

# **St Francis of Assisi Catholic College**

**‘Nil satis optimum’**



## **Bursary Policy**

### **Control Sheet**

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## 1. Our ethos

St Francis of Assisi Catholic College (referred to forthwith as 'the College') seeks to develop the whole person. We are a faith Community inspired in our mission by our motto 'Nil Satis Optimum'- 'nothing but the best is good enough'. In striving to fulfil this we follow our mission statement which in practice this means that we seek to:

- Encourage, support and inspire young people and the wider College community in their journey of faith.
- Create a well-ordered community where everyone is valued and respected.
- Develop the intellectual, creative, physical, spiritual and religious potential of every student and encourage involvement in the wider life of the College community.
- Work in partnership with parents, parishes, local industry and commerce and the wider community in a spirit of mutual service for the benefit of all.
- Prepare our young people for the life beyond college and in particular to develop personal integrity, moral values and a sense of justice so that they "preach the Gospel at all times, use words if necessary" (St Francis).

## **2. Background**

The 16-19 Bursary Fund provides financial support to help students overcome specific barriers to participation so they can remain in education. The amount of funding available for each school to distribute has been determined by the government and there is a finite amount of funds to be distributed. St Francis of Assisi is therefore committed to distributing the bursary fund to those students with the greatest need. The notes here give further detail on the bursary fund, how applications can be made and how decisions will be reached.

## **3. Eligibility**

There are two types of 16-19 bursary:

- 1) A vulnerable bursary of up to £1,200 per year for young people in one of the defined vulnerable groups
- 2) Discretionary bursaries which institutions award to meet individual needs, for example, to help with the cost of transport, meals, books and equipment

To be eligible to receive a bursary, a student must meet the eligibility requirements as set by the Education & Skills Funding Agency. The key requirements relevant to those at the School are:

- Must be aged 16 or over but under 19 at 31 August 2023 to be eligible for help from the bursary fund in the 2023 to 2024 academic year.
- Must meet the residency criteria in ESFA funding regulations for post-16 provision. Those on 1 September who are settled in the UK, and have been ordinarily resident in the UK for the preceding three years will be eligible as will certain other groups.

## 4. Bursary Funding

- 1) **Vulnerable Bursaries** are fixed at £1,200 per year and are designed to support the young people in most need, identified by the government as:
  - Young people in care
  - Young care leavers
  - Young people in receipt of Income Support or Universal Credit in their own right
  - Young people in receipt of Employment and Support Allowance or Universal Credit and Disability Living or Personal Independence Payments in their own right.

### 2) Discretionary bursaries (household income below £30,000)

Discretionary Bursaries are for students in low-income households to allow students to continue in education. To be eligible, the student's family household income must be below £30,000 per annum, to include income from employment, pensions payments, jobseekers allowance, all tax credits including child tax credit and working tax credit but child benefit may be excluded.

Discretionary awards may consist of the following:

- Travel expenses
- College meals
- Books, equipment and uniform
- Trips and visits
- Other miscellaneous costs incurred as a result of attending College.

## 5. Application

Any student who believes they are eligible for any level of funding from the 16-19 Bursary Fund should complete an application form and hand it in to Sixth Form Student Support as soon as possible after admission in September. The appropriate documentation to prove entitlement, e.g. a letter setting out a benefit entitlement, or written confirmation of the student's current or previous looked after status should accompany this application. Applications should reach us by Friday 20<sup>th</sup> September 2024. Applications may be made later in the year in the case of a change in your financial circumstances. Students who are currently in Year 12 (admission year September '23) will not need to reapply and submit evidence.

Students should note that all awards of the Student Bursary will be subject to meeting the expectations outlined in the Sixth Form agreement.

## **6. Evidence**

As part of the application, the relevant evidence must be submitted with the application form in order for the application to be assessed and processed.

List of possible evidence:

- Letter from HM Revenue and Customs – Tax credit award Notice
- Receipt of benefit and/or P60
- Current benefit letter from the DWP
- Universal Credit Assessment
- Evidence of self-employment income and tax return.

The allowance will be established upon agreement by the school to make awards to students. All evidence of household income will be kept in strict confidence.

## **7. Assessment procedure**

The distribution of the discretionary bursary fund will be dependent on the number of eligible students and the College reserve the right to retain 20% of the 16-19 bursary amount provided. This is to accommodate changes in circumstances and ensure that requests for funding from students following such changes can be accommodated.

## **8. Award letter**

An award letter will be issued to students confirming the amount of support, what support will be made in- kind and payment conditions.

## **9. Complaint or Appeals**

Any student or parents who is unhappy with the handling of application for bursary funding or wish to make an appeal should follow the school' complaint procedure. It is important to note that appeals for bursaries on the grounds of income levels alone are unlikely to result in a revised decision.

## **10. Confidentiality**

The school will ensure that all applications are handled confidentially. For audit purposes, computerized copies of all documentation for learner support will be kept for a period of six years and will be held securely and in compliance with the Data Protection Act. This information will only be made available for audit purposes.