1(b) – Eligibility	Household income must be less than £17,005	Household income must be less than £20,000
6 – What can the money be spent on	Formatting only, as it was all contained within a bullet point	Made it a list of items which the funding can be used for and added specialist clothing and university open day/interview costs.
7.1(a) – Evidence required	n/a – these categories are listed in section 5 but never had details of what supporting evidence we would require	ii) UC award notice in the students name iii) ESA or UC award and DLA or PIP notice in the students name
7.1(b) – Evidence required	<u>Universal Credit</u> – Provide – Copy of the UC claim from DWP (UC claimants should be able to print off details of their award from their online account)	<u>Universal Credit</u> – Provide a FULL copy of the last 3 months of UC notice award (UC claimants can print off details of their award from their online account or provide screenshots to the Bursary Award Panel).
7.1(b) – Evidence required	<u>Income support</u> – Provide a letter from the Department of Work and Pensions setting out the benefit you are entitled to. <u>Income Based Jobseekers Allowance</u> – Provide a letter from the Department of Work and Pensions setting out the benefit you are entitled to. <u>Child Tax Credit</u> – Provide the TC602 letter from HM Revenue & Customs (Families annual income must not exceed £17,005) <u>Pension Guarantee Credit</u> – Provide the Award Notice from the Pensions Service <u>Income Related Employment and Support Allowance</u> – Provide the entitlement letter <u>Receipt of support under Part VI of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999</u> – Provide the application registration	UC has replaced IS and ESA as well as other benefits, so any legacy benefits provided as evidence will be assessed on an individual basis.

	card or form SAL 1/SAL2 from the Immigration and Nationality Directorate Please note: Working Tax Credits, Jobseekers Allowance – contribution based, a bank statement are insufficient documents to provide as evidence.	
Throughout	Any reference to dates in academic year 25/26	Amended to be within academic year 26/27

Date of Draft Policy: (this is the month/year the policy was drafted)	April 2026	
Last approved version: Frequency of review:	11 th March 2025 Annually	
Consultation with Staff Required:	Yes ☐	No ☒
Period of Consultation (if required):	From N/A	To N/A
Trustee Committee Reviewing:	Trustee Policy Review Committee	
Date of Board of Trustees Meeting at which Final Policy Approved (if required):	16 th June 2026	
Date of Adoption of Policy:	1 st September 2026	
Date Policy available on Central Area/www (if appropriate):	1 st September 2026	
Reviewer:	Finance Director	
Brief historic history & where update advice has been sourced:	DfE Guidance The Key Model Policy	

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INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 The 16–19 Bursary Fund is a government-funded scheme designed to support students to remain in full-time education by addressing financial barriers to participation.
- 1.2 The fund is a fixed and finite sum and allocations may therefore not exceed the total sum available.
- 1.3 All bursary awards are made in line with Department for Education (DfE) guidance and must be based on an assessment of individual student need, not automatic entitlement.
- 1.4 The Trust is committed to ensuring that bursary funding is administered fairly, transparently, and consistently, supporting students to access and complete their education.

SCOPE

- 2.1 This policy applies to the administration of the 16–19 Bursary Fund for students aged 16 to 19 enrolled in full-time education within Bridge Academy Trust. The 16–19 Bursary Fund provides financial support to help students overcome the specific financial barriers to participation they face so they can remain in education, including support for essential costs such as travel, meals, books, equipment or specialist clothing required for their study programme.
- 2.2 The policy applies to both bursaries for students in defined vulnerable groups and discretionary bursaries and sets out the eligibility criteria, funding rules, and conditions under which bursary support may be awarded, reviewed, withheld or withdrawn, in line with Department for Education guidance and the funding available for each academic year.

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

BOARD OF TRUSTEES

- 3.1 The Board of Trustees are responsible for approving the 16–19 Bursary Policy and providing oversight to ensure that bursary funding is administered in accordance with Department for Education guidance, funding rules, and the principles of fairness, transparency and accountability.

FINANCE DIRECTOR

- 3.2 The Finance Director is responsible for the overall administration of the 16–19 Bursary Fund, including compliance with funding conditions, financial oversight, record-keeping, fraud prevention, and ensuring that appropriate evidence is retained to support bursary awards and payments.

HEAD OF SIXTH FORM

- 3.3 The Head of Sixth Form is responsible for promoting awareness of the bursary scheme, supporting students with applications, verifying eligibility and evidential documentation, monitoring ongoing compliance with bursary conditions (including attendance and behaviour expectations), and identifying changes in student circumstances that may affect eligibility.

BURSARY ALLOCATION PANEL

- 3.4 The Bursary Allocation Panel, comprising the Head or Deputy Head of Sixth Form and the Finance Director, is responsible for assessing applications, determining awards based on individual financial need and available funding, approving payments (including cash and in-kind support), and reviewing awards throughout the academic year.

STUDENTS

- 3.5 Students are responsible for submitting accurate information and supporting evidence, notifying the school of any change in circumstances, complying with the conditions of the bursary award, and using bursary support only for agreed, essential costs related to participation in education.

EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT (EIA)

- 4.1 An Equality Impact Assessment has been completed for this policy which identified no significant negative impacts.

ELIGIBILITY

- 5.1 To qualify you must be aged under 19 on the 31st August in the academic year in which you start your programme of study and a legal resident of the UK or registered asylum seeker. There are three levels to the Bridge Academy Trust Bursary, and you can apply for **ONE** only:
- a) **Level 1.** Some students may be entitled to a grant or bursary of up to £1,200 per year funded by the Government. You could get this if you are in one of the following categories:
 - i) You are living in care.
 - ii) You are a care leaver.
 - iii) You are receiving income support or the equivalent Universal Credit (UC).
 - iv) You are disabled and receiving both Employment Support Allowance or UC and Disability Living Allowance, or Personal Independence Payment (PIP) in your name.
 - b) **Level 2.** This bursary can be allocated to students who need support to overcome financial barriers that might prevent them continuing in full time education, for example, being able to afford transport to school, field trips or textbooks. Applications must state what the identifiable financial need is. The criteria for any support are that the total household income must be less than £20,000pa and that no other income is available from another household to support the student. Documentary evidence is required. Students could receive financial support worth hundreds of pounds per year for identified and agreed costs outlined in the application process.
 - c) **Level 3.** Emergency meal support fund to support individual cases of severe hardship.
- 5.2 The award will be dependent on good behaviour e.g.:
- a) a maximum of 2 formal concerns per term received by either Deputy or Head of Sixth Form;

b) "C" as a minimum for "Effort" in the termly data sheets for all subjects;

5.3 In addition to the above, good attendance (above 96%), with no more than 10% unexplained absence from all lessons.

DEFINITIONS

5.4 'In care' is defined as: children looked after by a local authority on a voluntary basis (section 20 of the Children Act 1989) or under a care order (section 31 of the Children Act 1989).

5.5 'Looked after child' is defined as: a child in the care of a local authority or who is provided with accommodation by the authority in the exercise of any functions for more than 24 hours (section 22 of the Children Act 1989).

5.6 'Care leaver' is defined as:

- a) A young person aged 16 or 17 who was previously looked after for a period of 13 weeks consecutively (or periods amounting to 13 weeks), which began after the age of 14 and ended after the age of 16, or
- b) A young person aged 18 or above who was looked after prior to becoming 18 for a period of 13 weeks consecutively (or periods amounting to 13 weeks), which began after the age of 14 and ended after the age of 16.

WHAT CAN THE MONEY BE SPENT ON?

6.1 The money can be used, but not limited to, the following:

- a) Educational books and equipment;
- b) School meals (this will be credited to the cashless catering system);
- c) Field trips essential to the course;
- d) Transport (please note that in some cases the school may purchase rail or bus tickets on behalf of students if the Bursary is to cover transport costs);
- e) Specialist clothing/uniform;
- f) Costs to attend University open days or interviews; or
- g) Other course-related costs needed to help a young person stay in education.

IF I AM IN ONE OF THE ELIGIBLE GROUPS WHAT EVIDENCE WILL THE SCHOOL NEED TO SEE?

7.1 All evidence is required to be dated within the last 3 months or be relevant for the current tax year, documents considered as supporting evidence are as follows:

a) **Level 1**

- i) In care or a care leaver – Request the Local Authority provides a confirmation letter for the School;
- ii) Universal Credit (UC) award notice in the student's name;
- iii) Employment Support Allowance (ESA) or UC award and Disability Living Allowance or Personal Independence Payment (PIP), both in the student's name.

a) **Level 2**

- i) Universal Credit – Provide a **FULL** copy of the last 3 months of UC notice award (UC claimants can print off details of their award from their online account or provide screenshots to the Bursary Award Panel);
- ii) UC has replaced Income Support and ESA as well as other benefits, so any legacy benefits provided as evidence will be assessed on an individual basis.

b) **Level 3**

- i) Confirmation letter signed by the Head of Sixth Form.

ADVICE ON BANK ACCOUNTS

- 8.1 Where bursary payments are to be made to a bank account, they can only be made to the student's bank account.
- 8.2 Payments should not be made into another person's account, except in exceptional circumstances where a student is unable to administer their own account.
- 8.3 Payments may be made to a joint account, as long as the student is one of the account holders.

HOW DO I APPLY?

- 9.1 Complete and sign the Bursary Application Form ([Appendix 1](#)) and return this form together with documentary evidence in a sealed envelope to the Sixth Form Office, for the attention of the Finance Director, marked 'Confidential'.
- 9.2 The deadline for submitting an application form is 8th October 2026.
- 9.3 There will be further opportunities to apply for any students facing a change in circumstances part-way through the year or new starters. The deadline for the "change of circumstances" windows will be: one at the end of January 2027, and the other at the end of April 2027.
- 9.4 In exceptional circumstances where a need can be evidenced a small part of the Bursary may be advanced in September to assist return to school.
- 9.5 You must apply each year.

WHAT HAPPENS TO MY APPLICATION FORM?

- 10.1 Our Bursary Allocation Panel will comprise of the Head or Deputy Head of Sixth Form from your school and the Finance Director.
- 10.2 The Bursary Allocation Panel will meet in October, February and May to review all applications received. Payments will be made on an instalment basis throughout the year. Approved applications will be monitored and evaluated throughout the year, and should a student fail to meet the conditions of the grant, then funding may be withdrawn at any time.
- 10.3 If successful, your School may choose to pay the bursary as 3 termly cash payments directly into your bank or transfer to a school's trip budget or provide 'in kind' support. For example, by bulk purchasing equipment that eligible students need for particular courses. Transport costs may be bought by the school i.e., bus or rail tickets rather than allocating cash payment.

APPEALS PANEL

- 11.1 Should you not agree with the outcome of your application, please put your appeal in writing to the Head of School who will review the decision with a member of the School's Local Governing Committee.

NB The bursary payment to schools is a fixed sum and not on a per student basis. Your school may have to vary the amounts of its bursaries to deal fairly with the number of eligible students in their Sixth Form.

APPENDIX 1: BURSARY APPLICATION FORM



CEO Mr M. Farmer

Brian Close

Chelmsford

Essex CM2 9ES

e: enquiries@bridgeacademytrust.org

w: www.bridgeacademytrust.org

School Name:

Student Details

Student Name:

Date of Birth:

School Year

(please circle):

12

13

Home Address:

Mobile Number:

Postcode:

Email Address:

1.

Subjects being studied 2.

3.

4.

Bank or Building Society Details

If you are successful in your application, we will need your bank details, the account **must be** in the name of the applicant. Please complete the account information below:

Name of Account Holder:

Name of Bank:

Bank Address:

Sort Code:

Account Number:

Roll Number
(if applicable):

I confirm that the above details are true and accurate.

Signature: (Student) Date:

Parent/Guardian Details

Full Name:

Home Address:

.....

Postcode: Telephone Number:

Financial Information

All household income **must be declared**. Household is defined as all adults living in the property – including stepparents, carers, partners and cohabittees.

Bursary Applied for (tick one box only)

Level 1 ☐ For students in care, students receiving Universal Credits and disabled young people receiving both Employment Support Allowance and Disability Living Allowance or Personal Independence Payment (PIP).

Level 2 ☐ For students who can demonstrate considerable identifiable financial need. Please state below the evidence that you are providing to support your application (see policy for more details of evidence).

Level 3 ☐ For students who require support for school meal costs due to experiencing severe hardship.

What will the grant be used for? (must complete, see section 6 in the policy for examples)

Type of Expenditure	Details	Estimated cost

What evidence has been supplied?

.....

.....

.....

If the original documentation has been provided, please tick here if you want this returned. ☐

Please note 3 months evidence must be enclosed to support your application. If there is no evidence provided the application will be refused automatically.

I confirm that the above details are true and accurate.

Signature: _____ (Parent/Guardian) Date: _____

Declaration by student and parent(s)/guardian(s)
Please read and sign the declaration below and return this form together with documentary evidence in a sealed envelope to the Sixth Form Office marked 'Confidential' for the attention of Finance Director.

- I agree to my application being scrutinised by the Bursary Allocation Panel.
- I understand that if I do not behave well, fail to adhere to the Sixth Form contract/code or have attendance below 96% then my Bursary will be withdrawn without notice.
- I confirm that, for level 2 Bursaries, no other income or financial support is available from another household to support the student.
- If I leave the Sixth Form at any time within 4 weeks of a Bursary being awarded/paid then I will repay the funds given to me.
- I confirm that, the information I have given is, to my knowledge true and correct and Bridge Academy Trust may seek to confirm any details I have given.
- I understand there will be a delay in any funds being released if the application form has not been correctly completed or appropriate evidence of income has not been supplied.
- I understand that I must keep evidence of what the bursary has been used for and if unable to provide upon request, then my Bursary will be withdrawn without notice.

Data Protection Act:

I understand that:

- The data contained on this form will be held on file for seven years and that Bridge Academy Trust may make enquiries about the validity of the information provided on this form from other central and/or local government bodies, as deemed appropriate by the school.
- I hereby consent to the disclosure of any information sought in accordance with the application for the purposes of the General Data Protection Regulations 2018.
- The school has a duty to protect the public funds it administers and to this end may use the information provided on this form within this Authority for the prevention and detection of fraud. It may also share this information with other bodies administering public funds solely for these purposes.

Student Name: _____ Parent/Guardian Name: _____

Signature: _____ Signature: _____

Date: _____ Date: _____

Office Use Only

Name: _____ Position: _____

Signature: _____ Date: _____