

16 - 19 Bursary, Free Meals and Hardship Policy

Christ the King Sixth Forms have a long tradition of excellence, underpinned by our Catholic values, and we take pride in our strong sense of community. Our staff are our greatest resource, and this core value is enshrined in our mission statement.

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 16 - 19 Bursary Fund is made available through the Government's Education, Skills and Funding Agency (EFSA) so that Christ the King Sixth Forms (CTK) may provide financial support to those students whose participation in education might be hindered due to financial hardship. The 16 - 19 Bursary Fund is to provide financial support to help students overcome the specific financial barriers to participation they face so that they can remain in education.

The 16 - 19 Bursary Fund is a limited fund made available for supporting students to access equipment and materials that are specifically for and essential to, the completion of their post-16 programme of study. The 16 - 19 Bursary Fund, is intended to help students with the essential costs of participating in their study programme it is not intended to support extra-curricular activities or provide learning support – services that institutions give to students – such as counselling, mentoring or extra tutoring'.

Students and parents/carers will have the opportunity to apply as soon as they have enrolled at CTK. Students should submit their application before the end of September, so that a full needs analysis can be undertaken. We endeavour to come back to applicants withing a two-week window of the September deadline, to acknowledge if eligibility criteria have been met. Students can submit an application after September and if funds have not all been spent their application will be considered. Once the allocation has been spent no further funds will be available.

The 16 - 19 Bursary Fund is designed for students who are aged under 19 on 31 August, each year. Students aged 19 or over are only eligible to receive a discretionary bursary if they are continuing a programme of study that they began aged 16 - 18 or have an Education, Health and Care Plan. Students aged 19 or over are not eligible for bursaries for vulnerable groups.

CTK receives an allocation from the ESFA to contribute towards the administrative costs relating to the 16 - 19 Bursary Fund. Allocation of 16 - 19 Bursary Funding will be subject to Terms and Conditions as set by CTK and which are outlined in the Student Bursary Agreement Document. The distribution of the 16 - 19 Bursary Fund is at the discretion of the CTK.

1.1 Residency Criteria

To be eligible to apply for the 16 - 19 Bursary Fund, students will need to confirm that they have legally lived in the UK for the 3 years before their enrolment at CTK.

1.2 Eligibility

The ESFA has set eligibility criteria to ensure that 16 - 19 Bursary Funds go to those who need it the most. Any student who meets the eligibility criteria can apply for a 16 - 19 Bursary Fund. Applications are means-tested based on total household income and original documentation will be required to support any application. In line with EFSFA requirements, CTK will assess the actual financial need as well as eligibility before allocating funds to support students.

At the beginning of each year of study, continuing students already in receipt of the 16 - 19 Bursary Fund, will have to complete a form declaring that their financial situation has not changed in order to receive financial support in that academic year.

Once eligibility for the 16 - 19 Bursary Fund has been established, CTK will assess the individual needs of students and determine the essential items necessary for their continued participation in education. Assessment will be undertaken on a case-by-case basis by the site Assistant Principal for Character and Wellbeing.

1.2.1 The following persons will be eligible for funding

- A person who is 'settled' in the UK, and who has been ordinarily resident in the UK and Islands (that is including the Channel Islands and the Isle of Man) for the 3 years preceding the 'relevant date'. 'Settled' means having either indefinite leave to enter (ILE) or indefinite leave to remain (ILR), being an Irish citizen or having the right of abode in the UK. Students who are eligible for funding include:
 - British citizens who hold a United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland passport Irish citizen
 - EU citizens or family members of EEA and Swiss workers (resident in the UK before 1 January 2021) with settled status

- Students who are children of Turkish workers where the Turkish worker has been lawfully employed and resident in the UK before 1 January 2021
 - British Dependent Territory Citizens (now known as British Overseas Territory Citizens)
 - Those whose passports have been endorsed to show they have right of abode in the UK
 - Those who have a certificate of naturalisation or registration as a British Citizen
 - Those with Hong Kong British National (Overseas) (BN(O)) visa who have been given Home Office permission to reside in the UK
- In addition to the groups outlined above, ESFA will also consider the following groups of students (including those who may not have lived in the UK for the last 3 years) to be eligible for funding:
 - Someone with (or their spouses, civil partners and children with) refugee status (RS), humanitarian protection (HP), discretionary leave (DL), exceptional leave to enter (ELE) or exceptional leave to remain (ELR)
 - Someone with recently settled status (this means those having been granted ILE or ILR, right of abode or British citizenship within the 3 years immediately preceding the start of the course)
 - Someone granted pre-settled status following our exit from EU
- In addition to the groups above, ESFA will also consider the following groups of students (including those who may not have lived in the UK for the last 3 years), aged up to and including the age of 18, as eligible for funding as follows:
 - Those who are accompanying or joining parents or spouses or civil partner who have the right of abode or leave to enter or remain in the UK (or accompanying or joining relevant family members, usually parents, who are UK or Irish citizens), or those who are children of diplomats
 - Those who are dependants of teachers coming to the UK on a teacher exchange scheme
 - Those who are residing legally in the UK (including those entering the UK in the last 3 years who are or were not accompanied by their parents) who are British (or Irish) citizens or those whose passports have been endorsed (or as part of move to digital immigration systems, either a biometric residency permit, or an equivalent digital status and/or an endorsement letter) to either show they have the right of abode in this country or to show that they have no restrictions on working in the UK

- Those who are dependants of adults residing legally in the UK who have been given immigration rights as workers to reside in the UK
 - Those who are dependants of foreign students where the accompanying parent or legal guardian has a student visa.
 - Asylum seekers
 - Those having been granted leave under [section 67 of the Immigration Act 2016](#) (the 'Dubs' amendment)
 - Those having been granted Calais leave to remain
 - Those who are (including unaccompanied asylum seekers) placed in the care of social services or those receiving section 4 support
- In addition to considering students in the categories listed in the 3 paragraphs above, the funding body will consider other exceptional circumstances. When an institution believes that a student should be considered for ESFA funding under exceptional circumstances, it must contact ESFA for guidance before claiming funding.
 - For funding eligibility purposes only, we have defined the EEA on 31 December 2020 as including Switzerland, as well as all members of the EU, Iceland, Liechtenstein, and Norway and each of their overseas territories. Students who are citizens of certain British Overseas Territories are eligible for funding. Certain European Overseas Territories citizens will also be eligible for funding but only if they moved to the UK before 1 January 2021.
 - Someone who has 'no recourse to public funds' included in their passport stamp would not be in breach of their immigration conditions if they had access to state-funded education in the UK. 'Public funds' are defined in the immigration rules, and the benefits and services listed do not include education or any education funding. This condition in a passport therefore makes no difference to a student's eligibility, which must be determined under the normal eligibility criteria described in the paragraphs above.
 - Aged 19 and over - A student could also get a bursary if they either:
 - Are continuing a course they started aged 16 –18 (known as being a 19+ continuer)
 - Have an Educational Health Care Plan (EHCP)

1.3 Support for Eligible Students

CTK will typically use the 16 - 19 Bursary Fund for:

- Educational books
- Clothing which meets our Sixth Form Dress Code, such as suits, footwear and other suitable garments
- Educational equipment
- Curriculum trips and visits that are an essential part of a student's programme of study

- UCAS Application
- Travel to or from Sixth Form, where the eligible student does not already receive free travel
- Work-related learning costs
- Authorised university visits (e.g., university interviews)
- Assistive technology such as laptop
- Ensuring all students have eaten a breakfast

The allocation of funds will focus on assessing individual student eligibility and actual need. Needs assessment will be undertaken to ensure financial support is available to those students whose participation in education might be hindered due to financial hardship.

2. Support at Christ the King Sixth Forms

Support at CTK has four elements, these are:

- The Defined Vulnerable Groups Bursary
- The Discretionary Bursary
- Hardship Fund
- Free Meals

2.1 The Defined Vulnerable Groups Bursary

Students who are eligible to receive 16 - 19 Bursary for vulnerable groups are not entitled to receive the discretionary bursary as well.

2.2 Eligibility Criteria and Evidence required for the Vulnerable Bursary

Eligibility Criteria	Evidence Required
Young people who are in or have recently left local authority care	Written confirmation of their current or previous looked-after status from the relevant local authority
Young people who get Income Support or Universal Credit in their own name because they are financially supporting themselves	A most recent 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 who are in receipt of Universal Credit, we must also see a document such as a tenancy agreement or utility bill in the student's own name
Young people in receipt of Disability Living Allowance (DLA), Personal Independent Payment (PIP) or Employment and Support Allowance (ESA) in their own name	A copy of their UC claim from DWP. Evidence of receipt of DLA or PIP must also be provided

2.3 Discretionary Bursary

The Discretionary bursary award is to help to overcome the financial barriers to education, this could include but is not an exhaustive or exclusive list:

- Essential books
- Equipment including specialist clothing and IT equipment
- Activities that are an essential part of the students' 16 - 19 study programme. For example, study visits within the programme of study
- Public transport
- Food while at the Sixth Form
- University open days and interviews

2.4 Eligibility Criteria for the Discretionary Bursary

To qualify for the discretionary bursary, your total household income must not exceed **£30,000 (subject to approval)** (Childcare costs and housing benefit are not included in the calculation of eligibility). Students, who meet the criteria for the discretionary bursary must provide-evidence of household income as listed:

Evidence Type	Required Documents
Universal Credit Award statements	Most recent 3 months of statements prior to date of application
Employment Pay Slip	Most recent 3 months of statements prior to date of application
Child Tax Credits Statement	Statement must be for current Financial Year. All pages of document must be supplied
One of the following: Job Seekers Allowance Employment Support Allowance Income Support	Current letter certified from Department for Work and Pensions, confirming receipt of the particular Benefit
State Pension Statement	Current statement certified by Department for Work and Pensions
Any other Department for Work and Pensions benefit	Current statement certified by Department for Work and Pensions

2.5 Severe Hardship Fund

In cases of extreme hardship students may request consideration for additional support from the 16 - 19 Bursary Fund. These requests will be considered on a case-by-case basis and individual needs assessed by the Assistant Principal for Character and Wellbeing. Requests will need to be appropriately evidenced. There is no right of appeal should the request be unsuccessful.

3. Qualifying Condition Requirements

The student will need to complete a qualifying learning period before they are able to receive 16 - 19 Bursary Funds.

4. Bursary Applications

Applications for a 16 - 19 Bursary Fund must be made using the correct Application Form and should be submitted in full along with the required evidence by October Half term each academic year. This should be submitted to the following site email address:

- CTK Aquinas: aquinasbursary@ctksfc.ac.uk
- CTK Emmanuel: emmanuelbursary@ctksfc.ac.uk
- CTK St Mary's: stmarysbursary@ctksfc.ac.uk

CTK acknowledges that student financial circumstances can change, and Applications made after this date will be considered, if sufficient funds are available. However, once the 16 - 19 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 will 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).

Successful 16 - 19 Bursary Fund awards will only require evidence on application. Thereafter an annual 16 - 19 Bursary Fund eligibility self-declaration form needs to be completed by the student to confirm that their household income circumstances have not changed.

5. Free College Meals

Free meals are targeted at disadvantaged students and this funding forms part of the overall 16 –19 Bursary Fund designed to overcome the financial barriers to participation. Free meals are provided using the on-site catering facilities. Lessons are timetabled in a way that all students are expected to be on site each day or attending a work placement as part of their programme of study. For students who undertake work related learning they will be given a payment that is made directly into their bank accounts to ensure that they can purchase a meal whilst off site.

5.1 Free College Meals Application

To be eligible for a free meal in the academic year 2024-25 you must be aged between 16 and 18 on 31st August 2024. If you turn 19 during your year of study, you will remain eligible for free meals until the end of the academic year. Students who are aged 19 or over on 31st August 2024 and who meet the '19+ Students' criteria below may also be eligible to Free Meals.

Free Meals are targeted at disadvantaged Students. For the purposes of eligibility, disadvantaged is defined by the students being in receipt of, or having parents who are in receipt of, one or more of the following benefits shown below (with the exception of Personal Independence Payment).
Transitional/Protected Free Meals

- Income Support
- Income-based Jobseekers Allowance
- Income-related Employment and Support Allowance
- 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 and have an annual gross income of no more than **£16,190**, as assessed by Her Majesty's Revenue and Customs (HMRC))
- Working Tax Credit run-on – paid for 4 weeks after someone stops qualifying for Working Tax Credit
- Universal Credit (UC) with net earnings not exceeding the equivalent of **£7,400** for each year (after tax and not including any benefits they get)

If you were receiving Free Meals at school (on/or after 01/04/2018) you will continue to receive Free Meals until March 2025 or, the end of the course you have enrolled on. This will apply even if your household income rises above the Government threshold. A letter from your School or Local Authority confirming this will be needed as evidence when completing your application. This evidence should be sent to:

- CTK Aquinas: aquinasbursary@ctksfc.ac.uk
- CTK Emmanuel: emmanuelbursary@ctksfc.ac.uk
- CTK St Mary's: stmarysbursary@ctksfc.ac.uk

5.2 Emergency Meal Support

In individual cases of severe hardship, we can provide meal support on the days a student attends their study programme, where the student is considered to be in real need, without undertaking the checks on household income or gathering other evidence that would normally be required. This is expected to only apply to a very small number of the total 16 - 19 student cohort. For audit purposes, we must retain a copy of:

- A record of the number of students supported in this way
- The number of days this support is given

- The £'s value of support given to each student along with the rationale for the meal support
- The signed confirmation by the student of receipt of funding to be spent on food that day, if actual spend receipts are not obtained

This arrangement is not to continue on an ongoing basis for any individual student – we will exercise our discretion in each case and will be mindful that this flexibility relates to food support only.

6. Process

The named contact at CTK Sixth Forms for all 16 - 19 Bursary support/enquiries is Miss Pointing, Head of Administration who can be contacted at l.pointing@ctksfc.ac.uk

For audit purposes, copies of all documentation for the 16 - 19 Bursary Fund will be kept. This documentation must include evidence of the application process, documents relating to how the student was assessed and the funds issued.

The site Assistant Principal for Character and Wellbeing will review the application, supporting evidence, information provided in relation to participation needs and any other personal circumstantial evidence. The student will be notified of the outcome.

7. Appeals

If a student or their parent/guardian/carer(s) is dissatisfied with Christ the King's decision not to allocate funds from the 16 - 19 Bursary funds, the student or their parent/guardian/carer(s) should discuss this in the first instance with the Assistant Principal for Character and Wellbeing at the site they are based.

If the student or their parent/guardian/carer is still unsatisfied following the conversation with the site based Assistant Principal, then the student (not someone on his/her behalf) can make an appeal. The appeal should be made to Deputy Principal Mrs Crampton by email c.crampton@ctksfc.ac.uk . within 5 working days of the decision.

The outcome of the appeal will be communicated to the student and parent guardian/ carer by email, within one week of the appeal being received. The outcome of the appeal is final.

8. Confidentiality

Applications and supporting evidence will be confidential to the 16 - 19 Bursary Application Panel and in the event of an appeal those involved in the bursary appeal. The applications and supporting evidence will remain confidential during processing, 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.

All evidence and data received and retained for audit purposes will conform CTK's GDPR policy.

9. Equality

In determining the allocation of the 16 - 19 Bursary Fund, students will not be discriminated against on the basis of their protected characteristics.

10. Change of Financial Circumstances

If a student is in receipt of a 16 - 19 Bursary Fund, they have a duty to inform Christ the King 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 College Meals). This does not automatically mean any future bursary will be stopped but would result in a convening of the 16 - 19 Bursary Application Panel to determine current need.

11. Fraud

Students and their families are required to make a declaration (whether paper or electronic) that the information and evidence provided is correct and complete to the best of their knowledge and belief. False or incorrect information or failing to update CTK about changes in household income that affect the 16 - 19 bursary items that were purchased and the cost of these will be asked to be recovered.

12. Further Help and Guidance

The 16 - 19 Bursary Policy will be reviewed annually or when new guidance becomes available. Should you require further help or advice regarding the CTK 16 - 19 Bursary Policy, please contact Head of Administration.

Date Revised: October 2024

Next Review Due: June 2025