



# Thinking Schools Academy Trust

## *“Transforming Life Chances”*

### **16 to 19 Bursary Policy**



This policy was updated and ratified in June 26
The policy is to be reviewed once a year

## Types of Bursaries

There are three main types of bursaries available:

**Travel Bursary:** This bursary designed to support those students where travel distance has a large financial implication. It is means tested **AND** is based on crow flies distance calculated using [www.freemaptools.com](http://www.freemaptools.com) with the units toggle set to miles:



- For households where the household income as evidenced by payslips **and** benefit statements is below £50,000 **AND** where the student as evidenced by child benefit letter lives in a qualifying postcode (the postcode on this letter will be used to calculate the distance from the school for the purposes of travel bursary award).

	Distance	Max Allocation <sup>i1,2</sup>
<b>Dist 1</b>	8 – 12 miles	£500
<b>Dist 2</b>	12 – 16 miles	£700
<b>Dist 3</b>	Over 16 miles	£1000

**Vulnerable Student Bursary:** This bursary offers up to £1,000 per year for students. We offer a vulnerable student bursary to provide additional financial support for students facing challenging personal circumstances, helping ensure they can fully participate and succeed in their education.

Which include students who are:

- In or have recently<sup>2</sup> left local authority care
- Receiving Income Support or Universal Credit in their own name
- Receiving Disability Living Allowance (DLA) or Personal Independence Payment (PIP) in their own name, along with Employment and Support Allowance (ESA) or Universal Credit

**Discretionary Bursary:** This bursary is awarded by educational institutions based on individual assessments of financial need. It is intended for students who require financial assistance to continue their education but do not qualify for the Vulnerable Student Bursary. The amount awarded varies depending on individual circumstances and is allocated using the banding system below.

	Household Income		Max Allocation <sup>ii3</sup>
<b>Band A</b>	£0	£19,999	£1,000
<b>Band B</b>	£20,000	£24,999	£800
<b>Band C</b>	£25,000	£29,999	£600
<b>Band D</b>	£30,000	£34,999	£400

<sup>1</sup> Distances are calculated and rounded to the nearest 1/10 of a mile.

<sup>2</sup> Evidenced as being in care of the local authority no longer than 6 months previously for a minimum duration of 6 months

<sup>3</sup> Actual Allocations are always at or below the maximum and will depend on numbers of applicants for the available funds and will be allocated equably within the funding formula after a 5% cost of managing the process is maintained by the school

## Purpose and Usage

The travel, discretionary and vulnerable bursary funds are intended to assist with education-related costs, such as:

- Books and other essential equipment
- Specialist clothing required for courses
- Local travel costs
- Costs associated with attending university interviews, required external exams (such as LNAT, UCAT, TMUA or others as needed) or travel to work experience placements.

*It's important to note that the bursary is not meant to cover general living expenses or extracurricular activities that are not essential to the student's study programme.*

## Eligibility and Application

To be eligible for one of the three 16 to 19 Bursary Funds, students must:

- Be aged 16 to 19 on 31 August of the academic year in question
- Be enrolled in a publicly funded school, college, or training provider in England
- Have and maintain a high level of punctuality and attendance (generally considered to be above 94% with fewer than 5% lates). Attendance falling below expectations may result in bursary payments being suspended, though where this does occur Mr Anderson and Mr Fielding will review on an individual basis to check the circumstances<sup>4</sup>.
- Meet the specific criteria set out for either of the bursaries

Applications are made through this form **ONLY**. Students must complete the application form themselves and will be required to provide evidence of their household's financial situation.

There are 7 sections of this form that **MUST** be completed by Monday 6<sup>th</sup> October 2026<sup>5</sup>. It is at this point applications will be reviewed and bursary funds allotted for draw down.

<b>Section 1</b>	Details of Applicant
<b>Section 2</b>	Details of Provider and Course
<b>Section 3</b>	Bursary Type
<b>Section 4</b>	Evidence
<b>Section 5</b>	Use of Funding
<b>Section 6</b>	Declaration by Applicant
<b>Section 7</b>	Bank Account Details

The vulnerable student bursary and the discretionary bursary are paid on receipt of requested resources, (as itemised in the purpose and usage section above) evidenced as being paid for by the student or the school purchase of said resources from an approved supplier such as Amazon. Attendance over the preceding 6 weeks will be reviewed before any reimbursement or purchase will be made. Payments will typically be received within 10 working days of submission of receipt.

The travel bursary will be paid in 2 tranches. The first being near the beginning of term 2 using term 1 attendance calculations and the second near the beginning of term 4 using term 2 and term 3 attendance calculations.

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<sup>4</sup> It is appreciated that there will be exceptional circumstances which might include national transport disruptions, bereavement and non-elective medical appointments for which appropriate evidence must be provided

<sup>5</sup> Late applications will be accepted where circumstances have changed and funds are still available

Lack of completion of any section of the form and lack of evidence might put your application at risk of being declined and resubmission might mean that you miss the deadline.

No funds will be allocated for spending until term 2 due to the need to fairly and proportionately allocate funds to all applicants who meet the deadline.

All applications will be reviewed by a panel consisting of Mr Anderson, Mr Fielding and Mrs Arnold, with final decisions being made by Mr Anderson.

Where applicants are successful, they will be informed by Mrs Arnold and payments and/or processes for reimbursements confirmed.

Where applicants are unsuccessful, they will be informed by Mrs Arnold with a clear explanation. If any applicant remains dissatisfied with the decision they can submit an appeal.

### **Appeals / complaints process**

Students have the right to appeal a bursary decision within 5 working days of notification. Appeals must be submitted in writing to the main school office and marked bursary appeal, clearly outlining the criterion-based reason for the appeal and will be reviewed by a member of the Senior Leadership Team not involved in the original decision. The outcome of the appeal will be final.

### **Fraud / verification**

All applications are subject to verification checks. Any false or misleading information may result in withdrawal of bursary funding and could lead to disciplinary action in line with school policy.

### **Data protection**

All personal and financial information provided will be processed in accordance with UK data protection legislation and used solely for the purpose of assessing bursary eligibility. Data will be stored securely and only accessed by authorised staff.

### SECTION 1: Details of Applicant

*This MUST be the students details and be completed by the student*

Forename	<input type="text"/>	Surname	<input type="text"/>
Form	<input type="text"/>	Date of Birth	<input type="text"/> / <input type="text"/> / <input type="text"/>
Address	<input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/>		
Postcode	<input type="text"/>		
Email	<input type="text"/>		
Mobile	<input type="text"/>		

### SECTION 2: Details of Courses

*Please list the subjects that you are taking*

Subject 1	<input type="text"/>
Subject 2	<input type="text"/>
Subject 3	<input type="text"/>
Subject 4	<input type="text"/>

### SECTION 3: Bursary Type

*Please tick which type of bursary/band/dist you are applying for.*

Vulnerable Bursary	<input type="checkbox"/>
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Discretionary Bursary	<input type="checkbox"/>
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Band A	<input type="checkbox"/>
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Band B	<input type="checkbox"/>
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Band C	<input type="checkbox"/>
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Band D	<input type="checkbox"/>
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Travel Bursary	<input type="checkbox"/>
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Dist 1	<input type="checkbox"/>
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Dist 2	<input type="checkbox"/>
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Dist 3	<input type="checkbox"/>
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*Please note that students are eligible to apply for the travel bursary alongside the vulnerable bursary or the discretionary bursary, as long as all applicable criteria for each bursary are satisfied.*

**SECTION 4: Evidence**

Please tick to indicate which supporting evidence is attached to support your application, evidence should include the entire document and be dated within the last 6 months. Please bring copies as these will be kept on file for the external Audit purposes.

**Vulnerable Bursary**

In care as a looked after child or a care leaver – Letter from the Local Authority	
Universal Credit statement in Students Name	
Income support letter in Students Name	
Disability Living Allowance or Personal Independence Payment in Students Name	

<b>Discretionary &amp; Travel Bursary</b>	<b>Parent or Carer 1</b>	<b>Parent or Carer 2<sup>6</sup></b>
Name		
Gross Annual Salary <sup>7</sup>		
Annual Benefit Income		
Relationship to Student		

Evidence can be selected from the list below but must evidence all of the household income

Tax Credit Award Notice 2025/2026	
Tax credit Award Review 2025	
Universal Credit	
Employment Support Allowance (ESA)	
Income Support (IS)	
Job Seekers Allowance (JSA)	
Guaranteed State Pension	
Self Employment Tax Return	
Child Benefit Statement	
Pay Slips	
P60	
Other .....	

If there is insufficient evidence, then the issue will be discussed with the person who is applying for the bursary (the student) and no one else.

<sup>6</sup> Only include if living in the same household

<sup>7</sup> To include work salary, child maintenance, share dividends, pension payments etc





