



Notre Dame High School

16-19 Bursary Information – Policy and Procedure

Introduction

The student bursary fund aims to help and support students enrolled in the school Sixth Form who face barriers to learning, and to ensure that students can fully participate in and benefit from the 16-19 curriculum.

2025-26 Academic Year (September 2025)

What is the Bursary Fund?

The Government's Education & Skills Funding Agency (ESFA) provides a limited amount of money to Schools and Academies to pass on to students aged 16 to 19 in full-time education so that financial barriers to education can be reduced or removed. Bursary awards will typically be allocated to fund course related costs such as books, educational equipment, personal protective equipment (PPE) but will also be allocated to assist with transport costs, catering, field trips, university open days and UCAS fees.

Aim

Notre Dame High School (The Academy) administers the 16-19 Bursary Fund (The Fund) so that it provides financial support for students enrolled in the Sixth Form, who face the greatest barriers to learning: funding is intended to ensure that all students can fully participate in Sixth Form life.

Eligibility

A student must be aged 16 or over but under 19 at 31 August 2025 to be eligible for help from the bursary fund in the 2025 to 2026 academic year. You must also be taking part in full-time or part-time further education or training.

Students must meet the residency criteria:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/advice-funding-regulations-for-post-16-provision>.

There are two categories of Bursary payments as per Category 'A' and 'B' below.

CATEGORY 'A' – Vulnerable Group

To qualify you must be aged 16-19 in one of the following groups:

- In care
- A care leaver
- In receipt of Income Support (IS) or Universal Credit (UC); because you are financially supporting yourself/or supporting someone dependant on you
- In Receipt of Disability Living Allowance or Personal Independence Payments in your own right as well as Employment and Support (ESA) OR UC in your own right.

You may be entitled to receive a bursary of up to £1,200 per annum allocated in up to two parts:

1. A payment 'in kind' to cover the cost of travel, food and course requirements.
2. A regular monthly payment (subject to attendance and the learning agreement conditions).

CATEGORY 'B' – Discretionary

You may qualify if your household income is £25,000 or less.

Discretionary bursaries are awarded by the Academy using policies set, in line with DfE funding rules.

Students can claim financial assistance to meet the cost of:

Transport

Contribution towards travel expenditure may be made by the Academy dependant on the distance travelled.

Books (including revision guides)

Some books or other learning materials may be provided to all students by the Academy depending on your course. In some instances, the Academy will have pre-ordered supplies that it will allocate to you as part of your bursary award. Where this is not the case, we will need proof of purchase to reimburse you from the Fund for direct purchases. We require text books to be returned once the students have left school.

Educational equipment

Where you need to purchase essential educational equipment for example, a scientific calculator, design technology or art materials, we will need proof of purchase to reimburse you from the Fund. In some instances, the Academy may have pre-ordered supplies that it will allocate to you are part of your bursary award. We require equipment to be returned once the students have left school.

Personal Protective Clothing and Equipment (PPE)

In most instances, this will be provided during lessons for all students by the Academy, at no cost. If it is not we will need proof of purchase to reimburse you from the Fund.

Catering

Contribution towards meals may be met by the Academy. Specific payment rates will be confirmed in September 2025.

UCAS Fees

Once eligibility for Bursary is determined, the Academy will pay your UCAS fee.

Field Trips

The Academy will meet 100% of the essential cost of any essential field trips that form part of your course of study.

University Open Days

The Academy will meet up to 100% of any reasonable travel costs and subsistence incurred for up to three university open days subject to approval by the Head or Assistant Head of Sixth Form. We will need confirmation of the travel dates, location and travel costs to facilitate the refund.

Attendance

Eligibility for all bursary payments may be withdrawn for any students whose attendance triggers our attendance policy without the appropriate authorisation.

The total annual amount available in any given year for discretionary bursaries depends on student numbers and demand for financial support and so payments may be subject to change.

Students are also entitled to apply for Free School Meals

- Students living in Sheffield can apply here: [Free school meals \(sheffield.gov.uk\)](https://www.sheffield.gov.uk/free-school-meals)
- Students living outside Sheffield should contact their own Local Authority.

To Apply for the 16-19 Bursary

- Complete all the sections of the online Bursary application form.
- All information received will be treated in strictest confidence and copies of evidence of eligibility will be retained and stored securely for audit purposes.
- To avoid any delays in processing your application, please ensure you attach copies of the required evidence of income documents in the online form.
- Please email any queries to Mrs Borden aborden@notredame-high.co.uk
- A decision regarding your application will be confirmed by written communication.
- **The initial closing date for discretionary bursary applications is Friday 19th September 2025.** However, we acknowledge that students' circumstances change and therefore the application process will remain open for the whole school year.
- **A small emergency fund will be retained to support students who face exceptional circumstances due to a change in their situation during the year that impact on their ability to participate in education.**
- Any approved payments or re-imburement will be made into your own bank account – please ensure details are provided on your application form.
- Please do tell us if your financial circumstances change

Decision Making

Each application will be reviewed on its own merits.

Using the criteria above, a decision panel (comprising of the Head of Sixth Form and Sixth Form Pastoral Manager) will meet and assess your individual need for financial support based on your circumstances, the family income evidence supplied, the participation costs being claimed and the funds available. You will be notified in writing of the award decision made by **30th September 2025.**

In extenuating circumstances, the Academy reserves the right to make awards to individual students who do not necessarily meet all of the listed criteria, as long as they meet the base criteria set by the ESFA.

Bursaries will be granted based on the information provided. Funds will only be granted where a genuine need for assistance has been demonstrated. Not all applications will be successful. The funding available is limited, and with the exception of the guaranteed bursaries, awards will not be guaranteed. Students who apply later in the year after the budget has been allocated may not be granted an award, unless they are classed as category A.

Appeals/Complaints Procedure

An appeals process exists so that if a student or parent / carer wish to appeal against a decision regarding support from The Fund, they are treated equally and given the right to appeal. The matter will be referred initially to the Director of Business. The Academy's procedure is designed to ensure that students have a full opportunity to raise, individually or collectively, matters of concern to them, without fear of disadvantage and in the knowledge that privacy and confidentiality will be respected. Decisions will be confirmed via email.

Payments

The total annual amount available in any given year for discretionary bursaries depends on student numbers and demand for financial support and so payments may be subject to change.

The Academy will try and ensure that the first payments of the academic year are made in October however, this depends on the number of applications that require assessment, and whilst awards will be backdated you may need to allow for this.

In accordance with the Education Funding Agency 16-19 Bursary Fund Guidelines for 2025-26 – best practice, wherever possible, bursary payments will be made 'in kind' rather than cash. For example, providing funding for curriculum trips/visits, provision of stationery boxes each term, curriculum materials and equipment – textbooks, revision guides, clothing allowance, laptop scheme, funding for university visits. All purchases will need prior approval that they fall within the bursary guidelines.

Once the bursary application has been approved, **any payments due are made once a month**, subject to any supporting evidence, i.e. proof of purchase, being provided by the middle of the month.

Bursary payments may be reduced if **students have several instances of negative behaviour recorded on the student behaviour records system**.

Students must notify the Academy of any changes in their circumstances throughout the year, they will not normally be expected to repay an award, but their entitlement to further payments may be affected. Students are not allowed to have debts with the Academy. Vulnerable and Discretionary Bursary awards will be reduced by the amount of any outstanding debts.

Confidentiality

The Academy will ensure that applications are handled confidentially. For audit purposes, however, hard copies of all documentation for bursary funding will be kept for a period of six years. The information will be made available for audit purposes. Some records may be computerised but these will be held securely and in compliance with the Data Protection Act.

Equality Act 2010

No applicant will receive less favourable treatment on the grounds of age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex or sexual orientation.

Contact Us

If you would like help completing the application form or have any queries, please contact your Mrs Borden aborden@notredame-high.co.uk

Date approved: May 2022

Committee approved by: P&R

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