

Sixth Form Bursary Policy



The Cardinal Wiseman Catholic School subscribes to the ethos and vision encapsulated by "All things for Christ".

Thus, our commitment to the development of human ecology, divine inspiration, Catholic Social Teaching, the counter-cultural element of our work and a constant quest for excellence inspire us daily. We want our students to flourish at Cardinal Wiseman in order that they will have the knowledge, skills, compassion and agency to make the world a better place.

September 2026

To be reviewed July 2027

Purpose of the 16–19 Bursary Fund

The 16–19 Bursary Fund exists to help eligible students overcome specific financial barriers to participation so that they can take part in and remain in full-time education in our sixth form. It is intended to support essential costs related directly to a student's study programme, not to provide general financial support or income.

CWCS will administer the fund in line with current national guidance and will review this policy annually.

Types of bursaries available

The school operates two types of bursaries:

1. Vulnerable bursary

For students who meet the national eligibility criteria, for example those who are:

- a. in care
- b. care leavers
- c. in receipt of Income Support or Universal Credit in their own name
- d. in receipt of both Employment and Support Allowance and Disability Living Allowance/Personal Independence Payment in their own name

Evidence will be required to confirm eligibility. The award level and method of support will be determined on an individual basis.

2. Discretionary bursary

For other students facing financial barriers to participation, for example due to low household income or other hardship. The school will set local eligibility criteria (such as household income thresholds or specific indicators of hardship) and may prioritise students where funds are limited.

Awards from the discretionary bursary are not automatic and may vary in value according to need, available funding and the number of eligible applicants.

What the bursary can be used for

Bursary support is targeted at essential education-related costs. This may include:

- Meals during the school day where a student would otherwise struggle to afford food. The school recommends that these monies are spent at CWCS. These monies will be a combination of school food provision and Tesco vouchers.
- Required books, equipment, and course-related materials (e.g. textbooks, revision guides, specialist art materials).
- Required clothing and specialist kit where this is needed to meet the sixth form dress code or for particular courses. (e.g. PPE, sports kit for a qualification). See appendix 1 for price limits for required items.
- Further, please note; students are not permitted to purchase certain items, such as shoes, coats, bags, and similar items, more than once or twice within an academic year.

- Costs of compulsory or clearly course-related trips and visits (e.g. fieldwork, curriculum theatre visits, university open days or interviews where these are directly linked to progression).
- Exam-related costs and application fees directly linked to the student's programme or progression (e.g. UCAS fee, specific audition fees).
- As a cash free school, we will not issue cash payments to students
- Please note all receipts must be provided otherwise the school will not authorise reimbursements

What the bursary will not normally fund

The bursary is not intended to support general living costs or non-essential activities. The fund will not normally be used to pay for:

- Routine household costs or to supplement family income (e.g. rent, utility bills, general food shopping).
- Clothing or personal items that are not required for participation in education.
- Optional enrichment or leisure activities, including overseas trips that are not an essential part of the course.
- General learning support services that should be funded from the school's core budget (e.g. counselling, mentoring, additional teaching).

In exceptional circumstances, the school may consider other uses where there is a clear and evidenced link to participation and where this is consistent with national guidance.

Application and assessment process

- Students (or their parents/carers) must complete a bursary application form each academic year and provide the requested evidence of eligibility (for example, benefit entitlement or proof of household income).
- The bursary panel (or named bursary lead) will assess applications, prioritise in line with this policy, and confirm awards in writing.
- Awards may be made as:
 - a one-off payment
 - a regular termly award
 - a package of support in kind (e.g. travel pass, equipment, meals) or a combination of these.

Where funds are oversubscribed, the school may reduce individual award levels or maintain a waiting list.

Conditions of receipt

Bursary support is conditional on students meeting the expectations set out in our sixth form contract, including:

- Satisfactory attendance and punctuality.
- Meeting behaviour expectations.
- Making reasonable academic effort and engaging fully with their study programme.

The school reserves the right to withhold, reduce or cease bursary support where these conditions are not met, or if a student withdraws from their course.

Payment and audit arrangements

- Wherever possible, support will be provided through direct purchasing by the school or via vouchers/credits that can only be used for agreed purposes.
- Any direct payments to students will require a signed agreement and, where appropriate, receipts to evidence of spend. We are not permitted to pay direct payments into family accounts.
- High-value items (for example, laptops or specialist equipment) will remain the property of the school and must be returned when the course ends or if the student leaves. The school will seek payment for the item if it is not returned.
- The school will keep accurate records of applications, assessments, decisions and expenditure to meet audit requirements.

Review and appeals

Students or parents/carers who are dissatisfied with a decision about a bursary award may request a review. A senior member of staff not involved in the original decision will consider the appeal. The decision of the reviewer will be final within the school's internal processes.

This policy will be reviewed annually, or sooner if national guidance changes or if local circumstances require it.

Appendix 1

Price limits for purchased items.

Description (links provided are a recommended guide)	Total Amount
CW 6F School Tie - (Juniper Uniform)	£9.50
School Shoes/Trainers Plain Black	Up to £40
School Shirts Plain White - (up to 5 pack from M&S)	Up to £30
School Trousers Plain Black - (pack of 2 from M&S)	Up to £17
School Jumper Plain Black - (pack of 2 from M&S)	Up to £17
School Skirt Pleated Plain Black - (pack of 2 from M&S)	Up to £12
Black Belt - (Juniper Uniform)	£4
Black School Bag	Up to £25
Plain Coat/Jacket	Up to £50
Scientific Calculator - (Casio fx-991CW or a Casio fx-991EX)	Up to £25
School Printing via Parent Pay	Up to £70 per ½ term
Prices listed are subject to change, a review of this document will take place every 6 months	

To ensure the items listed are reimbursed, you must provide evidence of purchase. Cardinal Wiseman can decline any payments if the appropriate evidence is not provided.

Students receiving bursary will be provided with the necessary school materials such as Lever Arch Folders, Plastic Wallets, Dividers, Flash Cards, Pens, Rulers, Highlighters.

If you have any questions concerning the details above, contact:

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DPC

June 2026