

# **CHRIST'S HOSPITAL**

## **BURSARY POLICY**

### **Introduction**

1. Christ's Hospital (the School) is committed to providing a first class education to talented boys and girls from a broad social and financial background by offering eligible parents/guardians means-tested financial support with the payment of school fees. Such support is known as a bursary and may be awarded in the form of a discount of up to 100% on fees payable.
2. A bursary is distinct from a scholarship. Bursaries are given on the basis of need whereas scholarships reward outstanding achievement in, for example, academic work, music, sport, art or drama.
3. An applicant can be awarded both a bursary and a scholarship but, together, they will not exceed 100% of fees payable.

### **Eligibility**

4. Bursaries at the School are available to applicants for boarding places.
5. 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 the 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 its limited charitable resources are directed towards the most deserving cases and so, as well as current earnings, commitments and outgoings, other factors will be considered in determining the necessary level of grant, including:
  - the applicant's need of a boarding education;
  - 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 suitably 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 capital. Significant capital savings and investments would be expected to be used for the payment of school fees, as would equity value in houses;
  - in cases of separation, the contributions made by the absent parent; and
  - contributions to household costs by other, wider family members, any adults unrelated to the child or by outside sources.

### **Terms of bursary provision**

#### **General**

6. The School reserves the right to make or alter its overall bursary scheme from time to time in the light of its changing financial or other circumstances.
7. Any terms on which a bursary is made to an individual will be set out as part of the offer of a place and will generally continue for the child's duration at the School subject to annual review (see below). As a general principle, for example, parents cannot expect to benefit

financially from moving between different types of place (day to boarding or vice versa) with a view to trying to maximise bursary support. Changes in the application of the scheme to individuals already at the School will be at the discretion of the Headmaster.

8. The Headmaster's decision is final in awarding, re-assessing or removing a bursary.

### **Current provision**

9. Bursaries are expressed as a percentage reduction from the prevailing School fees. So, for example, an 80% bursary would mean that the parents would only need to meet 20% of the current level of School fees.
10. Bursaries are reviewed annually (see below) to take account of changes in parental circumstances, and:
  - where parents' circumstances have improved, the level of bursary may be reduced, however
  - where parents' circumstances have worsened and/or where fee levels have increased relative to the parents' ability to pay, the level of bursary may be increased but, over the duration of the child's time at the School, only up to a maximum figure, usually 10% above the original award made. This maximum figure will be communicated to parents at the same time as the original award.
11. Using the example above, for parents who are offered an 80% bursary, over the course of their child's education at the School, the maximum bursary given would rise to no more than 90% of the prevailing fees. Their bursary could fall below the 80% level if the annual review showed that their circumstances had improved.

### **Extras**

12. Bursary awards apply to tuition and boarding fees only. Extras must be paid in accordance with the terms and conditions of the School. A limited number of music bursaries and travel grants are available on a discretionary basis to especially deserving pupils who are already in School.

### **Confidentiality**

13. The School respects the confidentiality of bursary awards to families and recipients are expected to do likewise.

### **Applications**

14. Applications for financial support fall into two categories: new applicants and existing pupils:

#### **New applicants**

15. Bursaries are available for new applicants for boarding at the School, where parents are unable to fund the full fees. All awards are conditional on:
  - recipients meeting the required entry standards (see the School's admissions policy);
  - full disclosure of information requested within the timescales given. A considerable amount of personal information will be required as well as documentary evidence (this may include pay slips, P60, HMRC self-assessment documents, pension income proof, share dividend vouchers and bank interest, etc.);
  - the School satisfying itself that the information given is accurate. The School may seek

objective third-party confirmation of a family's financial circumstances (including from a credit reference agency); and

- a home visit from the School or its agents if the School deems this appropriate.

16. The School will not proceed with an application from anyone giving misleading, inaccurate or incomplete information.

### **Existing pupils: annual reassessment**

17. Once awarded, the bursary (as defined in the offer) normally applies for the duration of a pupil's school career. However, each bursary holder will be issued with repeat means-testing forms at the beginning of April each year for return by the date indicated on the bursary form. The same conditions apply as above. Continuation of the bursary is conditional upon:

- full disclosure of information requested within the timescales given;
- the School satisfying itself that the information given is accurate. The School may seek objective third-party confirmation of a family's financial circumstances (including from a credit reference agency); and
- a home visit from the School or its agents if the School deems this appropriate.

18. The School reserves the right to withdraw a bursary from anyone giving misleading, inaccurate or incomplete information.

19. In addition, the Headmaster also has the discretion to recommend 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 have failed to make timely payments of any contribution they are making to fees or extras.

### **Existing pupils: hardship bursaries**

20. These may be offered to parents of existing pupils where a catastrophic change in financial or personal circumstances has created a difficulty in paying the fees. Financial help may be offered in the form of a short term award. Such awards are subject to availability of funding and cannot be guaranteed. Hardship funding will be awarded on a temporary basis and will not be guaranteed for the remainder of the pupil's education at Christ's Hospital. As soon as the situation has arisen, the Bursary Assessment Manager needs to be informed so that consideration can be given to a request.

## **The Application Process**

### **Boarders**

21. If an applicant wishes to apply for a bursary the following steps need to be followed:

- a. Parents need to register for a place at the School by filling in the appropriate form and sending the registration fee to the School (see the admissions policy for more detail). On the registration form, parents should indicate interest in a bursary.
- b. The School will send out a Home and Background Form (which seeks to establish need of a boarding place), together with a Verification Form for a Bursary which seeks outline financial information. No supporting financial documentation is required at this stage.
- c. If the applicant is invited to attend an assessment at the School, his/her parents will be asked to fill in a more detailed financial declaration for the tax year then current. At this stage copies of documents are required to support the application.

- d. If the applicant is offered a place following the assessments, then the School will provide an estimate of the bursary support that can be provided at the same time as the offer is made.
  - e. Parents are then required to sign a contract with the School, accepting the place. This includes the requirement for an annual review of their financial circumstances (see above). The contract will also acknowledge agreement to any conditions relating to the bursary.
  - f. Prior to joining, the School will ask parents to complete an additional detailed financial declaration with updated information for the tax year just finished and provide relevant verification for all income and allowable expenses. It is on the basis of this return that the final bursary offer will be confirmed.
22. The School does not give individual estimates prior to the point at which a place is offered. However, a table presenting examples of the bursary support the School may be able to provide is available on application.
  23. Forms and supporting documents should always be returned by the due dates given as delayed bursary applications cannot be processed and you may then potentially forfeit a bursary – bursary places at the School are highly competitive.

#### **Overseas applicants for means tested bursaries**

24. Preference in awarding competitive, means-tested bursaries will be given to children who are normally resident in the UK (defined as having lived in the UK full time for two years preceding the application). Applications from overseas for means tested bursaries will only be progressed if all of the following requirements can be met:
  - all normal School entry criteria have been satisfied;
  - the candidate satisfies the requirements of the UK Visas and Immigration Service for study in the UK;
  - the School is able to obtain objective, verifiable third-party confirmation of the family's financial circumstances (in English); and
  - the candidate has a relative or education guardian living in the UK who has been given legal authority to act on behalf of the parents in all respects and with whom he or she can stay during leave weekends, exeats, half term or any other holiday or period of time when his/her parent is abroad.

#### **Day pupils converting to boarding**

25. The parents of day pupils who wish to become boarders can apply for bursary support alongside external candidates for Year 9 and Year 12 entry but there is no guarantee that bursary provision can be made: each case will be considered on its merits. In addition, the provisions set out in paragraph 7 apply.
26. Parents should contact the Admissions Department. Parents will be asked to complete steps c - f above as well as providing additional information about the child's need of a boarding place.

#### **Boarding pupils converting to day**

29. Continued bursaries are not available for boarding pupils converting to day.

Author: MAP

Date of last review: April 2019

Date of next review: April 2020