



The Park College
DISCRETIONARY BURSARY FUND POLICY
ACADEMIC YEAR 2025 - 2026

The DFE has made a small allocation of bursary funds to the college to provide financial support to help students overcome specific financial barriers to participation they face, so they can remain in education.

Applications for discretionary bursary funds are open to students who are aged 19 or above, have an EHCP and meet the residency criteria in the DFE funding rules. The bursary fund is to help eligible students with essential costs of participating such as, travel to and from college, or to buy essential books, equipment, or specialist clothing (protective overalls, for example) that are required for their individual study programme. These are items that a student would otherwise need to pay for to participate.

All decisions about which students receive a discretionary bursary, and how much they receive, will be based on each student's individual circumstances and their actual financial need. These will vary from student to student, depending on, for example, their household income, the distance they need to travel to the institution and the requirements of their study programme. Students who meet the criteria are not automatically entitled to a bursary if they do not meet financial need or their needs are being met from another financial source. They may receive a lower amount of bursary or no bursary at all in these circumstances.

We will need to look at information that sets out your household income. We have set a threshold of £30,000 to be eligible for a discretionary bursary. This means that the total family household income must not exceed this amount. Please note that our policy is to maintain strict confidentiality in the review and storage of these documents.

Completed application forms, and supporting information, are considered by a panel to ensure that funds are allocated for those students who genuinely need them. A bursary will only be paid if attendance and behaviour meet our required standards.

Usually, the DFE requires the college to carry out an annual financial eligibility check. However, if you were enrolled with The Park College in 2024-25 and are continuing your education in 2025-26 we are allowed to exercise discretion on carrying out these checks again if your household circumstances remain unchanged. We will, however, require you to sign a declaration to confirm there are no changes.

If you are successful in receiving bursary funding it does not affect receipt of other means-tested benefits paid to families, such as Income Support, Jobseeker's Allowance, Child Benefit, Working Tax Credit, Housing Benefit or, generally, Universal Credit.

If you require any further information, or have questions about how to complete your application, please contact the college. If you would prefer, you can request that an application form is posted to you or collected from the college.

There is also a guide for students (and parents) which can be found on the government's website as follows: <https://www.gov.uk/1619-bursary-fund>

All applications and full supporting evidence must be submitted to the college by Monday November 3rd 2025. **Please note this is a strict deadline and extensions will not be given.**

A panel will consider applications during November 2025 and write to you with the outcome. If the panel's decision is to award a bursary, it will set out the amount and what it is proposed this will purchase.