Wembley Multi-Academy Trust

ACHIEVEMENT FOR ALL

WEMBLEY HIGH TECHNOLOGY COLLEGE

16 – 19 BURSARY POLICY

2026 – 2027

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WEMBLEY HIGH TECHNOLOGY MISSION STATEMENT

Our mission is to deliver ‘Achievement for All’, one child at a time. We do this by creating a dynamic and inclusive learning environment where every student is empowered to achieve the grades that unlock the doors of opportunity. Driven by our core values of hard work, ambition, resilience, empowerment, diversity, and helping others, we believe that academic excellence is the golden ticket to success. We are committed to equipping our students with the skills, knowledge, and love of learning that they need to excel, ensuring they have the confidence and capability to shape a better world. Through perseverance and collaboration, our students will not only achieve their personal goals but also become compassionate leaders who inspire positive change.

At Wembley Multi-Academy Trust, we are committed to ensuring all students have equal access to quality education within our sixth form.

The Government has set aside money for schools, colleges, training providers and local authorities to allocate to young people who need financial support to stay on in further education or training. This is called the 16-19 Bursary Fund. It could help you with any education-related costs that may arise during the school year, including essentials like a meal during the day or transport to school. Alternatively, you might need extra help to buy additional books, clothing or equipment for your course, or to pay for educational visits.

To apply for a bursary, you must be aged between 16 and 19 and in full-time or part-time further education or training.

1. Aims and scope

The 16 to 19 bursary fund provides financial support to help students overcome the specific financial barriers to participation they face so they can remain in education.

There are 2 types of 16 to 19 bursaries and this policy refers to both:

- Bursaries for defined vulnerable groups
- Discretionary bursaries

This policy aims to:

- Set out clear and transparent processes for the use and allocation of 16 to 19 bursary funds
- Make sure that bursary funds are administered appropriately and fairly, with due regard to the Equality Act 2010
- Make clear to parents/carers and students the type of support that is available and how to apply for it
- Make clear to parents/carers and students the attendance and behaviour conditions for receiving the funds

2. Guidance

This policy is based on advice from the Department for Education (DfE) on the 16 to 19 bursary fund for the 2026 to 2027 academic year.

3. Definitions

- 'In care' is defined as: children looked after by a local authority on a voluntary basis (section 20 of the Children Act 1989) or under a care order (section 31 of the Children Act 1989)
- 'Looked after child' is defined as: a child in the care of a local authority or who is provided with accommodation by the authority in the exercise of any functions for more than 24 hours (section 22 of the Children Act 1989)
- 'Care leaver' is defined as:
    - A young person aged 16 or 17 who was previously looked after for a period of 13 weeks consecutively (or periods amounting to 13 weeks), which began after the age of 14 and ended after the age of 16, or
    - A young person aged 18 or above who was looked after prior to becoming 18 for a period of 13 weeks consecutively (or periods amounting to 13 weeks), which began after the age of 14 and ended after the age of 16

4. Roles and responsibilities

4.1 The Board of Trustees

The governing board has overall responsibility for:

- Approving this 16 to 19 bursary fund policy
- Monitoring the implementation of this policy
- Ensuring compliance with relevant requirements

4.2 The headteacher

The headteacher is responsible for:

- Making sure that staff are familiar with this 16 to 19 bursary fund policy
- Making sure the policy is being applied consistently
- Setting eligibility criteria for bursary funding and making sure these comply with the Equality Act 2010
- Promoting awareness of the 16 to 19 bursary fund to prospective applicants and their parents/carers

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4.3 Bursary panel

The bursary panel is responsible for reviewing applications and supporting evidence in accordance with this policy.

The panel consists of:

- The Deputy Headteacher responsible for Sixth Form
- Assistant Headteachers responsible for Sixth Form
- The Designated Safeguarding Lead
- The Chief Financial Officer

4.4 School business manager/bursar/head of finance

The Chief Financial Officer is responsible for ensuring that the bursary funding is accounted for accurately.

4.5 Staff

Our staff are responsible for implementing this 16 to 19 bursary fund policy consistently.

4.6 Parents/carers

Parents/carers are also expected to notify staff or the headteacher of:

- Any concerns or queries regarding this 16 to 19 bursary fund policy
- Any change in circumstances that might affect eligibility for bursary funding

4.7 Students

Pupils are responsible for meeting the conditions attached to the receipt of any support from the bursary funding.

4.8 WHTC's responsibilities

WHTC will be responsible for setting eligibility criteria for students at the institution and will set conditions for receiving the bursary, such as regular attendance. Arrangements for applying for bursaries will be straightforward and confidential.

The needs of each student who applies for the bursary will be assessed by WHTC and evidence will be obtained to support each application. WHTC will claim vulnerable bursaries from the Student Bursary Support Service (SBSS) for each eligible student.

Records will be kept by WHTC of all assessments and payments. The application process will maintain confidentiality.

WHTC will make this policy available early enough for students to be able to use the information when deciding which post-16 setting to attend.

WHTC will comply with the requirements of the Equality Act 2010 when setting its criteria and will not discriminate against students because of their protected characteristics.

WHTC will inform the DFE of the total amount of any unspent funds (not previously reported) from any year up to and including the 2026/2027 academic year, by completing the DFE online enquiry form no later than 31 March each year.

WHTC will ensure it completes the new individualised learner record (ILR) or census fields to provide data on the number of students participating in extended work placements.

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5. How we use the bursary fund

Financial support is available to eligible students from the 16 to 19 bursary fund. See sections 6, 7 and 8 below for details of our eligibility criteria.

The fund is intended to support students aged 16 to 19 in overcoming specific financial barriers to participation so they can remain in education.

There are 2 types of 16 to 19 bursaries:

- Bursaries for defined vulnerable groups; and
- Discretionary bursaries

We use the fund to provide students with support to fund:

- Transport
- Books
- Equipment
- Field trips that are essential to the course and other course-related costs
- The costs of attending university interviews and open days
- Specialist clothing
- Emergency meal support

We will provide support for students from the bursary fund by making payments in kind where possible. It will not be provided as regular payments for living costs.

6. Eligibility criteria for the 16 to 19 bursaries

Please note: the following eligibility criteria will be assessed **in addition** to the individual student's actual financial needs. This means:

- No student will automatically be awarded an amount of funding without an assessment of the level of actual financial need they have
- Funding provided to each eligible student is based on their actual participation needs (supported by evidence) and not a flat or fixed-rate payment that does not reflect the actual costs they face

6.1 Age

To be eligible for either bursary in the 2026 to 2027 academic year, students must be at least 16 years old but under 19 years old on 31 August 2026.

Students aged 19 or over are eligible only for a discretionary bursary (see section 6.6 below) if they:

- Are continuing on a study programme or course that they began when they were aged 16 to 18 years old (19+ continuers)
- Have an education, health and care (EHC) plan

Students aged 19 or over are not eligible for bursaries for defined vulnerable groups. In exceptional circumstances, where students under 16 years old are on a funded 16 to 19 study programme at our school, we may use our discretion to pay bursaries to these younger students. However, if these students are enrolled at another institution that receives public funding for them, they will not be eligible for bursary funding.

Students aged under 19 enrolled on higher education qualifications are not eligible for support from the 16-19 bursary fund.

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6.2 Eligible education provision

Students must be participating in provision that is subject to inspection by a public body that assures quality (e.g. Ofsted). The provision must also fall into 1 of these groups:

- Be funded directly by the DfE, or by the DfE via a local authority
- Be otherwise publicly funded and lead to a qualification (up to and including level 3) that is accredited by Ofqual or is on the DfE's list of qualifications
- Non-employed students aged 16 to 19 who are participating in a Prince's Trust Team Programme are also eligible to receive a bursary in the same way as any other student participating in an eligible, publicly funded course.

Students are not eligible if:

- They are on an apprenticeship programme
- They are participating in any waged training

Students who are studying via distance learning are not likely to require financial help from the bursary fund. If they do require financial help, we will provide support in kind, such as a travel pass to attend exams. Details of this shall be decided on a case-by-case basis.

6.3 Residency

Students must meet the residency criteria in the DfE funding rules for 16 to 19 provision.

6.4 Asylum seekers

Accompanied asylum seekers under 18 with an adult relative or partner, and asylum seekers aged 18 and above are entitled to education but are not entitled to public funds. If necessary, they can apply to the Home Office for suitable housing and cash for essentials.

We will provide in-kind support such as books, equipment and a travel pass to asylum seekers who have not had asylum refused.

Unaccompanied asylum-seeking children are:

- The responsibility of the local authority
- To be treated as 'looked after' children
- Eligible for a bursary for vulnerable groups, where they have a financial need

When these students reach 18 years old, we will consider their immigration status. They will still be eligible for a bursary as a student from a defined vulnerable group if the asylum claim is in their favour and will be treated as a 'care leaver' until they reach the upper age limit.

7. Bursaries for young people in defined vulnerable groups

Students with a financial need, who meet 1 of the following 4 criteria below, in addition to the criteria outlined in sections 6.1 to 6.4 above, can apply for a bursary for vulnerable groups.

The defined vulnerable groups are students who are:

- In care (N.B. those who are privately fostered are not classed as looked after)
- Care leavers
- Receiving Income Support (IS) or Universal Credit (UC) because they are financially supporting themselves, or financially supporting themselves and someone who is dependent on them and living with them, such as a child or partner
- Receiving Disability Living Allowance (DLA) or Personal Independence Payments (PIPs) in their own right, as well as Employment and Support Allowance (ESA) or UC in their own right

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UC has replaced IS, as well as other benefits above, for current and future young people aged 16 to 18. However, students aged 19 to 25 and funded from the 16 to 19 budget (such as students with an EHC plan) may still receive the legacy benefits listed above.

Students will be funded to reflect the amount of support they need to participate based on an assessment of the actual participation needs and costs they have.

Students who meet the criteria for a bursary for vulnerable groups are not automatically entitled to a bursary. Students will not receive the bursary if they do not have any actual financial need (for example, because their financial needs are met from other sources and/or because they have no relevant costs). Should we refuse the application on this basis, we will discuss this with the student and their support worker/parent/carer where applicable.

Where a bursary is provided, the funds will generally be up to £1,200 per year for study programmes lasting 30 weeks or more. When calculating the amount, cases will be looked at individually and the outcome based on a particular student's needs. Students will only receive the amount they actually need to participate and will not automatically receive £1,200 if they do not need the full amount.

We can use our discretion, on a case-by-case basis, to provide more than £1,200 per year if it is necessary, in all the circumstances, for the student to remain in education. Any such additional payment will be paid either from the school's discretionary bursary allocation or the school's own funds.

If a student's study programme lasts for less than 30 weeks, this will be considered in the assessment for the bursary amount provided as they may not request as much financial support as those on longer programmes. We will also consider the number of hours involved in a student's study programme when deciding the correct bursary amount to ensure it is appropriate.

We will review the student's eligibility position each academic year. Students will only continue to receive a bursary for vulnerable groups if they continue to satisfy the criteria.

8. Discretionary bursaries

In addition to the criteria outlined in sections 6.1 to 6.4 above, students can apply for a discretionary bursary if they satisfy 1 or more of the following criteria:

- They were on Free School Meals
- Parents/carers are in receipt of Universal Credit
- Transport costs are exceptionally high due their accommodation's distance from the school

Students who do not satisfy any of the criteria listed in this section, but who are able to demonstrate financial hardship arising from other reasons, may still apply for a discretionary bursary.

In assessing any application for a discretionary bursary, we will consider:

- Level of household income

Add to/amend the below as necessary:

- Distance to travel between the student's home and the institution, or the location of a placement
- The number of dependent children in the student's household
- The requirements of their study programme
- Whether the student has additional responsibilities that may mean they need extra help

There is no set limit for the amount of discretionary bursary that can be awarded to students. We will base all decisions around which students receive a discretionary bursary, and how much bursary they receive, on each student's individual circumstances and their actual financial need.

We will review the student's eligibility position each academic year. Students will only continue to receive a discretionary bursary if they continue to satisfy the criteria.

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9. Application and payment process

9.1 Applications

Applications should be submitted via the Sixth Form Bursary Application Form, available by emailing reception@whtc.co.uk.

Applications should ideally be submitted **by 30th September 2026**.

Any enquiries about the application process should be directed to the Deputy Headteacher responsible for Sixth Form.

9.2 Evidence

All applications for 16 to 19 bursaries must be supported by appropriate evidence, which we will verify. Examples of acceptable evidence we may request are:

- A copy of the UC or IS award notice from the Department of Work and Pensions (DWP) and/or evidence of receipt of DLA or PIP, in the student's name
- Documents such as a tenancy agreement in the student's name, a child benefit receipt, birth certificate or utility bills
- Written confirmation of the student's current or previous looked-after status from the relevant local authority

9.3 Payment process

Cash payments or bank transfers will not be made in any circumstances.

In-kind payments, such as travel passes, books, equipment or vouchers for meals are mad instead and are bespoke to the needs of each individual child.

9.4 Conditions for the receipt of bursary payments

the bursary is conditional on students meeting the following conditions in relation to their standards of attendance and behaviour:

- Attendance above a certain amount 95% [subject to exceptional circumstances]
- Following your sixth-form code of conduct
- Receipts for expenditure and purchases made with the bursary funding are provided

All students are required to sign a declaration confirming that they agree to these conditions.

Students who fail to meet these conditions may have their payment withheld, but we will always take students' individual circumstances into consideration. This includes considering the impact on attendance that might be caused by illness, caring responsibilities or other exceptional circumstances.

When students receive in-kind support such as equipment or travel cards, they will be asked to return these if they fail to meet the conditions.

We will stop in-kind purchases where students have decided to withdraw from a study programme.
We reserve the right to take back vouchers from students where they have not been spent for the reasons they were awarded.

We will consider the impact of such an action on the individual student before taking a final decision to do so, and any decision will be confirmed to the student in writing.

10. Change in circumstances

If there are changes in circumstances that may affect eligibility for a bursary, applicants and/or parents/carers must notify the school without delay.

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11. Record keeping and audit

The school will maintain comprehensive and accurate records relating to the 16 to 19 bursary fund. These records will be kept securely and be readily available for audit purposes. Records will include, but are not limited to:

- Copies of application forms and supporting evidence
- Proof that students meet eligibility criteria
- Records of 'zero bursary' students
- Details of assessment decisions and rationale for awards
- Records of all payments made to students, including dates, value and purpose
- Copies of documents signed by students to give formal agreement to the conditions of payment
- Evidence of student attendance and progress monitoring

Records will be retained for 6 academic years after the end of the academic year in which the student completed their programme.

QUALITY ASSURANCE

The setting will use the DFE's '16 to 19 Bursary Fund Checklist' to confirm which documents have been provided for each student, as outlined in the 'Student declarations' section – these relate to the following:

- The application process
- The decision to award the specified amount of bursary
- The funds that have been issued to the student
- The setting will maintain written records of the following:
  - The number of applications received
  - The value of all bursaries awarded
  - The purpose of all bursaries awarded
  - Which applications qualified for the bursary and which did not
  - Brief descriptions of the institution's justification for any decision to award a bursary or not

The setting will retain copies of any documents the student has signed to give formal agreement to their conditions for payment, as well as any others mentioned in this section, for six years.

AUDITING, ASSURANCE AND FRAUD

The setting will be responsible for investigating any suspected instances of fraud relating to bursary fund applications.

The setting will ensure that appropriate processes are in place to record bursary applications and expenditure at student level. This will include:

- A breakdown of the value, including the purpose, type of cost and whether paid or not.
- A brief justification for the decision.

The setting will ensure that it can clearly evidence the following:

- The application process
- How students were assessed as eligible
- How the decision has been made to award the specific amount of bursary based on financial needs
- The funds that have been issued to each student

Copies of documents signed by students to give formal agreement to their conditions for payment will be retained.

Students and their families will be informed that providing false or incomplete information that leads to incorrect payments or overpayment may result in a referral to the police with the possibility of the student and/or their family facing prosecution.

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If evidence comes to light that supplied information is misleading or fraudulent, the setting will stop any further payments and will attempt to recover any payments already provided to the student.

Where significant fraud is identified, the setting will report this to the DFE. Significant fraud involves one or more of the following:

- The amount of money is in excess of £1,200
- The particulars of the fraud are novel, unusual, systematic or complex

There is likely to be great public interest due to the nature of the fraud or the people involved

12. Unspent funds

Funding for bursary funding cannot be carried forward by the school for more than 1 year. Unspent funding must be reported to the DfE by the school using the customer help centre, specifying the amount of funding and the year(s) it relates to, no later than 31 March each year. The DfE will recover all unspent funds.

13. Monitoring arrangements

This policy will be monitored by the headteacher.
This policy will be reviewed by Chief Financial Officer every year. At every review, the policy will be approved by Board of Trustees.

14. Complaints or Appeals

Where any student or parent is unhappy with how we have managed their application for bursary funding or the support that has been provided, they are free to make a complaint or appeal as per the College's complaints policy.

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WHTC Form WHTC/1: Application for Sixth Form Bursary 2026 – 2027

Name		
Address		
Date of Birth		
Courses		
Please indicate if you are applying for:		
Level 1 – Vulnerable Bursary	Evidence required to be shown to school: Either a letter from your Local Authority to confirm: • you are in care • you are leaving care Or a letter from your benefit provider to confirm: • you are claiming Income Support • you are claiming Universal Credit • you are disabled and receive Employment Support Allowance and Disability Living Allowance	
Level 2- Discretionary Bursary	Evidence required to be shown to school: • Free School Meals entitlement • Other extenuating circumstances	
Your signature:		Date:

Please hand in this completed to the Head of Sixth Form by Wednesday 30th September 2026

WHTC Office Use	I authorise that this student is: • Guaranteed a bursary [ ] • Eligible to receive a bursary [ ] Name: Signature: Date:

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