

The Mill Hill School Foundation

**Walker House, Millers Close, The Ridgeway, Mill Hill,
London NW7 1AQ**

Mill Hill School

Belmont, Mill Hill Preparatory School

Grimsdell, Mill Hill Pre-Preparatory School

Bursary Award Policy and Procedure

Effective January 2010

The Mill Hill School Foundation Bursary Award Policy and Procedure

BURSARIES

1 Introduction

The Mill Hill School Foundation (the “Foundation”) aims to provide excellence in education, to support pupils in the passage from childhood towards adulthood and develop in every pupil self-discipline, responsibility, spiritual and moral values, leading to the highest possible standards of behaviour, consideration for others, pride in oneself and in one’s achievements.

To achieve these aims the Foundation is committed to providing the best possible care and education to its pupils and to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people. To this end the Foundation is committed to broadening access to Mill Hill School and Belmont Mill Hill Preparatory School by offering to eligible parents/guardians financial support with the payment of schools fees. Such support is known as a Bursary and may be awarded in the form of an allowance of up to 100% on school fees payable, depending on the financial, compassionate or other pertinent circumstances of applicants.

The Foundation does not offer bursarial support to parents/guardians of pupils at Grimsdell Mill Hill Pre-Preparatory School.

This policy has been authorised by the Court of Governors of the Foundation. Its status is advisory only. It is addressed to prospective and current parents and pupils and to all members of the teaching and administration staff.

2 Bursary Awards

2.1 Aims of Foundation Bursary Award Policy.

The aims of the Foundation’s bursary policy are as follows:

- to ensure compliance with the School’s charitable purposes;
- to admit children who will benefit from an academic education and who will contribute to and benefit from the ethos and activities of our school community. The Foundation will only admit a child who has met the academic criteria in accordance with the Foundation Admissions Policy;
- to offer children of parents/guardians eligible for means-tested financial support as a consequence of financial, compassionate or other pertinent circumstances, the opportunity to benefit from a Foundation education by the provision of bursarial support;
- to broaden access to children of the highest educational calibre to benefit from a Foundation education;

- to ensure that all applicant families for bursarial support are considered equitably and consistently;
- to ensure that no applicant family for bursarial support is treated unfairly on any grounds including race, colour, nationality, ethnic or national origin, religion or religious belief, sex or sexual orientation, marital status, disability or age.

2.2 Scale of Awards and Annual Review.

Bursary awards are subject to an evaluation and review by the Bursar of parental financial circumstances each year and may be varied upwards or downwards, depending on individual parents/guardians' circumstances (e.g. their savings, investments, assets and liabilities, as well as their income, the size of their family, any other persons dependent upon them and like factors), compassionate or other pertinent considerations. The annual review will also take into account any changes in fee costs.

2.3 Categories of Requests for a Bursary Award.

Requests for financial support usually fall into two categories:

- New applicants to the school, where a place has been offered but parents/guardians are unable to fund the tuition fees fully.
- Existing pupils where a sudden, unforeseen change in parents/guardians' circumstances has resulted in significant difficulty in meeting tuition fees with the result that the child is likely to be withdrawn part way through a stage of education.

3 New Applicants to the School

3.1 Awareness.

Information provided by the School 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 prospectus.
- The School website and may be promoted through local and other press by means of advertisements.

The Bursary Policy will be provided to parents on written request to the Head of the relevant School.

3.2 The Application Process.

Bursaries may be made available to parents/guardians of children entering Year 7 (11+) and, in exceptional circumstances Year 3 (7+), of Belmont Mill Hill Preparatory School and Year 9 (13+) and Year 11 (Sixth Form) of Mill Hill School. (See the relevant Schools' Admission's Policies). Bursaries are awarded at the discretion of

the Governors, The Head of the relevant School and the Bursar are responsible for the management and coordination of the process.

3.2.1 Step One: Confidential Statement of Financial Circumstances in support of an Application for a Grant.

Parents/guardians seeking a bursary are required to complete a Confidential Statement of Financial Circumstances in support of an Application for a Grant (the 'Form') which seeks to establish the financial circumstances of the household. The Form, which requests details of income, outgoings, assets and liabilities, will be provided on written request to the Head of the relevant School and must be completed accurately and in full and must be accompanied by full documentary evidence. Incomplete Forms will be returned and not considered until completed in full. The initial determination of qualification for a bursary will be dependent on the financial circumstances of the applicant. The School needs this information so that it may assess those families with the greatest financial needs and consult with parents about the financial commitment which the family can reasonably make to cater adequately for the child's needs both during the admission process and if an offer of a place is made.

The completed Form, together with the necessary documentary evidence, is to be submitted to the Bursar no later than the **31st January** in the year for bursaries to start in the September of that year.

In exceptional circumstances and with the written agreement of the Head or the Bursar the Form with documentation may be submitted after the closing date for a bursary to start in the September of the same year. Late applications will be considered in accordance with the procedure described in this Policy and will be subject to the School's ability to fund these within the context of availability of funds within the context of the relevant School's overall budget.

The Form must be accompanied by a completed Registration Form for admission and entry to the relevant School/s for each child for whom the family is seeking bursarial support together with payment of the non-returnable registration fee in accordance with the relevant School's Admission Policy.

3.2.2 Step Two. Assessment of Suitability, Interview and Recommendation.

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

Each child for whom a bursary application has been made will be assessed for suitability for entry to the School in accordance with the relevant School's Admission Policy and procedures. In assessing a child's suitability for an award, 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 Foundation's

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 School. In normal circumstances, each applicant for financial support should meet the School's normal academic requirements. The confidential reference received from the child's Head Teacher and previous school reports will be consulted for evidence of good behaviour.

It is recognised that, in addition to academic ability, the potential to contribute to and benefit from the ethos and activities of the school and financial constraints, there may be other circumstances which could be considered, these might include:

- Where a child has siblings at the School.
- Where the social needs of the child are relevant.

An applicant family considered by the School to be a potential candidate for a bursary award may be invited to attend an Interview (the 'Interview') with the Head of the relevant School and/or the Bursar at which time their bursary application will be discussed in more detail. This may involve the Bursar, or his representative, visiting the parents/guardians' home to ensure the information has been correctly presented and interpreted and that the basis of the financial assessment is fair.

The Bursar and the Head prepare a joint recommendation which is presented to the Foundation Bursary Committee which determines the recommendations to the Governors for a bursary award. The Foundation Bursary Committee reviews the joint recommendations for bursary awards presented by the Head and Bursar and makes recommendations for approval to the Court of Governors' Finance and General Purposes Committee. Bursaries are awarded at the discretion of the Governors.

The School will not consider an application for a bursary unless the child for whom the family is seeking bursarial assistance is registered for admission and entry to the School.

3.2.3 Step Three. The Admission Process determination.

The School will assess each child registered for entry to the School in accordance with the relevant School's Admission Policy and procedures to determine whether the child has been successful in meeting the School's entry criteria.

3.2.4 Step Four. Offer of a Place and Bursary Award.

The parents/guardians are advised whether their child is to be offered a place at the School and of the Bursary offer, if any.

An offer of a bursary is conditional on the offer of a place at the Foundation which is subject to the successful completion of the Admission Procedures which are set out in the relevant School's Admission Policy.

3.2.5 Step Five. Acceptance of a Place and Bursary Award.

Parents/guardians are then required to sign the appropriate documentation for the acceptance of a place at the school and the bursary including their agreement to any conditions relating to the bursary.

The Foundation expects that a pupil in receipt of a Bursary award will, subject to conduct and academic attainments and contribution to the school community, progress through the Foundation and complete the Upper Sixth Year at Mill Hill School.

4 Current Foundation Pupils - Change in Family Circumstances

4.1 The Application Process.

The Foundation recognises that family financial circumstances may alter during a pupil's time at the Foundation. Within overall budget funding the School will, in normal circumstances, set aside each year a Hardship Fund, for cases of sudden, unforeseen need or where applications seeking bursary support are received out of the normal calendar cycle for bursary submission, scrutiny and award. This sum will be set within the Foundation's overall budgetary constraints. Parents/guardians with a child at the School whose financial circumstances suddenly change may apply for a bursary to the Head of that School explaining their situation and using a Confidential Statement of Financial Circumstances in support of an Application for a Grant (the 'Form') and which will be provided on written request to the Head of the relevant School.

4.1.1 Step One: Confidential Statement of Financial Circumstances in support of an Application for a Grant.

Parents/guardians seeking a bursary are required to complete the Form which seeks to establish the financial circumstances of the household. The Form, which requests details of income, outgoings, assets and liabilities, must be completed accurately and in full and must be accompanied by full documentary evidence. Incomplete Forms will be returned and not considered until completed in full.

The completed Form, together with the necessary documentary evidence, is to be submitted to the Bursar.

The School needs this information so that it may assess the applicant family's extent of need and consult with parents about the financial commitment which the family can reasonably make to the payment of tuition fees.

4.1.2 Step Two: Assessment of Suitability, Interview and Recommendation

Each application will be assessed by the Head of the relevant School and Bursar in order to establish the level of financial support required to allow the pupil to remain at the School. The Head and Bursar will consider a number of factors when making the judgement as to the justification for financial support, and the extent of such financial support, if any. In the main, the opinion of the Head as to the pupil's academic ability and potential to contribute to and benefit from the ethos and activities of the School

are the first considerations in granting support. Other circumstances which may be considered include:

- Where a parent/guardian is 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.

Each pupil to whom support is offered will be expected to make sound academic progress, develop the quality of his or her work, and participate in and contribute to the school community.

An applicant family considered by the School to be a potential candidate for a bursary award may be invited to attend an Interview (the 'Interview') with the Head of the relevant School and/or the Bursar at which time their bursary application will be discussed in more detail. This may involve the Bursar, or his representative, visiting the parents/guardians' home to ensure the information has been correctly presented and interpreted and that the basis of the financial assessment is fair.

The Bursar and the Head prepare a joint recommendation which is presented to the Foundation Bursary Committee which determines the recommendations to the Governors for a bursary award. The Foundation Bursary Committee reviews the joint recommendations for bursary awards presented by the Head and Bursar and makes recommendations for approval to the Court of Governors' Finance and General Purposes Committee.

Such awards are at the discretion of the Governors and are subject to the availability of funding and cannot be guaranteed.

4.1.3 Step Three: Offer of a Bursary Award

The parents/guardians are advised whether their child is to be offered a Bursary award, if any.

4.1.4 Step Four: Acceptance of a Bursary Award

Parents/guardians are then required to sign the appropriate documentation for the acceptance of a bursary award including their agreement to any conditions relating to the bursary.

5 Financial Limitations

The determination of the amount of the bursary award is not influenced by the level of the academic ability of the child (beyond the requirement to satisfy the School's entry and suitability criteria) but by the extent of need. Each case is assessed on its own merits and awards are made accordingly, subject to the Foundation's budget constraints. Only in the most exceptional cases will a bursary award be made to a family who have significant net assets (e.g. in the form of property equity or investments). In cases where families have significant net assets but little or no income

the Foundation is more likely to consider requests for deferred payment arrangements rather than a bursary award.

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 awards are carefully and comprehensively considered and so, as well as current earnings, other factors which will be considered in determining the appropriate level of award will include:

- The ability to improve the financial position or earning power of the family.
- 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 Foundation's bursary award will take into account all these outgoings.
- Acknowledging that others might have a different view, the Foundation considers that the following examples may not be consistent with the receipt of a bursary:
 - Frequent or expensive holidays.
 - New or luxury cars.
 - Investment in significant home improvements.
 - Second property/land holdings.

6 Annual Review

All bursary awards are subject to a review of parental means each year and may be varied upwards or downwards depending on parental circumstances. Current bursary holders will be issued with further means-testing forms at the beginning of January each year for return by the end of the month.

For those previously in receipt of bursaries, the Head and Bursar, in making their joint recommendation to the Foundation Bursary Committee have the discretion to recommend a 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. Any changes in a family's financial circumstances will be taken into account and may result in the reduction of the amount of a bursary award or the removal of a bursary award. The determination of a bursary award is at the discretion of the Governors.

7 Confidentiality

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

8 Retention of Financial Information

The Foundation will:

- store Financial Information and other confidential documents provided by an applicant family in locked, non portable storage containers, access to which will be restricted to *those members of the Foundation entitled to see it as part of their duties*;
- will retain all relevant financial Information and associated correspondence in accordance with the guidance for the retention of pupil records and the Data Protection Act;
- if the application is unsuccessful, all documentation relating to the application will normally be confidentially destroyed after six months unless the applicant specifically requests the Foundation to keep the information on file.

9 Other Sources of Bursary Assistance

In addition to the School's own bursary funds, 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. The Foundation 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 Fees Manager
The Mill Hill School Foundation
Walker House, Millers Close, The Ridgeway,
London
NW7 1AQ
Telephone 0208 959 8131

Last review by Court of Governors: January 2009