



## The Tiffin Girls' School

### SIXTH FORM BURSARY POLICY

REVISED June 2026

Approved by: Governing Board

#### INTRODUCTION

1. The Department for Education (DfE) makes money available to each school to fund discretionary bursaries for Sixth Form Students.
2. Additionally, the DfE administers and pays individual direct bursaries of up to £1,200 to “vulnerable” students defined as those who are in care, have previously been in care, or if the student themselves is in receipt of income support / universal credit / disability living allowance / personal independence payments.
3. This policy has been written with regard to the current guidance published by the DfE.
4. The aim of the bursary funds is to support disadvantaged students with the costs of staying in education between the ages of 16-19 (e.g. textbooks, equipment for practical subjects, educational trips, travel costs to school, university interviews and open days). Students over the age of 19 are only eligible for discretionary bursaries if they have an EHC plan in place or are ‘continuers’ on a course started aged 16-18.
5. The bursary funds are not intended to support extra-curricular activities where these are not essential to the students’ study programme, support general household incomes or provide learning support, e.g. counselling or mentoring.
6. Students who may be eligible for either bursary must complete an application form and provide the required evidence to the school.
7. As part of their application, students must sign a declaration stating “I understand and agree that as a recipient of a 16-19 bursary, I will be responsible for maintaining high standards of attendance at school and full commitment to my A-Level courses”.
8. A student awarded a discretionary or vulnerable group bursary in Year 12 will also be eligible to receive the same level of bursary in Year 13, for which they will only have to submit a short ‘confirmation’ form declaring that their family financial circumstances are unchanged from Year 12. Students in Year 13 will only need to submit a full application, including supporting evidence, if they wish to apply for a different level of bursary support than they received in Year 12.
9. Although the DfE guidance allows schools to keep up to 5% of their total annual bursary allocation for administration costs, the Governing Board have agreed that The Tiffin Girls’ School will not do so. The entire bursary allocations will be disbursed to Sixth Formers each year.
10. The governor with delegated responsibility for the Sixth Form Bursary Funds will make an annual report to the Governing Board regarding the numbers of students eligible for a bursary and the sums disbursed. This report is anonymised with applications and outcomes being confidential.
11. Students who are awarded bursaries do have the option of disclosing it on their UCAS applications, if they choose to. Receiving bursaries can support students in receiving a contextual university offer and will not be seen as a deterrent to universities.

12. These bursaries are separate to the Sixth Form Discretionary Fund (SFDF) grants. There is overlap in some of the eligibility criteria, but the source of funds and determinant of award are different. Students who have a need for either are advised to speak with members of the Sixth Form Pastoral team if they are uncertain which best meets their specific circumstances.

### DISCRETIONARY BURSARIES

13. The school receives the fund allocation from the DfE at the start of the academic year and sets their own eligibility criteria.
14. The school has set three levels of bursary support for discretionary bursaries depending on the criteria outlined below; Level 1 recipients will receive the highest sum of support payments and Level 3 the lowest. These thresholds are revisited with changes to DfE guidance and at each review of this policy.
15. In determining the eligibility for each level, the school will consider the total household income, travel distance from home to school by public transport, the home local authority's transport policy for students aged 16 to 19 and the number of dependent children in the household. Students must meet the **residency criteria** outlined in the DfE funding rules for post-16 provision in order to be eligible for a bursary.

#### Level 1

16. The total household income for a Level 1 will not be more than £21,500. If this is the case, parents may be in receipt of one of the benefits or credits shown in the table below.

Universal Credit	Employment Support Allowance (ESA)
Job Seekers Allowance (JSA)	Housing or Council Tax Benefit
Income Support	Working Tax Credit
Pension Guarantee Credit	NHS Tax Credit Exemption Card

#### Level 2

17. The total household income for a Level 2 will be between £21,501 and £25,000. If this is the case, parents may be in receipt of one of the benefits or credits shown in the table above.

#### Level 3

18. The total household income for a Level 3 will be between £25,001 and £30,000.

#### Supporting Evidence

19. Students must attach supporting evidence to their application form. This should be in the form of parental bank statements, payslips, and/or documented evidence of any benefit payments as shown in the table above.
20. Students must include on their application form details of the type and likely cost of expenditure they would use the bursary fund for if their application is successful (see paragraphs 4 and 5 above).

#### Application Process and Payments for Discretionary Bursaries

21. The Director of Sixth Form introduces the bursary to Sixth Formers in an assembly early in September and invites applications. Students who wish to apply gather the relevant supporting evidence and return their application form to the Sixth Form Administrator. Students are given approximately two weeks to complete their applications.

22. All applications are assessed initially by the Director of Sixth Form, who may request further evidence if necessary.
23. The Director of Sixth Form and designated Bursary Governor meet to review each application and approve as appropriate. Both the Director of Sixth Form and designated Bursary Governor sign each approved application.
24. The Director of Sixth Form and designated Bursary Governor set the sums of money to be awarded to each level of bursary, depending on the number of approved applications and the total fund available. There is no guarantee of funding even to those defined in defined vulnerable groups. Awards are subject to proven financial need and available budget.
25. The Director of Sixth Form will inform the successful applicants of the sum awarded to them for the year and the school's finance office of the amount allocated to each student. Successful applicants will receive their bursary in 12 equal monthly payments based on an estimate of the individual's needs and supported by evidence of actual costs. The amounts received by each individual will depend on their bursary level, the total number of recipients and the total fund available.
26. In order to monitor how the bursary fund is being utilised to meet individual need, students must provide receipts to the Sixth Form Administrator who will arrange for Director of Sixth Form review and forwarding to the finance office for retaining on file.
27. Payments will be made direct to each student's bank account by BACS payment following the student's submission of receipts or request for payment in kind for items such as a travel pass or payment of a trip.
28. Should a student's family financial circumstances change during the course of the year (e.g. parental unemployment), they may submit a late application to the bursary fund. The same assessment, approval and payment processes as set out above are followed.
29. A reserve sum will be retained within the central bursary fund during the course of the year to allow for late applications. If this reserve has not been needed during the year, it is carried forward to be added to the discretionary bursary fund for the following academic year. Any such carry forward will be fully disbursed within the following academic year.
30. Should students in receipt of bursaries leave TTGS, their monthly payments will cease.

#### **EMERGENCY SUPPORT PROVISION**

31. The School may provide discretionary bursaries in cases of severe hardship to provide emergency meal and travel support on a temporary basis without waiting for full household income evidence.

#### **BURSARIES FOR STUDENTS IN DEFINED VULNERABLE GROUPS**

32. Students who meet the criteria, and who have a financial need, can apply for a bursary for vulnerable groups of up to £1,200. The defined groups reflect that these students are unlikely to be receiving financial assistance from parents or carers, so may need a greater level of support to enable them to continue to participate.
33. Students who meet the criteria are not automatically entitled to a bursary if they do not have financial needs and/or their financial needs are covered from other sources.
34. The defined vulnerable groups are students who are:
  - in care
  - 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 (PIP) in their own right as well as Employment and Support Allowance (ESA) or UC in their own right.

All required benefits must be received in the student's own right to meet the criteria.

35. The Director of Sixth Form and Assistant Head Pastoral Y12-13 will work to identify students who may be in one or more of the defined vulnerable groups by liaising with the Assistant Head Pastoral Y7-11 as well as with the relevant pastoral staff from a student's previous school if applicable and with relevant external agencies.
36. Such students will be encouraged to complete the application form and provide the required evidence of eligibility.
37. All applications are assessed initially by the Director of Sixth Form, who may request further evidence if necessary.
38. The Director of Sixth Form and designated Bursary Governor meet to review each application and approve as appropriate. Both the Director of Sixth Form and designated Bursary Governor sign each approved application.
39. The Director of Sixth Form and designated Bursary Governor set the sum of money to be awarded to each successful applicant, up to £1,200, depending on the financial need.
40. The Director of Sixth Form will inform the successful applicants of the sum awarded to them for the year and the school's finance office of the amount to draw down from the DfE's Student Bursary Support Service.
41. Decisions on how a vulnerable group bursary will be disbursed will be taken on a case by case basis, depending on the circumstances and preferences of the student.
42. This could include the School making a fortnightly or monthly BACS payment to the student's current account, the student submitting receipts or requesting payment in kind for items such as a travel pass, the School holding back a sum for payment of a trip, or a combination of these. The finance office will process claims and/or make regular BACS payments up to the total allocated amount for the academic year.
43. The School will indicate the numbers of students receiving support from the 16 to 19 Bursary Fund on the Individual Learner Record (ILR) or school census. This will include students eligible for the defined vulnerable groups bursary who do not require support ('[zero bursary' students](#)).