BISHOP VESEY'S GRAMMAR SCHOOL
Student Financial Support Funding Policy

Date of last review	October 2026
Review prepared by:	Vicki Broad Finance and Operations Director
Review date/by whom	Headteacher and Report to Full Governing Board
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Signed by Chair of Finance, Estates and People Committee:	

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Student Financial Support Funding Policy 2026–27

1. Policy Statement

This policy is written with the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) in mind, particularly Articles 3 and 28 — the child's best interests and the right to education.

The policy implements the DfE 16–19 Bursary Fund Guide (2026-27) and sets out how Bishop Vesey's Grammar School supports students whose access to, or completion of, education is inhibited by financial constraints.

We recognise that students have differing financial circumstances and differing participation costs. Awards are therefore based on evidenced financial need, actual participation costs, and available DfE funding. Not all eligible applicants will receive the same level of support.

2. Eligibility Criteria

Applications will be considered from students aged **16–19 on 1 September 2026**, who meet DfE residency criteria and fall into one of the following groups.

2.1 Group A — Vulnerable Bursary (DfE-defined)

Students are eligible if they are:

- in care
- care leavers
- receiving Income Support (IS)
- receiving Universal Credit (UC) because they are financially supporting themselves (with or without dependants)
- receiving Disability Living Allowance (DLA) or Personal Independence Payment (PIP) **and** Employment and Support Allowance (ESA) or UC

Important: Students in Group A are not automatically entitled to a fixed bursary amount. Awards must be based solely on actual participation costs, and students may receive a lower amount or no bursary if they do not have any evidenced costs.

2.2 Groups B–D — Discretionary Bursary (School-defined)

Students must be studying **at least two A Levels** and provide **annual evidence** of household income.

Group B — Highest Priority

Eligible if household circumstances include:

- eligible for Free School Meals
- gross annual household income **below £17,000**
- key household income provider in receipt of UC

Group C — Medium Priority

Eligible if:

- gross annual household income **£17,001–£22,000**
- previous Pupil Premium may be considered only where supported by current income evidence and demonstrated participation costs

Group D — Lower Priority

Eligible if:

- gross annual household income **£22,001–£26,500**
- support only provided where specific participation costs create a genuine financial barrier

2.3 Cross-Group Conditions (Groups B–D)

Students in Groups B–D will only receive discretionary bursary support where evidenced participation costs

create a genuine financial barrier. All awards are based on demonstrated need and available DfE funding.

3. Evidence Requirements

All applicants must provide current, valid evidence each academic year. Acceptable evidence includes:

- UC statements
- P60 or annual tax summary
- three recent wage slips
- tax credit award notices
- benefit entitlement letters

Applications cannot be processed without supporting evidence.

4. Funding Bands and Award Levels

The school uses indicative funding bands to support consistent decision-making. These bands apply only to Groups B–D. They are not entitlements; all awards are based on evidenced participation costs.

4.1 Group A — Vulnerable Bursary (No Bands)

Group A students are assessed only on actual participation costs. Awards may be full, partial, or none, depending on evidence.

4.2 Funding Bands (Groups B–D Only)

Band 1 — High Need (Typically Group B)

Indicative range: **£800–£2,000** Used where students demonstrate significant participation costs, such as:

- daily travel
- specialist subject equipment
- multiple curriculum trips
- laptop/home-study support
- combined or complex barriers

Band 2 — Medium Need (Typically Group C)

Indicative range: **£300–£800** Used where students demonstrate moderate participation costs, such as:

- partial travel support
- essential equipment
- revision materials
- occasional curriculum trips

Band 3 — Lower Need (Typically Group D)

Indicative range: **£150–£300** Used where students demonstrate lower participation costs, such as:

- occasional travel
- small equipment items
- single curriculum trip

5. Additional Costs

Any eligible student may apply for help with additional costs necessary to support their studies. Awards will depend on:

- eligibility group
- funding band (Groups B–D only)
- evidenced participation costs
- available DfE funding

5.1 Travel Costs

Students must provide evidence of expected travel costs (bus pass receipt, rail season ticket cost, fare quotation). Travel payments may be adjusted according to attendance.

5.2 Types of Support Available

Full or significant funding for:

- specialist subject equipment
- curriculum trips required for the course
- revision guides or similar materials
- re-marks for external examinations (subject to Deputy Head approval)

Partial contributions towards:

- laptop or other equipment necessary for home study

5.3 Exclusions

The bursary fund does not support:

- living costs
- extra-curricular or non-compulsory activities

Receipts may be required before payment.

6. Application and Payment Process

- Applications must be submitted by **26 September 2026**.
- Claims are assessed by the Finance & Operations Director and authorised by the Head of Sixth Form.
- Successful applicants receive an offer letter.
- Students must sign the Student Agreement confirming accuracy of information, authenticity of evidence, understanding of conditions, and commitment to notify the school of any changes.
- A standardised bursary assessment checklist is used for consistency and compliance.
- A central bursary register is maintained.
- The school will retain evidence of eligibility, assessed financial need, participation costs and payment decisions for DfE audit purposes, in line with the 2026-27 Bursary Fund Guide.
- Students must reapply in Year 13; support levels may differ. All students, including those eligible for a vulnerable bursary, must reapply each academic year
- Payments are made half-termly via BACS into the student's own bank account.
- Late applications may be accepted but will be pro-rated.

7. Conditions for Receiving Bursary Support

Bursary payments may be reduced or withheld if:

- attendance falls below **90%** without authorised reasons
- punctuality is persistently poor
- behaviour concerns persist despite warnings
- serious misconduct occurs
- required evidence is not provided
- All bursary awards, including vulnerable bursaries, must be supported by evidence of actual participation costs.
- The student fails to comply with the Student Agreement

8. Appeals Process

Students may appeal within 10 working days of receiving their bursary decision. Appeals are reviewed by a senior leader not involved in the original assessment. Outcomes are communicated in writing.

9. Data Protection and Record Retention

All bursary applications and evidence are stored securely in line with the school's Data Protection Policy and retained for six years for audit purposes.

Appendices

Appendix 1 - Bishop Vesey's Grammar School 16-19 Bursary application Form 2026-27

Appendix 2 - 16-19 Bursary Fund Student Declaration 2026-27.docx

Appendix 3 – 16-19 Bursary Fund Register - 2026_27.xlsx

Appendix 4 - Student Bursary Confirmation Letter Template.docx

Appendix 5 - Withdrawal of 16-19 Bursary Letter Template.docx