



St Paul's
CATHOLIC SCHOOL

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6th Form Bursary Policy

2024-2025

St Paul's Catholic School
Bursary Policy 2024-2025 - Information for
Students Joining in September 2024

Purpose: To provide financial support to help students overcome specific barriers so they can remain in education, pay for transport, meals, books and equipment.

Types of Bursary – There are two types of bursaries, only one can be applied for, details below:

1. Discretionary Bursaries

A discretionary bursary is to help a student overcome the individual barriers to participation. To qualify for this type of bursary at St Paul's you need to meet one or more of the following criteria:

- a) Students who are **eligible for free school meals**. You are eligible if parents are claiming one of these benefits:
- Income Support
 - Income-based Jobseekers Allowance
 - Income-related Employment and Support Allowance
 - Support under Part VI of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999
 - the guaranteed element of State Pension Credit Child Tax Credit (provided you're not also entitled to Working Tax Credit and have an annual gross income of no more than £16,190)
 - Working Tax Credit run-on – paid for 4 weeks after you stop qualifying for Working Tax Credit Universal Credit
- b) Students who come from families with lower than average incomes.
- Students with an annual family income of less than £26,000 in the last tax year (including benefits). ***This must be established through current benefit and income documentation as stated below and on the application form.***
 - Students who can demonstrate through benefit documentation that their award has been changed to reflect a change in circumstances so that their annual family income including benefits is now below £26,000. Students can apply at any point during the course. In the first instance, students or parents need to contact the year group Chaplaincy Lead. Parents or guardians may need to supply some documentary evidence of hardship such as :
 - P60 Forms
 - Universal Credit statements or Tax Credit Award Notice documents
 - Self-employment accounts
 - Wage slips (within last 3 months/last issued)
 - Copies of online bank statements (within last 3 months)
- c) Young people with caring responsibilities. *For example, caring for a parent or other relative may be entitled to claim bursary funding. All applications will need to be supported by either a GP letter confirming the young carer's*

status, proof that they currently access the Young Carers Service or proof they are in receipt of Carers Allowance.

2. Vulnerable Students Bursaries:

A vulnerable student bursary of up to £1,200 a year is for students in one of the defined vulnerable groups:

- students who are looked after (in care)
- care leavers
- students in receipt of Income Support or Universal Credit because they are financially supporting themselves or financially support themselves and someone who is dependent on them and living with them such as a child or partner.
- students in receipt of Disability Living Allowance or Personal Independence Payments in their own right as well as Employment Support Allowance or Universal Credit in their own right.

Eligibility - it is the responsibility of the guardian and student to provide the Sixth Form Administrator with copies of supporting evidence as detailed on the application form at the time of application. For the Vulnerable Student Bursary that could include:

- A letter from the local authority
- Universal credit statement
- evidence of the above (defined groups)

Student Bursary Payments

- Financial needs assessment carried out to confirm actual financial need and amount of support required.
- Evidence to confirm the student meets the institution's bursary fund criteria, including household income and statement of actual participation costs (**Discretionary bursary**)
- Evidence of income and overall eligibility obtained, and copies retained (**Discretionary bursary**)
- Student and parent/caregiver will be invited to a meeting with the year group Chaplaincy and Pastoral Lead to discuss the application and process.
- Bursary payments will be backdated to the official start of term date if the application form and supported documents are returned by the deadline date of 25th October 2024. Any completed forms and full supporting documents received later than this date will have payments backdated by up to 4 weeks only.
- Appropriate evidence seen and copies retained to confirm student's eligibility, including the letter to support in care.
- Support awarded in kind (bus pass, meal vouchers, books or equipment purchased on student's behalf). Receipts should be retained.
- Award letter issued to student confirming the amount of support, what support will be made in-kind and payment conditions.
- Bursaries are **not** paid during school holidays.

Need

The level of bursary support provided will be dependent on the costs students can demonstrate they incur through participating in Sixth Form study. Documentary evidence of these costs must be provided unless the cost is a charge made by the school. Examples of costs would include (but are not limited to):

- Travel to and from school
- Clothing to comply with Sixth Form dress code (limited during a half term)
- School resources – books materials and equipment needed for a particular course
- Educational visits
- Travel to and from University or apprenticeship open days/interviews
- Food (if not already eligible for Free School meals) from the school canteen

Level of Funding and Frequency of Bursary

The level of support offered by the bursary depends of the amount allocated to the school through The Education and Skills Funding Agency and the number of eligible student applications from above groups 2-4.

Once this has been established during September the priority will be school transport. It is our aim to cover all transport cost to and from school for all eligible students.

Once the funds for travel have been allocated the remaining bursary fund will be used throughout the school year for students to claim for clothing to comply with the Sixth Form dress code, books, materials and equipment needed for a particular course and the cost of educational visits related to courses. These should be claimed via the 'Bursary Expenses Claim Form' available from the Sixth Form Administrators or the Chaplaincy Assistants.

Habits, Routines and Bursary

Student responsibilities:

Students must sign a declaration stating *"I understand and agree that as a recipient of a Sixth Form bursary, I will be responsible for maintaining high standards of attendance and full commitment to my Sixth Form courses."*

This includes:

- 97% attendance to all timetabled sessions
- be punctual for registration and lessons.
- Complete on time all independent learning, coursework and/or assignments to the best of your ability
- be punctual and attend all examinations associated with your courses
- inform the school of any changes of home circumstances i.e. no longer eligible for free school meals, moved address, changed bank accounts
- provide written or verbal communication in advance from parents/guardians of any absences, as these need to be authorised.

It is understood that there is, very occasionally, a reason why you may need to apply for permission to be absent. If the school agrees in advance of the absence, then your Bursary will not be affected.

The following list gives examples of some of the occasions when permission **may** be granted on a limited basis providing we receive **written notification in advance**:

- Dentist, Doctor and Hospital appointments
- Attendance at a close family funeral
- Religious holiday (no more than four days per academic year) at the discretion of the school
- Visit to university either to attend an open day or for interview; or career related interview (a maximum of four in one academic year).
- Participating in a significant extra-curricular activity, when representing the school
- Attendance at probation meeting or court hearing

The following reasons for absence would **not** be acceptable:

- Opticians appointment
- Holidays taken during the school term
- Part time job interview
- Part or full time work which is not part of your programme of study
- Leisure activities that are not part of your programme of study
- Birthdays or similar celebrations
- Babysitting younger siblings or looking after other family members
- Driving lessons or tests
- Missing the bus
- Waking up late

Where an absence genuinely could not be foreseen, you should nevertheless make arrangements to tell the school as soon as possible on the day in question. Where you fail to do this, the absence will be treated as unauthorised. If you are unsure about whether an absence will be authorised, please check with the Head of Sixth Form. The school's decision is final in relation to authorising absence.

If you are ill or sick

The school must be notified of any absence due to illness by telephone or email on the day of absence by a guardian or parent. Sixth Form students cannot authorise their own absence for illness. Written evidence for illness must be provided on the day of return to school by a guardian or parent.

The school will:

- Arrange for your learning progress to be assessed on the basis of completion of relevant coursework and/or assignments
- Monitor and assess coursework and/or assignments to ensure they were on time and produced to the best of your ability
- Monitor your weekly attendance and attendance at all examinations associated with your courses
- Inform students and parents/guardians in writing if your bursary award is at risk.

Application Process for Discretionary Bursaries

- The Sixth Form Pastoral Leadership Team will introduce bursary to Year 12 and 13 students in early September and again in January.
- Application forms will be distributed to all students and parents via In Touch twice a year. Application forms can also be requested at any time during the year from Sixth Form Administrators or Chaplaincy Leads.
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- Students who wish to apply gather the relevant supporting evidence and return their application form to the Sixth Form Administrator.
- All applications are assessed by the Head of Sixth Form, who may request further evidence if necessary.
- Student and parent/caregiver will be invited to a meeting with the year group Chaplaincy and Pastoral Lead to discuss the application and process.
- The Head of Sixth Form will meet with the relevant Sixth Form Chaplaincy Lead and Sixth Form Administrator to review each application and approve as appropriate.
- The Head of Sixth Form will sign each approved application and any relevant purchase orders associated with the application.
- The Head of Sixth Form in consultation with Chaplaincy Leads and where appropriate the Finance Manager or member of the Finance Team, will set the sums of money or materials/resources/equipment to be awarded to each level of bursary, depending on the number of approved applications and the total fund available.
- Applications will be treated in the strictest confidence.

Appeals

Bursary decisions will, in the first instance, be made by the Head of Sixth Form supported by the Sixth Form Chaplaincy Leads and the Finance Department. If a student wishes to challenge the decision, they should do so, in writing to Mr Tillman (Director of Sixth Form and Assistant Head) within ten working days of the decision by the Head of Sixth Form.

Review: 2025/26 By the Sixth Form Team and presentation to the Curriculum and Teaching Committee of the Governing board