

Cost of Living Crisis Fund

Frequently Asked Questions

1. What is the purpose of the funding?

Barnardo's has taken immediate steps to make urgent support available to the children and families who currently receive support from our services, as part of the charity's response to the Cost-of-Living Crisis.

2. Who is eligible to receive funds?

- A family in which one or more members are currently being supported by a Barnardo's Service
- A family that clearly has an inability to meet immediate short term needs due to the cost-of-living crisis
- The recipient must be over 16+ (i.e. the named recipient although the benefit can be for a family)
- The family has no other support to fall back on (all other funding sources have been explored for this family and no other statutory funding is available)
- There are no savings available to the family to be able to support themselves at this time

3. What is the criteria for young people and families to receive the funding?

- Having a current need at the time of application
- In a circumstance of pressing need which requires immediate action to address extreme financial hardship/harm
- A short-term need may be for an item which will have a long-term use. For example, a family may need a cooker and pans which they will use on an on-going basis

4. What can the funds be used for?

The objectives of the fund are:

1. Preventing Hunger
2. Access to Warm Spaces
3. Increase Safety
4. Access to Employment
5. Access to Safe and Working Appliances
6. Access to Health-Related Appointments

Examples of how spending can meet these objectives include:

- Food – To ensure family does not go hungry
- Fuel - Gas/electricity/oil- top up meters or cover reasonable fuel meter debts
- Clothing – such as winter coats or school shoes/boots, school uniforms
- Miscellaneous – for example, purchase or repair of white goods (including fridges, freezers, ovens, etc.) including the costs of safe installation by a registered supplier, blankets, and essential homewares
- Further need can be met with agreement from your line manager/budget holder

5. What can't the funds be used for?

- Any expense which the local authority or other organisation has a statutory duty to meet, for example regular costs for care or housing
- Expenses which are regular and ongoing. For example, Council Tax
- Travelling expenses, with the exception of one-off expenses as approved by your line manager/budget holder.

- Expenses in connection with court (legal proceedings) such as legal fees, court fees, fines, costs, application costs for bankruptcy

6. How likely is it that my funding request will be approved?

It is highly likely that any reasonable request for funding for a family that meets the defined eligibility criteria will be awarded funding, whilst funds last.

7. How many times can funds be accessed by a young person or family?

We want to ensure that the funding reaches as many families and young people within Barnardo's services as possible and will be scrutinizing applications for families who have received the fund more than once. Funding can be provided directly to a young person or to families supported by Barnardo's. The expectation is that funding can be accessed up to as many times as there are children in the home. However, if a young person or family needs to access additional funding, please speak with your line manager/budget holder for discretionary approval.

8. What is the maximum amount that can be requested on the form?

£300 is the maximum amount that can be requested on the form. However, we understand that with rising costs, in exceptional circumstances requests may be higher. If more than £300 is needed, please seek approval from your line manager/budget holder.

9. What if a family needs more financial support than the maximum amount?

The purpose of the funding is to provide direct support to families and young people. If a request is needed for a higher amount, please speak to your line manager/budget holder for discretionary approval (i.e. car repair, carpets, etc).

10. Is it possible to give a family cash?

In most cases no, but if cash is the only way to meet a specific need, then up to £50 in cash can be given with approval from line manager/budget holder. It has been agreed that you may exceed impress amounts to pay out again this fund

11. What if my credit card limit is too low for the amount I need to approve or already up to its limit?

We have made arrangements to increase credit card limits in each locality/area. If your card limit is too low, please speak to your ADFA who will be able to tell you who is a super user in your area and make arrangements for their card to be used along with the relevant journal transfers.

12. How long does it take to receive the funding?

The online form is designed to take under 2 minutes. Once a form has been completed, it should take up to 1 working day to receive authorisation for spending the funds. If there is a discretionary request that goes to your line manager/budget holder for approval, then an additional working day may be needed to process. Once the funds have been approved, workers can make arrangements to provide the family with the funding. If you have not been contacted about the outcome of your application within 48 hours, please escalate your request to specialprojects@barnardos.org.uk.

13. Once the form has been submitted how are the funds made available to the worker/or family?

When authorisation has been signed-off by the relevant colleagues, spending can happen immediately through Service petty cash accounts and Service RBS cards.

14. What if a family does not have a Barnardo's Case ID – are they still eligible for this funding?

All families supported by Barnardo's are eligible for the fund, regardless of whether they have a Barnardo's Case ID or not. For example, families or young people supported by Barnardo's through group work or 1-to-1 (who have their case IDs held by external partners) are eligible for this funding. There is an option on the form to answer whether the service user is recorded on Barnardo's main recording system – there is an option to select "No - Third Party System". Please fill in the "Eligibility Details" box to explain why this young person or family would be eligible for this funding.

15. Is the request form compliant with GDPR Regulations?

Barnardo's reputation depends on the appropriate care and security of all and any data within our infrastructure. We take very seriously our obligation to protect data and will not take any risks or actions that may potentially violate the confidentiality, integrity, or availability of data; cause unnecessary exposure to them; or violate contractual or regulatory requirements. The Cost-of-Living request form is compliant with GDPR regulations. A Data Protection Impact Assessment has been completed and information about service users falls within the Confidentiality Agreement they sign to receive services and support from Barnardo's.

16. Who can I contact to ask further questions?

Please contact the Special Projects team at specialprojects@barnardos.org.uk