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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)

1. Introduction

The College receives an allocation from the Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA) 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 is subject to funding received from the ESFA. Consideration will be given to the individual needs of each student based on their household situation, finances and programme of study.
- 1.2** All awards will be made subject to an application meeting the bursary criteria outlined in this policy which is published on the Bursary Support section of the St Brendan's website. To receive bursary funding, students must meet the attendance, punctuality and academic progress criteria detailed in 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.

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 school 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 meal allowance will be a minimum of the statutory £2.53 per college day. This may be topped up from discretionary bursary funding to allow the purchase of a 'meal deal' from the college café.
 - 2.2** Transitional protection will be taken into account in our assessment of free meals eligibility. The

protection means that all students already receiving free meals on or after 1 April 2018 will continue to be eligible to receive free meals up until March 2025 and then until the end of their phase of education. This also applies to any students who were eligible for free school meals (FSM) prior to moving into further education provision. Proof of free school meal eligibility can be established by a student providing a letter from their secondary school confirming that they received free school meals OR documents to be provided as part of a bursary application confirming eligibility as outlined above. In all instances an online bursary application will need to be completed however if a student does not meet bursary criteria, a letter from their secondary school confirming free meals eligibility will mean that this particular benefit can be carried forward.

3. Bursary funding for vulnerable students

Students who are in one or more of the groups noted below and have a financial need can apply for a bursary of up to £1,200 per annum for essential costs relating to their education. The application process for these students will include an assessment of individual circumstances and review of their programme of study. A student will be awarded the amount of support they need to participate in their study programme, based on an assessment of the actual costs and will not be automatically be awarded £1,200

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. 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)
- Compulsory educational trips
- Compulsory kits for creative arts subjects & essential printing costs for specific subjects
- Other items of kit confirmed as essential such as calculators for A level Mathematics and Headphones for Music Technology.

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

- 4.2** The award will be determined by an assessment of total household income. This is to include employed / self employed income along with any benefits received added to any other sources of income. For households that receive Universal credit, we will base our calculations on an average of 3 monthly statements. We will make our assessment of total household income based on the following calculation:
Universal credit award amount minus housing entitlement amount (shown in first part of the statement) plus total earnings reported on the Universal Credit statement.
- 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 base our figures on the amount payable after tax, pension and National insurance have been deducted from income. For households where total household income (all sources) is below £24000 net we will be able to offer a free meal allocation as part of the bursary award.
- 4.4** 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
- 4.5** All awards are subject to adherence to the *St. Brendan's Student Expectations* and continued acceptable attendance. Students whose attendance falls below 85% may no longer be eligible for bursary support
- 4.6** 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.

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.
- 5.2** The College will endeavour 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 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.

6. Appeal process

- 6.1 Once an application is received, the Bursary Coordinator will approve or decline the application based on the evidence provided.
- 6.2 Unsuccessful claimants have the right to appeal the decision. Appeals must be in writing and should be lodged with the Finance Manager within 10 working days of their notification letter. The appeal letter must state why the application should be approved and provide further evidence to support the application. The Finance Manager will review the case within 10 working days from receipt of the appeal letter and notify the student of the outcome of their appeal in writing. The Finance Manager's decision is 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

Purchase of Essential IT Equipment from the student's awarded bursary fund.

- Students will be subject to the same criteria and circumstance as set in the **Laptop Loan Procedure**.
- Once issued, the Essential IT Equipment will become the ownership and responsibility of the student.
- The college will not be responsible for its maintenance or upkeep.
- Purchased Essential IT Equipment accessing any College IT infrastructure or systems will still be subject to the IT Acceptable Usage and BYOD Policy.