



Mersey View
LEARNING TRUST

The Rowan Schools

Sixth Form

Bursary Statement

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Version	1

Academic Year 2026-2027

The 16-19 Bursary Fund is provided by the Department for Education (DfE) to help remove financial barriers that may prevent students from participating fully in education.

The fund is intended to support students who face genuine financial hardship in meeting the essential costs associated with their study programme.

The funding available to The Rowan Schools is limited. The school is therefore committed to ensuring that bursary support is targeted towards students who demonstrate both eligibility and an actual financial need.

The school will assess all applications fairly, transparently and consistently in accordance with the DfE guidance.

The school will ensure that:

- *Funding is used to remove financial barriers to participation in education.*
- *Awards are based on individual circumstances and assessed need.*
- *Students do not automatically receive a fixed award because they meet eligibility criteria.*
- *Awards reflect actual participation costs.*
- *Public funds are used responsibly and represent value for money.*
- *Decisions are transparent, consistent and evidence based.*
- *Students facing the greatest financial hardship are prioritised.*

Eligibility

To be eligible for support through the 16-19 Bursary Fund, students must:

- *Be aged 16 or over but under 19 on 31 August of the relevant academic year.*
- *Be enrolled on a funded study programme at The Rowan Schools.*
- *Meet the residency requirements outlined in the ESFA funding guidance.*
- *Demonstrate actual financial need which creates a barrier to participation in education.*

Types of bursary available

There are two types of bursary available:

Vulnerable Student Bursary

Students may be eligible for support of up to a maximum of £1,200 per academic year if they fall within one of the following categories:

- *Young people in care.*
- *Care leavers.*
- *Young people receiving Income Support in their own right.*
- *Young people receiving Universal Credit in their own right.*
- *Young people receiving Employment and Support Allowance (ESA) and Personal Independence Payment (PIP) or Disability Living Allowance (DLA) in their own right.*

Eligibility for a vulnerable bursary does not automatically entitle a student to receive £1,200.

The school will assess:

- *Actual financial need.*
- *Essential participation costs.*
- *Other financial support available to the student.*

Awards will be based on evidenced need and may be lower than £1,200 where a student's participation costs are lower.

The school reserves the right to refuse an application where eligibility is established but no actual financial need exists.

Discretionary Bursary

Discretionary bursaries may be awarded to students who experience financial hardship that may affect their ability to participate in education.

To be considered, students will normally meet one or more of the following criteria:

- *Eligible for Free School Meals.*
- *Parent or carer receives a means-tested benefit.*
- *Household income that falls below £38,500.*
- *Experiencing exceptional financial hardship.*

- *Facing specific educational participation costs which cannot reasonably be met by the family.*

The school may review these priorities annually depending upon funding levels and student need.

Assessment of need

All applications will be assessed individually.

Priority may be given to students facing the greatest financial barriers to participation.

The school may request additional information to support an application.

Submission of an application does not guarantee an award.

What the bursary may be used for

Bursary funding is to be used for items that are vital for or will enhance a student's course of study, such as:

- *Public transport costs.*
- *Bus or rail passes.*
- *Essential travel to and from school.*
- *Books and revision guides.*
- *Stationery.*
- *Specialist equipment.*
- *University application costs where appropriate.*
- *Compulsory educational visits and trips.*
- *Other educational expenses approved by the school.*

The list is not exhaustive. Students can apply to use their bursary for other school related expenses, but the final decision will be at Leaderships' discretion.

Application process

Students wishing to apply must complete the school's bursary application form and provide all requested evidence.

Evidence may include:

- *Universal Credit statements.*
- *Benefit entitlement letters.*

- *Tax credit notifications.*
- *Proof of income.*
- *Other documentation requested by the school.*

Applications should be submitted as early as possible following enrolment.

Applications may also be made at any point during the academic year where financial circumstances change.

Students must notify the school immediately if their financial circumstances change after receiving an award.

Reapplications

Students in Year 13 that received the bursary in Year 12 are not required to complete a new application for their second year of study. Students will be asked to complete a signed declaration confirming that household or individual circumstances have not changed.

Payment of awards

The school may provide support through:

- *Direct purchase of goods or services.*
- *Payment of travel costs.*
- *Reimbursement of approved expenditure.*
- *Bank transfer to a student/parent/carer.*
- *Other methods considered appropriate by the school.*

The school will determine the most appropriate payment method for each award.

Where direct payments are made, students may be required to provide receipts or other evidence showing that funds have been used for approved educational purposes.

Failure to provide requested evidence may result in future payments being withheld.

Emergency hardship funds

The school will retain a small contingency fund to respond to genuine emergencies.

Emergency support may be considered where a financial issue presents an immediate risk to participation in education.

Examples may include:

- *Emergency transport costs.*
- *Replacement essential equipment.*
- *Unexpected financial hardship.*

Emergency requests will be considered on a case-by-case basis.

Attendance, punctuality and engagement

Students receiving bursary support are expected to demonstrate commitment to their studies through:

- *Regular attendance.*
- *Good punctuality.*
- *Positive behaviour.*
- *Appropriate engagement with learning.*

*Please be aware that attendance and engagement are **not used to determine eligibility** for the 16-19 Bursary Fund. However, attendance, punctuality, conduct and engagement with learning may be considered when reviewing ongoing awards and determining whether bursary payments continue to represent an effective use of public funds in supporting participation in education.*

Where concerns arise, the school will review individual circumstances before making any decision regarding future support.

Changes in Circumstances, Fraud and Misuse of Funds

Students must inform the school of any significant change to their financial circumstances during the period of their bursary award.

The school reserves the right to review bursary awards at any time and may increase support where financial need has increased, reduce support where circumstances have improved, or withdraw support where eligibility criteria are no longer met.

The school also reserves the right to withdraw bursary funding if false or misleading information has been provided, evidence has been falsified, funds have not been used for approved educational purposes, or the conditions of the award have not been met.

In appropriate cases, the school may seek recovery of any funds that have been incorrectly awarded or misused.

Decision making and appeals

Applications will be assessed by the Bursary Panel comprising of the Head of Sixth Form and a member of the school finance team (where appropriate).

The panel will consider all available evidence and determine eligibility, level of need, appropriate support and funding amount.

Applicants will normally be informed of the outcome within 21 school days of receipt of a completed application.

Students or parents/carers who wish to challenge a decision may submit a written appeal to the Headteacher within 10 school days of receiving the decision. The appeal should clearly explain the grounds for appeal and provide any additional supporting evidence.

The decision of the Head of School will be final.

Queries

For further information regarding the 16-19 Bursary Fund, please contact Miss L Hughes, Head of Schools PA at lhughes@rps.mvlt.co.uk.