



ST BRENDAN'S
SIXTH FORM COLLEGE

BURSARY POLICY

Author's Name and Job Title:	Nicola Stevenson		
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	<input type="checkbox"/>	Other (Please specify): Click or tap here to enter text.	
People/Groups consulted:	Finance Manager, Principalship		
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VERSION CONTROL

Version	Date revised	Author/reviewer	Section / page no. changed	Summary of change(s)

St Brendan's mission is to serve the Catholic and wider community by providing Sixth Form education of the highest quality and to act in the spirit of the Gospel believing that every person is loved by God and has a unique value.

1. Introduction

The College receives an allocation from the Department of Education (Dfe)) in support of Free College Meals and Discretionary Bursaries for students. Additionally, the College also receives bursary funding for vulnerable students who are in care or are care leavers.

- 1.1** The College will assess student awards individually allocating the funds as they see fit and according to student need. Bursary awards will be based on essential participation costs and are subject to funding received from the Department of Education. Consideration will be given to the individual needs of each student based on their household circumstances / household income.
- 1.2** To receive bursary funding, students must adhere to the Positive behaviour management policy, the Student Attendance and Punctuality Policy and the Student Learner Agreement.
- 1.3** Students and their families should be made aware that giving false or incomplete information may result in funding being stopped and any incorrectly paid funds being recovered. They should also be informed that this might result in a referral to the Police with the possibility of the student and /or their family facing prosecution.
- 1.4** All awards will be made subject to an application meeting the bursary criteria outlined in this policy which is published in the Bursary Support section of the St Brendan's website. All students must also meet the residency criteria outlined within the DfE funding rules for post-16 provision.

2. Free College Meals

Free meals are targeted at disadvantaged students. If a student or their parent/carer is in receipt of one of the following benefits, they will be eligible for free meals:

- Income Support
- income-based Jobseekers Allowance
- income-related Employment and Support Allowance (ESA)
- support under part VI of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999
- the guarantee 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)

- 2.1** The government have confirmed that transitional protection will stay in place until the end of the 2025/26 academic year (for all students agreed for free meals on or after the 1st April 2018). Students that do not meet the government or college criteria for free college meals but had them at secondary school will be entitled to continue receiving Free School meals. An application must be submitted through our online portal uploading evidence such as a letter from their secondary school to confirm their eligibility.
- 2.2** The meal allowance will be a minimum of the statutory £2.58 per college day. This may be topped up from the discretionary bursary fund to allow the purchase of a 'meal deal' from the college café.

3. Bursary funding for vulnerable students

Students in one or more of the groups below (who have a financial need) can apply for a bursary of up to £1200 for essential costs relating to their study programme. This amount is not given automatically and each application will be reviewed individually.

To demonstrate a need for support, we will ask eligible students to complete a short questionnaire and provide personal bank statements to cover a full month. This is in lieu of requesting proof of household income. We will also request confirmation of care status from the local authority.

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.

4. Discretionary bursaries

Discretionary bursaries may be awarded in addition to Free College Meals for households on lower incomes (see point 4.3 for specific details). Some students who do not qualify for Free Meals may be eligible for a discretionary bursary; the two awards are not interdependent.

- 4.1** Discretionary bursaries may be awarded to help with the costs of:
- Travel to college on public bus in the Bristol and West of England areas (for students who live more than 1.5 miles from college). Bus tickets are provided during term time only – lost paper tickets will not be replaced.
 - Compulsory educational trips.
 - UCAS application fee payment.
 - Compulsory kits for creative arts subjects (last orders will be 15/12/25)
 - Essential printing costs for specific subjects.
 - Other items confirmed as essential such as calculators for A' level Mathematics.
 - A daily meal allowance for some students (see point 4.3 for eligibility).

Discretionary bursaries do not cover train tickets or provide help with fuel if students travel to college by car.

For compulsory trips, funding will be allocated into a bursary “purse”. Students will need to book themselves onto the trip via the College Store to secure a place.

Any kits provided from Bursary funding will not be supplied until at least mid October in line with Government guidelines.

For young parents with childcare costs, we can consider applications under the Care to Learn criteria subject to Government guidelines being met.

- 4.2** The bursary award will be determined by an assessment of total household income. If benefits are received in addition to employed / self employed income, we will add benefits to any income source to give a total household income.

For households that receive Universal credit, we will base our calculation on an average of the last 3 months Universal credit statements. This average will then be multiplied by 4 to give an annual total household income figure.

For most households receiving Universal credit we will undertake the following calculation to establish total household income:

Universal credit award amount minus housing entitlement amount (showing on the first part of the statement) plus total earnings reported on the Universal Credit statement.

This formula will be adjusted if rent is paid directly to landlord as part of the calculation.

Where there is no housing entitlement showing on the Universal Credit statement, we will add Universal credit award amount to net salary to obtain a household income figure.

We have made the decision to calculate household income in this way as an analysis of applications shows a large variation in levels of rent paid within our catchment area. By stripping out the housing allowance (when this shows on a Universal credit statement), this gives a more accurate indication of available household income for the majority of our bursary applicants.

- 4.3** A bursary will be awarded where the total household income (from all sources) is below £30000 per annum. When reviewing employed income, we will base our figures on the amount received after tax, pension and National insurance have been deducted from salary. For households where total household income (all sources) is below £24000 net, or parent/carer is out of work, we will be able to offer a free meal allocation as part of the bursary award.
- 4.4** Where there is a disability allowance or childcare allowance showing on a Universal credit statement within the ‘what you are entitled to’ section, we will not take this amount into consideration when calculating total household income.
- 4.5** Where an assessment shows that a parent/carer has savings of over £6000, applications will be reviewed on an individual basis. As part of the review, we will seek additional justification as to why bursary support is required.

- 4.6** Where a 2nd property is held and there is evidence of rental income on documentation received, further details will be requested as part of our assessment, and applications will be reviewed on an individual basis.
- 4.7** A bursary award may be made occasionally at the discretion of the College to provide access to a free meal without providing proof of household income. These awards are reviewed on a case-by-case basis taking into consideration government guidance and agreed by the college leadership team in exceptional circumstances. These can only ever be temporary awards and will be reviewed regularly.
- 4.8** All bursary awards are subject to a student meeting 85% attendance. Bursary support will be affected if attendance goes below 85%. Mandatory trips and items may not be paid for and if eligible for a bus ticket, this will be reviewed.
- 4.9** If there is a change to an individual's household financial status, this must be reported to the Bursary Coordinator immediately and may result in a change to the award made with immediate effect. The Bursary Coordinator can be contacted, by phone, email (bursary@stbrn.acc.uk) or in person.

5. Application and assessment

- 5.1** New students are invited to complete and submit an application immediately after they have enrolled at college, via the PayMyStudent online portal. Applications will be reviewed in date order. The online application form can be found within the St Brendan's website under the Bursary support section.
- 5.2** The College will endeavor to assess and make awards to new students as quickly as possible at the start of term, but this will be dependent on all supporting evidence being available and uploaded correctly.
- 5.3** Applications can be submitted throughout the Academic year and reapplication will be accepted where there have been changes to household circumstances.
- 5.4** Awards cannot be backdated and a bursary will commence when an online application has been received and all supporting evidence has been submitted to the bursary coordinator's satisfaction.
- 5.5** All applicants other than students applying under vulnerable bursary criteria should provide evidence of household income. Details of acceptable documents are listed within the Bursary Support section of the St Brendan's Sixth form college website. Assessments will be made based on the student's primary address and travel tickets allocated based on primary address location. Applicants should provide all pages of requested documents at time of application to avoid delays in assessment.
- 5.6** Where there has been a change to the primary address after an application has been approved, the Bursary coordinator will have the right to ask for an official document such as a bank statement or utility bill to confirm the new address. The student's primary parent/carer should also confirm the change in writing.

- 5.7 If further documents are requested after a bursary has been approved, the Bursary Coordinator has the right to put the Bursary on hold if there are delays in submitting the requested documentation.

6. Appeal process

- 6.1 Unsuccessful claimants have the right to appeal the decision. Initial appeals should be sent to the Bursary Coordinator for review and include details of why there is a need for Bursary support. If an application remains declined and claimant is still not happy with the decision made, a further appeal must be made in writing and addressed to the Finance Manager. The Finance Manager will review the application within 10 working days of the appeal and notify the student of the outcome in writing. The Finance Manager's decision will be final.

7. Responsibility and monitoring

- 7.1 The responsibility for managing, assessing applications and promoting the bursary and free meal awards lies with the Bursary Coordinator, who will work closely with the Finance Manager, Head of Student Wellbeing & Progress and Inclusive Learning Manager to ensure appropriate levels of support.
- 7.2 This policy will be reviewed annually and approved by the Principalship and the College's Board of Governors.
- 7.3 A termly reconciliation of the funds will be carried out with the Executive Finance Director.
- 7.4 Monitoring returns will be submitted as required to evidence the distribution of the funds.
- 7.5 The management of the 16-19 financial support will be subject to an audit in line with other key activities within the college.

Appendix to Bursary Policy

Students that do not have the appropriate IT equipment to enable them to study remotely can apply for assistance.

Each year college may offer;

Loan of Essential IT Equipment

- Students will be subject to the **Laptop Loan Procedure and must** comply with the **Loan Agreement**
- All loan equipment will be purchased by the college and will be configured and monitored set up in line with the college's IT Acceptable Usage, IT Security and Safeguarding policies
- On occasion the college may purchase a laptop for a students use. This will be the responsibility of the student but will remain under the ownership of the college.