

## 16-19 Bursary, Free Meals and Hardship Policy - 2023 / 2024

### Mission Statement

We are a Catholic Sixth Form dedicated to the education and development of the whole person, so that all students can realise their full potential.

To achieve this as a community we will:

- Provide the highest standards of teaching and learning.
- Expect students to show commitment to their studies and the Christian values of the Sixth Forms.
- Provide equality of opportunity, with mutual respect and positive encouragement.
- Build and further develop a partnership with parents, schools, parishes, higher education, employers and the local community.
- Value staff and support their professional development.

In doing this we will reflect Christ's teaching in the life and work of the whole Sixth Forms.

### 1. Introduction

The fund is made available from the government through its funding body, the Young People's Learning Agency (YPLA), for 16-19 year olds, to provide assistance to students whose access to, or completion of, education is inhibited by financial constraints or barriers.

The '16-19 Bursary' fund is available to help young people facing financial hardship to stay in fulltime education. The 16-19 Bursary is a limited fund made available for supporting eligible young people with the costs of food, books, and educational visits or other course materials or equipment essential to successfully complete their post-16 programme of study.

The Sixth Forms is awarded an allocation to administer and - apart from mandatory payments to some of the most vulnerable groups of students - the distribution of the Bursary Fund is at the discretion of the Sixth Form.

The '16-19 Bursary' fund is targeted towards those young people considered most in need of financial support. Christ the King Sixth Forms have a set eligibility criterion to ensure that bursary funds go to those who need it the most. Any young person who meets the eligibility criteria can apply for a CTK Bursary. Applications are Means Tested based on total household income and original documentation will be required to support this. The Bursary Fund awarded will be subject to Terms and Conditions as set by Christ the King Sixth Forms including agreeing to meet the standards expectations regarding behaviour and attendance that is required of a CTK student.

The 16-19 Bursary Fund is designed to be paid to students who are aged under 19 on 31 August, in a given year. Students aged 19 or over are only eligible to receive a discretionary bursary if they are continuing on a programme of study that they began aged 16-18 or have an Education, Health and Care Plan.

## **2. Guidelines**

These guidelines have been developed by Christ the King Sixth Forms to promote fairness and consistency and adhere to those in place by the Education Skills Funding Agency (ESFA). The purpose of the Bursary is to:

- support and retain students by ensuring barriers to learning are removed.
- promote a positive attitude to learning.

We will ensure all eligible students are identified and assessed in a designated time frame and maximise the amount of funding available to support individual students.

All students will receive a payment at each Performance Monitoring window so long as they meet the criteria listed below and the remainder of the money will be used to buy necessary equipment for students to achieve. All students will receive items such as stationary, support for essential trips related to the curriculum, residentials, UCAS fees as well as a contribution towards clothing for Sixth Form. In the academic year 2023/2024 it is proposed that a portable IT device is issued for all bursary students to ensure they are not negatively impacted when studying off site. Due to the changing landscape in relation to free London travel this aspect of financial support will be reviewed once confirmation has been received from Central Government.

The Performance Report element of the Bursary fund will be paid based on attendance, punctuality, and good conduct. The Bursary will be applied fairly and consistently ensuring the process is clear and accessible to all students.

## **3. CTK Bursary**

The CTK Bursary, Hardship Fund and Free School Meals have four elements, these are:

- Defined vulnerable groups.
- Discretionary Bursary including curriculum and progression support bursary.

The eligibility criteria for each of these elements are detailed below.

### **3.1 Defined Vulnerable Groups**

A maximum bursary of £1,200 per year can be paid to following groups of students:

- Young people in care (LAC)
- Care Leavers
- Young people in receipt of Income Support or Universal Credit allowance – supporting themselves or financially supporting themselves and someone who is dependent on them, such as a child.
  - Young people in receipt of Disability Living Allowance in their own right.
  - Eligibility will be based on need, and this will be determined by a meeting with the Assistant Principal for Character and Wellbeing at the relevant sixth form.

The government has identified the above learners as a priority group of young people and the Sixth Form can claim this money directly from the ESFA.

Proof must be provided showing the criteria for the bursary for vulnerable groups in full. Evidence includes:

For example:

- Care or a care leaver, written confirmation of their current or previous looked-after status from the relevant local authority
- For students in receipt of Universal Credit or Income Support, a copy of the award notice. This must clearly state that the claim is in the student's name/confirm they are entitled to the benefits in their own right.
- For students in receipt of Universal Credit, we must see a document such as a tenancy agreement in the student's name, a child benefit receipt.

Each student who is approved for this bursary and requires a portable IT device and who has not already been allocated one by Social Services, Christ the King Sixth Forms will provide with one.

### **3.2 Discretionary Bursary**

Students, who meet the criteria for the discretionary bursary must provide the evidence listed below:

- Evidence of household income, including benefits/tax credits must not exceed £24,000 per annum (certified by a DWA letter).
- This evidence is obtained from Universal Credits (Working Tax Credit, Child Tax Credits, State Pension Credit)
- Take home pay from employment in addition to Universal Credits

**For all of the above statements for THREE months are to be provided**

For the academic year 2023 /2024 the discretionary bursary will be used in the following ways:

- (i) A cash bursary payment will be up to £200 pounds per learner, per academic year, paid in four equal payments of up to £50, following each Performance Monitoring Report. This will be paid directly into a student's bank account. This payment is subject to change due to demand on bursary funds and number of applications.
- (ii) Other course related items, such as stationary, contribution towards trips and visits.
- (iii) An allocation of up to £50 for clothes, uniform, or essential protective clothing.
- (iv) UCAS fees and up to £40 to visit universities or attend employer/apprenticeship interviews.
- (v) Bursary students who are unable to pay the book deposit fee at enrolment will also be exempt from paying the £40 textbook deposit. Textbooks will be given to bursary students in the first term of the new academic year. The deposit will be collected by making a deduction of £10 will be taken from the first four cash bursary payments. If the textbooks are returned at the end of the course £40 will be paid to students.

To support students to study a portable IT device will be issued for all students in receipt of bursary in the 2023/2024 academic year. This will help ensure that barriers to learning are removed for all students on bursary. The electronic device will be allocated on a long-term loan basis to students and returned at the end of their studies at the Sixth Form. These students will not be asked to pay a deposit for the portable device, but they will sign an agreement that the item should be returned.

Students who are eligible to receive a Defined Vulnerable Groups Bursary are not entitled to receive a Discretionary Bursary as well.

The cheapest form of travel should always be the first option e.g., travel by coach or booking rail tickets in advance.

The amount of money available to support trips and visits will be determined once the overall cost is known and final agreement on the contribution will be authorised by the Assistant Principal Character and Wellbeing.

**4. Payment of Bursaries**

**4.1 Defined Vulnerable Groups Payment**

This bursary is paid in six instalments of a maximum amount of £200.00 linked to authorised attendance, as set out above.

**Payment**

100% - 95% authorised attendance	£200.00 (100% payment)
94% -90% authorised attendance	£160.00 (80% payment)
89% - 85% authorised attendance	£100.00(50% payment)
84% or below authorised attendance	No payment

*\*It will be the student’s responsibility to ensure that their attendance record is accurate should they have any concerns they need to speak with their Assistant Principal for Character Education and Wellbeing.*

**4.2 Discretionary Bursary Payment**

This bursary is paid in four instalments of £50 is linked to authorised attendance as recorded on Pro-Monitor and payment is made as follows:

100% - 95% authorised attendance	£50 (100% payment)
94% -90% authorised attendance	£40 (80% payment)
89% - 85% authorised attendance	£25 (50% payment)

84% or below authorised attendance	No payment
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The payments are made following Performance Monitoring Reports in October, December, February, and April.

*\*It will be the student's responsibility to ensure that their attendance record is accurate should they have any concerns they need to speak with their Assistant Principal for Character Education and Wellbeing*

*\* The Assistant Principal for Character Education and Wellbeing has the authority to make changes to payments if there are extenuating circumstances that have affected a student's attendance.*

## 5. Severe Hardship Fund

Hardship requests should be made directly to the site Assistant Principal for Wellbeing and Character, these are paid at the discretion of Christ the King Sixth Forms and there is no right of appeal should the request be unsuccessful. Outcomes of Hardship requests will be communicated within 5 working days.

In cases of extreme hardship students may request consideration for a small one-off payment or payment in kind. These requests will be considered on a case-by-case basis and all cases will need to be appropriately evidenced. For example, a small hardship payment or payment in kind may be made when the request is supported by social services or if a student's circumstances change without warning. Hardship requests should be made directly to the Assistant Principal for Character and Wellbeing.

Hardship support funds are paid at the discretion of Christ the King Sixth Forms and there is no right of appeal should the request be unsuccessful.

## 6. Free Meals in Further Education

To qualify for free school meals students must be in receipt of, or have parents/guardians who are 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 guaranteed element of State Pension Credit, Child Tax Credit (provided they are not entitled to Working Tax Credit).
- Have an annual gross income of no more than **£16,190.00** as assessed by HMRC.
- Working Tax Credit run-on – paid for 4 weeks after you stop qualifying for Working Tax Credit.
- Universal Credit with net earnings not exceeding **£7,400.00** per annum after tax and not including any benefits received.

## 7. Payment Method

All payments will be made by automatic bank transfer (BACS) to a Bank Account in the student's name and all students who successfully apply for a bursary must have a bank account. No payments will be made by cash, cheque or into another person's bank account.

## 8. Residency Criteria

In order to be entitled for a Bursary award the student must satisfy one of the residency criteria listed below. The students will choose which category describes their circumstances and completes the residency section of the Bursary Fund Application Form.

Category	Description
<b>A</b>	I am a British National and hold a United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland passport or an Irish National.
<b>B</b>	I have 'settled status'* and have been ordinarily resident in the UK for at least three years prior to the start of my learning programme.  <i>* 'Settled Status' means having either indefinite leave to enter or remain or having the right of abode in the UK.</i>
<b>C</b>	I am a European Union National or a family member of an EEA or Swiss worker who has been resident in the UK before 1 January 2021 with settled or pre-settled status.
<b>D</b>	I am the child of a Turkish Worker who has been lawfully employed and resident in the UK before January 2021.
<b>E</b>	My passport has been endorsed to show they have right of abode in the UK
<b>F</b>	I am the child of a refugee who has been granted Humanitarian protection or discretionary leave or exceptional leave to enter the UK and remain.
<b>G</b>	My overseas passport has been endorsed and shows that I have a right of abode in the UK.
<b>H</b>	I have been issued with a certificate of naturalisation or registration that confirms I am a British Citizen.
<b>I</b>	I have a Hong Kong British National (Overseas) (BN(O) visa which gives me permission from the Home Office to reside in the UK
<b>J</b>	I do not meet any of the above criteria
<b>K</b>	I have refugee status (RS) or humanitarian protection (HP) or discretionary leave (DL) or exceptional leave to enter or remain in the UK.
<b>L</b>	I have recently been given settled status (this means you have been granted indefinite leave to enter or remain, right of abode or British citizenship within the 3 years immediately preceding the start of the course)
<b>M</b>	I have been granted pre-settled status following our exit from EU

## 9. Qualifying Condition Requirements

The student will need to complete a qualifying learning period before they are able to receive Bursary payments. However, they can make an application ahead of the four-week qualifying period and in a case of extreme hardship, consideration will also be given for payment in advance of the four-week period. Payments from the Bursary Fund in the case of emergencies can be authorised by the Deputy Principal (Wellbeing & Character).

To receive any Bursary, the student must meet a minimum weekly attendance and punctuality of 90%. To ensure that the full amount is paid 100% attendance and punctuality needs to be achieved. It will be the student's responsibility to ensure that their attendance record is accurate should they have any concerns they need to speak with their Assistant Principal for Character and Wellbeing. In addition, they must meet minimum behaviour and progress expectations. If they do not meet these conditions, Christ the King Sixth Forms reserves the right to withdraw or suspend their Bursary payments. These conditions will not be additional to those expected of any other student within the Sixth Forms.

*Exceptions* - There will be occasions when we feel it is appropriate to continue to award a bursary even if a student has fallen below minimum attendance requirements. For example, bereavement, serious illness or injury, sick dependant/family member. This will be authorised by the site Assistant Principal of Character & Wellbeing.

## **10. Applications**

Applications for a Bursary must be made using the correct Application Form and should be submitted in full along with the required evidence by 21<sup>st</sup> October 2023. Applications made after this date will be considered, as long as sufficient funds are available. However, once the Bursary Fund has been used, it may not be possible to consider further applications. Consideration will be given to assisting the student to make an application if they are unable to do so due to a level of learning difficulty and/or disability. Consideration must also be given to assisting the student in making an application if they are not able to provide supporting evidence due to difficulties with engagement or support from parent/guardian/carer(s).

- **Bursary Application**

Successful bursary awards will only require evidence on application. Thereafter an annual bursary eligibility self-declaration form needs to be completed by the student to confirm that their household circumstances have not changed.

- **Free School Meals Application**

Current eligibility for free meals only requires a single check of household income for each phase of education e.g. 16 to 19.

## **11. Process**

The named contact at Christ the King Sixth Forms for all 16-19 Bursary support/enquiries is Mrs Salmon Assistant Principal for Character and Wellbeing, who can be contacted on [r.salmon@ctksfc.ac.uk](mailto:r.salmon@ctksfc.ac.uk)

5% of the allocated fund will be used towards the administration of the bursaries in accordance with the ESFA 16-19 Bursary Fund Guide for 2023 /24.

For audit purposes, hard copies of all documentation for the Bursary Fund will be kept for a period of 6 years. This documentation must include evidence of the application process, documents relating to how the student was assessed and the funds issued.

All applications for a Bursary or to access the contingency fund will be assessed by a 16-19 Bursary Application Panel, consisting of the:

- Site based - Assistant Principal for Character and Wellbeing.

The Panel will review the application, supporting evidence and any other personal circumstantial evidence and the student will be notified of the outcome within two weeks of receipt.

## **12. Appeals**

If a student or their parent/guardian/carer(s) is dissatisfied with Christ the King Sixth Form decision not to award a Guaranteed or Discretionary Bursary, the student or their parent/guardian/carer(s) should discuss this in the first instance with the Mrs Salmon Assistant Principal for Character and Wellbeing at [r.salmon@ctksfc.ac.uk](mailto:r.salmon@ctksfc.ac.uk)

If the student or their parent/guardian/carer is still unsatisfied following the conversation with Mrs Salmon is, then the student (not someone on his/her behalf) can make an appeal. The appeal should be made to the site based Assistant Principal of Student Wellbeing & Character either by email or in writing, within one week of the decision.

The outcome of the appeal will be communicated to the student by email, within one week of the appeal being received.

If the student is still not satisfied, he/she may make a further appeal to the Deputy Principal Mrs Crampton, [c.crampton@ctksfc.ac.uk](mailto:c.crampton@ctksfc.ac.uk). The outcome of the appeal is final.

## **13. Confidentiality**

Applications and supporting evidence will be confidential to the 16-19 Bursary Application Panel and in the event of an appeal he/she involved in the Bursary Appeal. The applications and supporting evidence will remain confidential during processing, payment, and storage. If it is necessary to obtain additional information to reach a decision, the student and/or their parent/guardian/carer(s) will be told the reasons why this is necessary prior to obtaining further information.

## **14. Equality**

In determining payments of the 16-19 Bursary Fund, students will not be discriminated against on the basis of their protected characteristics. Payments are also subject to the public sector equality duty in section 149(1) of the Equality Act.

## **15. Change of Financial Circumstances**



If a student is in receipt of a Bursary, they have a duty to inform Christ the King Sixth Forms should their, or those of their parent/guardian/carer(s), financial circumstances change (e.g., increase in household income that would affect entitlement to Free School Meals). This does not automatically mean any future Bursary payments will be stopped but would result in a convening of the 16-19 Bursary Application Panel to determine whether the payments continue or be stopped, and the funds redistributed.

## **16. Further Help and Guidance**

The bursary policy will be reviewed annually. Should you require further help or advice regarding the CTK Bursary Policy, please contact your site Assistant Principal for Character and Wellbeing.

**Date Revised: May 2023**  
**Next Review Due: May 2024**