



Richmond House School

Bursary Policy		Associated Policies
Last reviewed	January 2022	Admissions Policy
Next review	January 2025	Privacy Notice
Gov. sub-committee	Finance and General Purposes	
Owner	Bursar	

General

The Governors of Richmond House School are committed to broadening access to the School by offering to eligible parents/guardians means-tested financial support with the payment of school fees. Such support is known as a bursary. Bursaries may be awarded in the form of a discount (typically of around 25% but may be up to 100%) on tuition fees payable, in cases of proven need, depending on the individual circumstances of the prospective pupil and each of his or her parents.

A bursary fund is set aside each year by the Governors but the School receives many more applications than it is able to fund. The number and level of bursaries awarded is completely at the discretion of the Governors.

Bursary awards are subject to an annual review of the pupil's and parents' financial circumstances, with a new application required every year that their child attends the school. Bursary awards may be removed or varied upwards or downwards, depending on the pupil's and parents' financial circumstances.

As a guide, no award will be made where the combined gross income of the parents/guardians for the applicant exceeds £75,000. Awards are made on the basis of the Richmond House School Scale of Awards, which sets out award levels in relation to a family's financial circumstances, as amended from time to time. The Scale of Awards is reviewed and revised annually by the School. Though awards are generally linked to this scale, 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 other factors).

Awards may also be varied upwards or downwards for compassionate or other pertinent reasons, including but not limited to a pupil's progress, attitude, attendance or behaviour; where the parents have failed to support the School or otherwise have not acted in accordance with their obligations under the School's Terms and Conditions, for example by the late payment of any contribution they are making to the fees; or otherwise in accordance with the terms of the award or the School's Terms and Conditions.

A bursary may be withdrawn in its entirety in accordance with the terms upon which such an award is made or otherwise in accordance with the School's Terms and Conditions. A bursary may also be withdrawn in its entirety if, in the opinion of the Headmaster, the child's attendance, progress and/or behaviour (and/or the parents' behaviour or conduct (or the behaviour or conduct of one of the parents)) no longer merit the continuation of the award.

The School reserves the right to amend the way in which awards are assessed.

Requests for financial support fall into one of three categories:

- Means tested bursaries: Pupils moving from nursery into reception or new applicants to the School where a place has been offered but parents/guardians require some level of assistance to be able to fund the tuition fees. Bursaries are awarded from the term after the child turns 5 and are typically awarded up to 50% of the fees payable. Priority will be given to children who have attended the Richmond House School nursery.
- Transformational bursaries: New applicants to the School, where a place has been offered as the child shows exceptional academic potential and parents would not otherwise be able to afford the full fees. Bursaries are available for children from year 3 to year 6 **up to** a value of 100% of fees. The School may work alongside other charitable organisations in order to maximise the funding available.
- Hardship bursaries: 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.

Awareness of Bursaries.

Information provided by the School alerting parents of prospective pupils to the possibility of gaining means-tested financial support with the payment of school fees and other educational expenses is included in:

- The School's prospectus
- The School website

The Application Process

Bursaries are awarded at the discretion of the Governors. The Headmaster and Bursar are responsible for the management and coordination of the process. The application process is detailed below:

Process for Means tested bursaries for new pupils and Transformational Bursaries

- Step One. During January. Half day assessment of the pupil along with a parent/guardian meeting with the Headmaster or Bursar (for pupils not already within the School)
- Step Two. By end of January parents/guardians will be notified whether a place will be offered to the pupil (for pupils not already within the School)
- Step Three. Parents/guardians seeking a bursary are required to complete a Bursary Application Form which seeks to establish the financial circumstances of the household. The form requests details of income and capital and must be accompanied by full documentary evidence. The completed form, together with the necessary documentary evidence, are to be submitted to the Bursar **by end of February** in any year for bursaries to start the following September.
- Step Four. The Bursar or their nominee assesses all applications in order to establish the likely level of support which will be required in order to allow the child to attend the School. This may involve the Bursar, or a representative from a third party company, visiting the parents/guardians' home to ensure the information has been correctly interpreted and the basis of the financial assessment has been fair. Parents may also be asked to meet the Bursar or their nominee at the School and/or provide such additional supporting information as may be requested.
- Step Five. The Bursar prepares a recommendation which is considered with the Headmaster and a joint recommendation is then reached.
- Step Six. The joint recommendation is presented to the Chair of Governors for approval, or in their absence, another Sub-Committee Chairperson.
- Step Seven. The parents/guardians are advised of the Bursary offer in writing along with the terms and conditions of the offer.

- Step Eight. Parents/guardians are then required to sign an acceptance form which includes agreement to the terms and conditions relating to the bursary.

Process for Means tested bursaries for existing pupils

- Step One. Parents/guardians seeking a bursary are required to complete a Bursary Application Form which seeks to establish the financial circumstances of the household. The form requests details of income and capital and must be accompanied by full documentary evidence. The completed form, together with the necessary documentary evidence, are to be submitted to the Bursar **by end of February** in any year for bursaries to start the following September.
- Step Two. The Bursar assesses all applications in order to establish the likely level of support which will be required in order to allow the child to attend the School. This may involve the Bursar, or a representative from a third party company, visiting the parents/guardians' home to ensure the information has been correctly interpreted and the basis of the financial assessment has been fair.
- Step Three. The Bursar prepares a recommendation which is considered with the Headmaster and a joint recommendation is then reached.
- Step Four. The joint recommendation is presented to the Chair of Governors for approval, or in their absence, another Sub-Committee Chairperson.
- Step Five. The parents/guardians are advised of the Bursary offer.
- Step Six. Parents/guardians are then required to sign an acceptance form and an acknowledgement agreeing to any conditions relating to the bursary.

Existing Pupils - Change in Family Circumstances

Within overall budget funding, the School will in normal circumstances set aside each year a Hardship Fund, for cases of sudden, unforeseen need or in exceptional cases where applications meriting bursary assistance are received out of the normal calendar cycle for bursary submission, scrutiny and award. This sum will be set within budgetary constraints. Parents/guardians with a child at the School whose financial circumstances suddenly change may apply for a bursary to the Bursar, explaining their situation and using the Bursary Application Form. Such awards are subject to the availability of funding and cannot be guaranteed.

Richmond House School may use an external organisation to assist with processing bursary applications, including making home visits. Information provided by applicants may be made available, in confidence, to that organisation for those purposes.

All personal data processed in connection with the School's arrangements for bursaries shall be processed in accordance with the School's privacy notice which is available on the School's website and is otherwise available from the School upon request.

The Case for Assistance.

The Headmaster and Bursar 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 Headmaster, 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 School. In normal circumstances, each applicant should meet the School's normal academic requirements. Previous school reports, where relevant, will be consulted for evidence of the pupil's attainment, progress and behaviour.

- **Financial Limitations.** The amount of the bursary award 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 School's ability to fund these within the context of what is viable within the context of its overall budget. It is recognised that judgements about what sacrifices a family should make to pay school fees will be personal. However, the School has a duty to ensure that all bursary grants are well focused and so, as well as current earnings, other factors which will be considered in determining the necessary level of grant will include (but are not limited to):
 - The ability to improve the financial position or earning power of each parent. 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 any significant equity values in houses.
 - In cases of separation, the contribution that is being made or could be made by both parents, regardless of who the child lives with, and based on the principle that liability for the fees is joint and several. This means that the School may consider the financial circumstances of each parent separately and together, treating each parent's household separately.
 - 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 assessment will take into account all these outgoings.
 - Acknowledging that others might have a different view, the School considers that the following would not be consistent with the receipt of a bursary:
 - Frequent or expensive holidays.
 - New or luxury cars.
 - Investment in significant home improvements.
 - A second property/land holdings.
 - Failure to honour school fee payments to other schools.

- **Other Factors.** It is recognised that, in addition to academic ability and financial constraints, there may be other circumstances which should be considered. These include:
 - Where a child has siblings at the School (though a bursary award to one child does not guarantee an award to a sibling).
 - Where the social needs of the child are relevant (e.g. may be suffering from bullying at their present school).
 - Where a parent/guardian is critically or terminally ill or is unable to secure permanent employment due to poor health.
 - 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, although the School will nonetheless consider the financial circumstance of both parents in such cases.

Annual Review

All bursary awards are subject to repeat consideration of the child's and parents' financial circumstances each year and may be varied upwards or downwards depending on the outcome of any review. Current bursary holders will be issued with repeat means-testing forms early in the spring term of each year, which must be completed fully and returned by the deadline date given to be considered.

For those previously in receipt of bursaries, the Headmaster and Bursar, in making their joint recommendation to the Chair of Governors, have 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 or by otherwise not acting in accordance with the School's Terms and Conditions.

Confidentiality

The School respects the confidentiality of bursary awards made to families and recipients are required to do likewise. Failure to keep any bursary award confidential could lead to withdrawal of the bursary.

Other Sources of Bursary Assistance

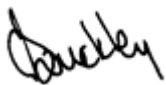
In addition to the School's Bursary Fund, there are a number of educational and charitable trusts which provide assistance with tuition fees. In the majority of cases, these are to assist children who are already attending a fee-paying school and due to a change of circumstances may be unable to remain. Richmond House School encourages parents/guardians to apply for support where it is felt a good case can be made for assistance. Further information on how to pursue such assistance may be obtained from the Bursar.

Examples of such organisations are found via:

The Educational Trusts Forum

Website: www.educational-grants.org

A review of this policy, through the Governing body and the SLT, will be undertaken within 3 years of the last review date.



Signed (Headmaster):



Signed (Chair of Governors):