



Gillingham School, Dorset

Sixth Form 16-19 Bursary Fund

Last review:	September 2026
Next review:	September 2027
Signed:	TW
Approval Committee:	Governing Body

Part of United Learning





Application via QR code or online form

<https://forms.cloud.microsoft/e/uzKtMAhMeQ>

Further information: tara.whyntie@gillingham-dorset.co.uk

Aims of the 16-19 Bursary Fund

The Sixth Form bursary will be operated to distribute the funds allocated by the government as fairly, as possible, through considering each student's household income and the additional costs each student incurs through Sixth Form Study from the age of 16 to 19.

All students living in a household where the annual total net household income is below £32,000 per annum can apply to be considered for bursary support.

Eligibility is determined:

- **By means assessment** of combined annual household income (to include net salary and/or benefits and Universal/Tax Credits within the threshold limit).
- **By net income** we mean the amount earned after tax, national insurance and pension has been deducted.

Disability Living Allowance is the only form of income we **will not** include when calculating your household income.

Free School Meals Eligibility

New from the 1st of June 2026.

All households in receipt of Universal Credit will be eligible for Free School Meals.

Households in receipt of **Universal Credit** where the household income is **below £32,000 per annum**

- Students should **complete their application to the 16-19 Bursary Fund**
- Students must check their eligibility and apply to be registered for Free School Meals
<https://www.dorsetcouncil.gov.uk/w/free-school-meals>

Households in receipt of **Universal Credit** where the household income is **above £32,000 per annum**

- Are **not eligible** for support from the 16-19 Bursary Fund
- Students however must check their eligibility and apply to be registered for Free School Meals
<https://www.dorsetcouncil.gov.uk/w/free-school-meals>

16-19 Bursary Fund Eligibility

The following groups of students will be eligible for support, provided that the conditions stipulated by the government are met:

Group 1: Discretionary Bursary

Students living in a household where the combined household income is below £32,000

Can apply for financial support.

Eligibility is determined:

- **By means assessment** of combined annual household income (to include net salary and/or benefits and Universal/Tax Credits within the threshold limit).
- **By net income** we mean the amount earned after tax, national insurance and pension has been deducted.

For households not in receipt of Universal Credit, we will add any benefits and net salary together to obtain a total household income.

For households that receive Universal Credit, we will calculate the average annual income by looking at the amounts awarded in the last 3 months' Universal Credit Statements.

This will include the total of any earned income included on the statement.

Disability Living Allowance is the only form of income we **will not** include when calculating your household income.

Financial support will be considered proportionally, and priority given, as follows:

Priority	Household Income
High	Under £17,000
Medium	From £17,001 to £25,000
Low	From £25,001 to £32,000

Evidence of income is required in all cases

This will apply in the current tax year if, through benefit documentation, a change in circumstances can be proven that demonstrates that the annual household income (including benefits) is now below £32,000.

We will ask to see the last three months' Universal Credit Statements

Group 2: Discretionary Bursary

Students living in a household where the combined household income is below £32,000

A student who is caring for a parent or other relative may be entitled to claim bursary funding irrespective of household income. All applications should be accompanied by a GP letter confirming status as a 'young carer' and or evidence that the student is registered with the Young Carers Service or receives Carers Allowance.

Group 3: Vulnerable Student Bursary

Students who are within this group will be entitled to a bursary of up to £1,200.

This funding is claimed directly from the government by the school and is separate from the discretionary bursary. The school may, at its discretion, also award an additional amount from the Discretionary Bursary.

To be within this group, students will be:

- Young people who are looked after by the local authority
- Care leavers
- In receipt of income support (in their own right)
- Disabled young people in receipt of both Employment Support Allowance & Disability Living Allowance.

How the bursary amount is considered.

The school will consider the individual circumstances of each student, together with costs that are incurred through their study in the Sixth Form. Note that any 'loss of potential earnings' through being in full-time education is excluded from this consideration. Once eligibility has been confirmed, the amount of funding will be allocated according to need.

We will assess your need according to: The number of household dependents, the distance travelled to attend Sixth Form, any requirement for educational equipment not supplied as part of a course or any other factors deemed relevant.

- Funding is only provided for the weeks during which students are at school.
- No payments will be made for weeks falling within the school holidays.

Payment will be made to the student via a BACS into a bank account in their name.

Account details will be requested from the student at the time of signing their bursary agreement.

Travel Costs: Wherever possible, a contribution towards travel costs will be paid direct to the provider. Where this is not possible, a fortnightly payment will be made by BACS to the student to assist with travel costs. This will be awarded on a case-by-case basis, and any award may be adjusted to reflect the availability of an alternative and less expensive form of transport.

Food: All students in receipt of a bursary award or in receipt of universal credit, should apply for Free School Meals. Dorset Council <https://www.dorsetcouncil.gov.uk/w/free-school-meals>

They will receive an allowance of **£2.80 per day** which is loaded onto their canteen payment account.

This will allow the student to purchase their main meal of the day. If it is not used, the amount will not roll over.

Compulsory Educational Trips: Will be paid for direct from the bursary fund and will not impact the student's draw down allowance amount.

Draw Down Allowance: Each student will be allocated and individually assessed for an annual draw down allowance. To be re-paid for school related expenditure that has not been outlined above, the school will require a receipt or proof of purchase for all items. Apart from charges directly made by the school such as non-compulsory educational trips and extra-curricular activity trips.

If the amount in each student's draw down allowance reaches £0, only in exceptional circumstances, and should funding remain in the overall bursary fund for the academic year, will any additional requests for funds be considered. This is on a case-by-case basis.

Examples of where bursary funding can be drawn down from the student's allowance to assist with costs are:

- Personal Protective Clothing stipulated as necessary for a particular course
- Books, materials and equipment required for a particular course*
- Educational visits related to subjects studied where non-participation would place the student at a disadvantage
- Non-educational school organised trips where participation would support inclusion and student wellbeing
- Sixth Form Parking Permits
- University, Apprenticeship and Career related visits

**Larger items, such as laptops or photography equipment may be available on loan.*

Funding levels and payment intervals

The level of support the school is able to offer is dependent on how much is allocated each year to the *Gillingham School Sixth Form*, via *POST 16 Funding from the Government's Department for Education (DFE)* together with the number of students who are eligible and apply in *Groups 1 and 3*.

We will know this by the end of September of each academic year.

The following students will take priority:

- Those assessed as **'high' priority**
- Those requiring **support for transport to and from school**

Transport related payments may be made on a one-off, fortnightly or half-termly basis or paid direct to the provider. Proof of expenditure will be requested if appropriate.

Once funds have been allocated to transport, food and compulsory educational trips, the remainder will be distributed in the form of a draw down allowance for each student where an award is approved.

The Heads of Sixth Form reserve the right to authorise payments outside of the above criteria when there are extenuating circumstances and/or if there is clear educational value in doing so.

All payments are at the discretion of the Head of Sixth Form and Senior Finance Officer.

Application



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Applications to be made as early as possible, preferably by the 15th of September of the academic year you will be starting.

- Awards will be confirmed by the end of September of year of application.
- Payments will be backdated to the first day of term.
- Free School Meals will be put in place as soon as practicable.

We can assist with any enquiries prior to this date regarding individual circumstances and whether these meet our criteria for consideration for the 'vulnerable student' or the 'discretionary' bursary fund.

Should household circumstances change during the academic year, applications can be made at any time, and payments will then be backdated, either to the date of the application or to the first day of the current term. This will be in accordance with individual circumstances and the time of application.

If an application is not approved and you wish to appeal, this should be addressed to the Heads of Sixth Form in writing.