



Hopelands Preparatory School

MEANS -TESTED BURSARIES

General

The Governors of Hopelands Preparatory School (“the School”) are committed to broadening access to the School by offering to eligible parents/guardians means-tested financial support with the payment of schools fees. Such support may be awarded in the form of a discount on tuition fees payable, depending on the financial, compassionate or other pertinent circumstances of applicants.

Financial awards are subject to repeat testing of parental means each year and may be varied upwards or downwards, depending on parental circumstances. Awards are made in line with the needs of the school, which will be reviewed annually by the Bursar and based upon the school’s financial circumstances. Though awards are generally tied to these needs, they may be varied upwards or downwards depending on individual parents/guardians’ circumstances (e.g. their savings, investments and realisable assets, as well as their income, the size of their family, any other persons dependent upon them and like factors), compassionate or other pertinent considerations.

Requests for financial support usually fall into two categories:

- New applicants to the schools, where a place has been offered but parents/guardians are unable to fund the tuition fees.
- Existing pupils where a change in parents/guardians’ circumstances has resulted in difficulty in meeting tuition fees and may result in the child being withdrawn part way through a stage of education.
- These awards are both known as “Bursaries”.

New Applicants to the School

Awareness Information provided by the Schools alerting the parents/guardians of potential pupils to the possibility of gaining means-tested financial support with the payment of schools fees is included in:

- The School prospectuses.
- The School website.
- The local press by means of advertisements.

The Application Process

Bursaries are awarded at the discretion of the Governors, Head and Bursar. The Bursar is responsible for the management and coordination of the process.

- Step One Parents/guardians seeking a Bursary are required to complete an application form which seeks to establish the financial circumstances of the household. The form, which requests details of income and capital, must be accompanied by full documentary evidence.

- Step Two The Bursar assesses all applications in order to establish the likely level of support that will be required in order to allow the child to attend the School.
- Step Three The parents/guardians are advised whether their child is to be offered a place at the School and of the Award offer.
- Step Six Parents/guardians are then required to sign a letter accepting the place at the school and an acknowledgement agreeing to any conditions relating to the Award.

The Case for Assistance

The Head and Clerk to the Governors will consider a number of factors when making the judgement as to the justification for support, and the extent of such support. In the main, the child's suitability for the school is the first consideration in granting support.

- Suitability In assessing a child's suitability, attention will be given to the academic assessment result of each applicant, but potential will also be considered as well as actual achievement. Bursary funds are limited and those judged most suitable will be given priority as those likely to gain most from the educational provision. Each pupil to whom support is offered must, in the opinion of the Head, be likely to make sound academic progress following admission and possess the potential to develop the quality of his or her work, and benefit from participation in the wider, extra-curricular activities on offer at the Schools. Previous school reports will be consulted for evidence of good behaviour.
- Financial Limitations The amount of the Bursary is not influenced by the level of the academic ability of the child but by the extent of need. Each case is assessed on its own merits and awards are made accordingly, subject to the Schools ability to fund these within the context of what is viable within the context of the target budget set by the Bursar. It is recognised that judgements about what sacrifices a family should make to pay school fees will be personal. However, the Schools have a duty to ensure that all financial awards are well focussed and so, as well as current earnings, other factors which will be considered in determining the necessary level of grant will include:
 - The ability to improve the financial position or earning power of the family. For example, where there are two partners, both would be expected to be employed unless one is prevented from doing so through incapacity, the need to care for children under school age or other dependents, or the requirements of their partner's work.
 - Opportunities to release any capital. Significant capital savings and investments would be expected to be used for the payment of school fees, as would equity values in houses.
 - In cases of separation, the contribution made by the absent parent.
 - Contribution to household costs by other, wider, family members, any adults unrelated to the child or by outside sources.
 - Where fees are being paid to other schools (or universities) the School's grant will take into account all these outgoings.
- Other Factors It is recognised that, in addition to academic ability and financial constraints, there may be other circumstances that should be considered. These include:
 - Where a child has siblings at the School.
 - Where the social needs of the child are relevant (e.g. may be suffering from bullying at their present school).

- o Where a parent/guardian is terminally ill or is unable to secure permanent employment due to poor health.
- o Where a separation has resulted in the child having to be withdrawn from the School adding to the stress of coping with the parents/guardians separating.

Existing Pupils - Change in Family Circumstances


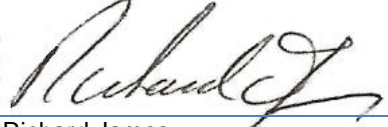
Within overall budget funding, the Schools will, in normal circumstances, make a transfer to the Bursary Fund to assist in cases of sudden, unforeseen need. This sum will be set within budgetary constraints. Parents/guardians with a child at the School whose financial circumstances suddenly change may apply to the Head for a Bursary explaining their situation. Such requests will be forwarded to the Bursar and parents/guardians will be asked to complete the application for financial assistance form. Such Bursaries are subject to the availability of funding and cannot be guaranteed.

Annual Review

All bursary awards are subject to repeat testing of parental means each year and may be varied upwards or downwards depending on parental circumstances. Current bursary holders will be issued with repeat means-testing forms at **the beginning of June each year** for return by **the end of the month**. For those previously in receipt of bursaries, the Head has the discretion to recommend to the Governors the reduction or withdrawal of an award not only where a pupil's progress, attitude or behaviour has been unsatisfactory but also where the parents/guardians have failed to support the school, for example by the late payment of any contribution they are making to the fees.

Confidentiality

The School respects the confidentiality of bursary awards made to families and recipients are expected to do likewise. A breach in confidentiality about an award may result in the termination of an award.

This policy was adopted at a meeting of	Hopelands Preparatory School
Held on	<u>17th February 2011</u>
Date to be reviewed	<u>17th February 2012</u>
Signed on behalf of the senior management team	
Name of signatory	<u>Sheila Bradburn</u>
Role of signatory	<u>Head</u>
Signed on behalf of the Governing Body	
Name of signatory	<u>Richard James</u>
Role of signatory	<u>Chair of Governors</u>