

16–19 Bursary Fund FSM Application Guidance (2026-2027)

The 16-19 Bursary is awarded to eligible students to provide support towards the cost of transport and other course-related costs. The payment of the Bursary award is subject to DfE guidance and Durham Sixth Form Centre's Bursary Policy which can be accessed via:

- <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/16-to-19-bursary-fund-provider-guide/16-to-19-bursary-fund-guide-2026-to-2027>
- <https://www.durhamsixthformcentre.org.uk/financial-support/>

The guidance below will help you complete the application form and identify which Bursary you may be eligible to apply for. Bursary payments are only made if students' attendance and behaviour meet the required standard and they remain at Durham Sixth Form Centre. **If your attendance falls below 90% your payment may be reduced.**

Eligibility Criteria

- Aged 16–18 on 31 August 2026.
- Aged 19+ only if continuing a course started aged 16–18 or with an EHCP.
- Students aged 16 or under are only eligible to receive a discretionary bursary in exceptional circumstances; where a student is following an accelerated study programme.
- UK resident or with legal right to reside in the UK.
- **Verified as eligible for FSM**

The Government has changed the eligibility for Free School Meals to include households in receipt of Universal Credit. Students previously eligible for FSM must re-apply.

Free School Meal Card

Durham Sixth Form Centre issues cards to students to use in the on-site cafes, and is loaded with £4 credit each school day. This does not roll-over.

To apply for FSM check your school email for the Finance welcome letter. This includes the link to the FSM verification application. Ask your parent or guardian to complete the information. Once you have completed the application we will arrange for a temporary FSM card to be available for you to collect from the Finance office, located on the ground floor of the Digital Media Centre.

As soon as your eligibility is confirmed we will contact you, and issue a permanent FSM Card. We will then send you a Bursary application form to complete.

Free School Meal Bursary

In addition to the FSM Card, students who are eligible for FSM will also be eligible for the FSM Bursary Award. This can be used to help cover the cost of transport to and from school in order to access further education.

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The FSM Bursary is £900 per year and is paid in 3 instalments:

- Before October half term holiday
- January 2027
- April 2027

In line with DfE regulations, Bursary Awards are paid directly into the Student's bank account.

If you have any queries regarding the FSM card or FSM Bursary please email finance@durhamsixthformcentre.org.uk