OAKLANDS CATHOLIC SCHOOL
AND
SIXTH FORM COLLEGE

With delegated responsibility from the Edith Stein Catholic Academy Trust

THE SIXTH FORM
Oaklands Catholic School

16-19 (Sixth Form) Bursary Fund Policy

APPROVED BY LOCAL GOVERNING BODY	July 2026
SCRUTINISED BY BUSINESS AND FINANCE COMMITTEE	June 2026
DATE LAST REVIEWED	June 2026
MEMBER OF STAFF RESPONSIBLE	Assistant Head (Director of Sixth Form)
STATUTORY / NON-STATUTORY	STATUTORY

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HAVANT FEDERATION OF SCHOOLS
WORKING TOGETHER FOR A BETTER EDUCATION

Community Unity Opportunity

Catholic Social Teaching

Finance has a role in God's purposes for humanity. Catholic Social Teaching affirms that financial support must serve the dignity of the human person and the common good. The Church teaches that wealth is not an end in itself but a means to promote justice, solidarity, and the flourishing of all. In this light, financial assistance should not create dependency or exploitation, but rather empower individuals and communities to participate fully in social, economic, and cultural life. This means directing resources toward initiatives that create sustainable livelihoods and ensure access to essential services.

In the eyes of the Church, every act of financial support is more than a transaction - it is an expression of love and solidarity. Catholic Social Teaching reminds us that when we share our resources, we are participating in God's work of justice and mercy.

1.0 Introduction

1.1 The 16 to 19 Bursary Fund provides financial support to help students overcome the specific financial barriers to participation they face, so they can remain in education (see DfE Guidance 16 to 19 Bursary Fund guide: 2025 to 2026 - GOV.UK). The main aim of this is to ensure that all students can access school and access learning as fully as possible. Each school has been allocated a fixed sum of money for the 16-19 Bursary Fund (this will vary from school to school based on demographic information).

1.2 There are two types of 16 to 19 bursaries:

- Level 1 – Vulnerable Group Bursary - bursaries for defined vulnerable groups.
- Level 2 – Discretionary Bursary - bursaries which institutions award using policies they set, in line with these funding rules.

The bursary fund is intended to help students with the essential costs of participating in their study programme, so to help contribute towards the cost of essential books or equipment or with the cost of travelling to school, for example.

1.3 The bursary fund is not intended to support costs not related to education (living costs), extracurricular activities or provide learning support, nor is it intended to provide services that institutions give to students – such as counselling, mentoring or extra tutoring. A contingency fund of 5% will be kept for students who join the Sixth Form part way through a year or whose circumstances change during the year.

2.0 Criteria and Eligibility

2.1 To be eligible to receive a bursary the student must be aged over 16 but under 19 on 31st August before the academic year of application, eg on 31st August 2025 for support in the 2025-2026 academic year. Students must also satisfy ESFA (Education and Skills Funding Agency) residency criteria. This means having a British or Northern Ireland passport or having 'settled status' in the UK.

2.2 Applications are welcome to be submitted throughout the academic year if family circumstances change.

2.3 **Level 1 – Vulnerable Group Bursary**
The defined vulnerable groups are students who are:

- in care
- care leavers
- receiving Universal Credit in their own name
- receiving Disability Living Allowance or Personal Independence Payments in their own name as well as Employment Support Allowance or Universal Credit in their own name.

2.4 **Level 2 – Discretionary Bursary**
Students who have an identifiable financial need. As a guide, we will consider applications from families with total household income, including all benefits, of up to £35,000 per annum. We would not normally expect to offer financial support to families with total household income of over £35,000 per annum, unless exceptional circumstances apply.

3.0 Evidence Required

3.1 **Level 1 – Vulnerable Group Bursary**

- For students who are in care or a care leaver, written confirmation of their current or previous looked after status from the relevant local authority.
- For students in receipt of Universal credit, a copy of the award notice.
- For students in receipt of Universal Credit, an additional document such as a tenancy agreement, utility bill etc. is also required.
- For students in receipt of Disability Living Allowance or Personal Independence Payments, a copy of the award notice. Evidence of Employment Support Allowance or Universal Credit being paid is also required.

3.2 **Level 2 – Discretionary Bursary**
Evidence of total household income below £35,000 is required and this could be in the form of:

- Universal Credit award notice – monthly statements for the last 3 months at least
- P60's
- Tax Return
- Last 3 months of bank statements
- Benefit Statement for the current tax year

4.0 Conditions of Funding

4.1 As per the Government guidance, receipt of Bursary funding does not affect receipt of other means tested benefits paid to families.

4.2 The 16-19 Bursary Fund provides financial support to help students overcome specific barriers so they can remain in education. Examples could include:

- a bus pass so the student can attend school,
- a laptop so the student can complete their schoolwork, bursary laptops are available to borrow in Sixth Form on a daily basis but if needed an arrangement can be made to borrow this for the academic year,
- payment for a school trip,
- equipment such as art materials, stationery, textbooks, revision guides, sports team kit

4.3 The 16-19 Bursary Fund cannot be used to provide learning support (eg tutoring, mentoring, counselling), extra-curricular activities which are not essential to a student's studies and general living costs. The above limits are subject to available funds.

5.0 How to Apply

5.1 Applications should be made on the 16-19 Bursary Fund Application Form (see Appendix A).

5.2 The completed application form, along with copies of the required evidence should be submitted for to the Sixth Form Pastoral Lead, via email to thesixthform@oaklandscatholicschool.org or in paper format to the Sixth Form Office. The application form and copies of the evidence will also be securely kept for audit purposes.

6.0 Reasons why Bursary may be withheld

6.1 Bursary payments are dependent upon adherence to the conditions laid out in the Sixth Form Agreement especially in relation to behaviour, attitude and punctuality.

7.0 Communication, Governance and Monitoring

7.1 This policy will be published on the school website.

7.2 The ESFA (Education and Skills Funding Agency) allocates a specific funding to the school each year, which is the school's allocated amount of money. Money will be allocated according the eligibility criteria and will be subject to the school's normal governance and audit regimes.

7.3 If a student feels aggrieved about how their request for a Bursary has been handled then they should follow the normal complaints procedure for the school.

7.4 The Bursary Award will be monitored through the external school financial audit, through the ESFA and through Ofsted.

8.0 Requests and Payments

8.1 Payments will be made based on actual financial need and students will be awarded the amount of support they need to participate in education based on an assessment of the types of costs they have.

8.2 Where possible, bursary payments will be made in kind - for example: travel passes, trips, books and equipment.

8.3 There will be no blanket or fixed rate payments.

8.4 Any requests for reimbursement for items bought by students must be accompanied by a VAT receipt and submitted to Mrs K Chinorwadza, Sixth Form Pastoral Lead. Students must have a bank account in their name, as any payments would be made directly via BACS payment to the student's bank account. Any student faced with difficulties in opening a bank account should contact the Sixth Form Admissions team.

8.5 This is a year-on-year Government Funded Grant and awards to students therefore relate only to the current academic year and therefore need to be renewed annually.

8.6 Students should be aware that an application is no guarantee of payment, even if the eligibility criteria are fulfilled. Each award will be made on a case-by-case basis.

8.7 Once a payment has been agreed, students are required to sign the Notice of Entitlement Agreement Form which is retained by the Sixth Form Pastoral Lead (see Appendix B).

9.0 Further Information

9.1 These government documents can be downloaded from their website:

- 16 to 19 Bursary Fund guide 2024 to 2025 academic year - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)
- ESFA funded adult education budget: funding rules 2024 to 2025 - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)

Appendix A

16-19 Bursary Fund Application Form
Academic Year ....

The 16-19 Bursary Fund is intended to provide support for Sixth Form students from disadvantaged backgrounds and is based on guidance from the Education Funding Agency. Proof of entitlement will be required to allow the processing of this form.

Section1: Student/Bank Details

Name	
Date of Birth	
Current address	
Postcode	
Email address	
Home phone	
Mobile phone	

Bank or Building Society Details

To receive payments, you must have a bank account in your name that will accept BACS payments. If you do not have a bank account, you need to open one before completing this form.	
Name of Account Holder	
Name of Bank	
Branch	
Sort Code	
Account Number	
Roll Number	

Section 2: Personal Circumstances

Please be assured that all applications will be treated in the strictest confidence.

		Evidence attached?
Are you in local authority care, a care leaver, or living with foster parents?	YES/NO	YES/NO
Are you in receipt of Income Support or Universal Credit?	YES/NO	YES/NO
Are you disabled and in receipt of Employment Support Allowance and also Disability Living Allowance?	YES/NO	YES/NO
Have you been in receipt of free school meals?	YES/NO	YES/NO
Do you or your parent(s)/carer(s) receive any of the following benefit?		
	Amount per week	**Evidence attached?**
Income Support/JSA/ESA		YES/NO
Child Tax Credit		YES/NO
Working Tax Credit		YES/NO
Other income-based benefit (please specify below)		YES/NO

<table>
<tr><th colspan="3">If you live with, or are financially dependent upon your parent(s) or carer(s) and they are on low incomes, please give the following details:</th></tr>
<tr><td>Name of Parent/Carer</td><td colspan="2"></td></tr>
<tr><td>Current address (if different from yours)</td><td colspan="2"></td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="2" rowspan="2">Please state their gross annual income, including benefits.
Please submit supporting evidence e.g. notification from benefits agencies, P60, Tax Credit Award Notice or evidence of self-employed earnings.

You may attach a supporting letter to your application.</td><td>Amount per annum</td></tr>
<tr><td></td></tr>
</table>

Section 3: Specific Funding Request

Please give details of any specific items you would like support with, as outlined in the 16-19 Bursary Fund Policy e.g. travel costs, books, equipment, curriculum related trips.

Travel support	
University visits	
Essential course trips	
Essential books/materials/equipment	
School meal support	
Loan laptop – these are available for daily hire but can also be loaned for the academic year	
Other (please specify)	

Statement:

I have read and agreed to the terms and conditions as outlined in the 16-19 Bursary Fund Policy.
I confirm that, to the best of my knowledge, these details are true and accurate.

Student's signature: **Date:**

Parent's signature: **Date:**

Examples of Evidence Required

Fund	Income threshold	Household Income Evidence
Free Sixth Form Meals	In receipt of a Means-tested benefit	▪ Universal Credit - take home pay must be less than £7,400 a year (after tax and not including any benefits, you get) ▪ Income Support ▪ Income-based Jobseeker's 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 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
16-19 Discretionary Hardship	Household income Up to £35,000	▪ Last 3 (or less if claim has been made recently) full Universal Credit statements showing take-home pay and payment. ▪ All pages of a tax credit award notice showing finalised income for 2024/25 and dependants ▪ P60/Last 3 months or 12 weeks of pay slips ▪ Welfare benefits letter showing current and active claim ▪ Latest verified accounts of self-employment e.g.,latest submitted tax return ▪ Pension statement ▪ Details of income from all other sources e.g. shares, investments, savings, rental income
16-19 Vulnerable Group	▪ In Care ▪ Care Leaver ▪ Receiving (PIP) or DLA) in your own right as well as ESA or UC in your own right ▪ Receiving IS or UC because you are financially supporting yourself and/or someone who is dependent on you and living with you, such as a child or partner.	▪ Written confirmation of your current or previous looked after status from the relevant local authority – must be on corporate letterheaded paper and signed or sent by email from the local authority. **OR** ▪ Copy of benefit award notice (e.g., DWP letter or Universal Credit statements) and additional documentation to confirm independent status e.g., tenancy agreement, child benefit letter – must be in the student's name and address.

Appendix B

16-19 Bursary Agreement

NOTICE OF ENTITLEMENT FOR 16-19 BURSARY FUND
ACADEMIC YEAR ……………………………….

NAME: ……………………………………………………………………… **TUTOR:** ……………………………….…

Your Bursary is paid on condition that you achieve full attendance. The following information explains what is expected from you.

You are expected to:

- Attend 100% of lessons, registration, tutorials, assembly, PRE and ensure you are punctual
- Notify us in advance of any planned absences that you need to take and follow the absence procedure
- Make satisfactory progress against your ALPs grade and attend any planned examinations

Requesting permission for an absence:
You may need to apply for permission to be absent and this should be agreed with Mr Godwin in advance.

Examples of Authorised Absence:

- Dental or Medical appointments which cannot be arranged outside school hours
- Attendance at a funeral of a relative or close friend
- An official religious holiday, pertinent to your faith
- Attendance at a university open day or a careers related appointment
- A theory/driving test
- Participation in an activity which reflects a significant personal achievement

Other absence (unauthorised absence) Sickness
Payment of Bursary Fund is dependent on attendance. Repetitive absence due to illness, even if covered by a medical certificate, will be classed as unauthorised.

Examples of Unauthorised Absences:

- Holidays during term time
- Non-emergency medical or dental appointments
- Part or full time work which conflicts with your programme of study
- Leisure activities, birthdays or similar celebrations
- Driving lessons
- Any absence from lessons not covered by notifying the school.

I agree to the above statements and understand that my entitlement to funds may be withdrawn if the above requirements are not met.

Student Signature: ………………………………………………………… Date: ……………………………………………..

Parent Name: …………………………………………………………….. Signature: ………………………………………

Please sign and return to Sixth Form Reception