



Mill Hill

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# Bursary and Financial Assistance Policy

## **Bursary and Financial Assistance Policy**

### **1. General**

The Court of Governors of the Mill Hill School Foundation (Foundation) are committed to broadening access to the Foundation by offering to eligible parents/guardians means-tested financial support with the payment of school fees. Such support is known as a 'bursary' and these may be awarded, at the absolute discretion of the Court, in the form of a discount of up to 100% on tuition fees payable (and under exceptional circumstances at the discretion of the Foundation on boarding fees).

**Please be aware that being eligible for a bursary in no way guarantee that an award will be made.**

### **2. Application Process**

Requests for financial support usually fall into two categories:

- New applicants to the school where parents/guardians are unable to fully 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parents/guardians' circumstances has resulted in difficulty in meeting tuition fees and may result in the child being withdrawn part way through a stage of education.

Bursaries may be made available to parents of children entering Year 7 (11+) of Belmont and Lower Sixth (Year 12) of Mill Hill School with a limited number of bursaries for Fourth Form (Year 9, 13+) entrance at Mill Hill School. They are awarded at the discretion of the Bursary Committee. The Director of Finance and Resources (DFR) is responsible for the management and coordination of the process.

**Step One:** Registration Process for Bursary awards:

School application date	- Complete the bursary box on the School application form
October	- Bursary application process opens
On or around 30 November	- Bursary application Deadline
December & January	- Evaluations/Home Visits
February	- Bursary decision made in line with decision on a place

Only British Nationals can apply for a bursary and they must meet the current admissions criteria for entry to the Foundation.

If the parents/guardians meet any of the following criteria they should not apply for a bursary as their application for a bursary may be rejected:

- An indicative gross family income in excess of £80,000 when the family (or a parent/ guardian) has one child attending an independent school or expecting to attend an independent school
- An indicative gross family income in excess of £100,000 when the family (or a parent/ guardian) has two children attending an independent school or expecting to attend an independent school
- Savings / investments in excess of £35,000
- If the parents/guardians main property (less the mortgage) is worth more than £300,000

**Step Two:** Parents/guardians seeking a bursary are required to complete an application form to establish the financial circumstances of the family. The form must be completed by both parents even where they are separated, divorced or the absent parent does not contribute to the financial upkeep of the child for whom the application is made. The application form and supporting documentation must be submitted by the required date.

**Step Three:** All applications are assessed in order to establish the likely level of support required to allow the child to attend the Foundation. This will involve the DFR or their representative, visiting the parents/guardians' home to ensure the information has been correctly interpreted and the basis of the financial assessment has been fair.

**Step Four:** The DFR prepares a recommendation based on the application and funds available to the Foundation for bursary support.

**Step Five:** The Bursary Committee (comprising CEO, the Head of Mill Hill School, the Head of Belmont and the DFR) reviews the applications and agrees awards to be made.

**Step Six:** The parents/guardians are advised whether their child is to be offered a place at the Foundation and of the bursary offer.

The decision of the Bursary Committee is final.

**Step Seven:** Parents/guardians are then required to sign a letter accepting the place at the Foundation and an acknowledgement agreeing to any conditions relating to the bursary.

### 3. Case for Assistance

A number of factors will be considered 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.

**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 Foundation's available funding.

It is recognised that judgements about what sacrifices a family should make to pay school fees will be personal. However, the Foundation has a duty to ensure that all bursary 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
- Future changes in the family circumstances. For example, if a parent is promoted or starts a new more highly paid job or the family is expecting a windfall
- Opportunities to release any capital. Significant capital savings and investments would be expected to be used for the payment of school fees, as would substantial equity 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 expects that parents will apply to the other schools and universities for financial assistance for siblings, so the burden of fees is shared among these organisations
- Choices in the use of family income and assets. The Foundation expects families to give priority in the use of available resources to school fees over expenditure. The Foundation 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
  - Substantial and/or non-contractual pension contributions
  - Substantial and/or non-contractual mortgage payments, especially accelerated capital payments
  - Substantial rental payments
  - Voluntary surrender of paid employment in favour of business start-ups or extended retraining.
  - Use of capital for purpose other than school fees
  - A second property/land holdings
  - Attendance on significant non-educational school trips/activities (e.g. ski trips)
  - Failure to honour school fee payments to another school

Bursary awards do not cover the cost of the registration fee, acceptance deposit or any extras except where stipulated when the award is made. In exceptional circumstances additional assistance maybe provided to help parents meet the other costs of a child's education at the Foundation.

#### **4. Pre-Testing Applications for Children in Year 6 or Year 7 for Entry in Fourth Form (Year 9) to Mill Hill School.**

The Foundation offers a pre-testing application for children in Years 6 and 7 for admission and entry in Fourth Form (Year 9) to Mill Hill School. Please contact the Mill Hill School Admissions Office for information and guidance on the pre-testing application procedures.

A parent who wishes to apply for an Admission Bursary when their child is applying for entry to Mill Hill School through the pre-testing application procedure is required to follow the standard application process.

An offer of a pre-testing application bursary for Fourth Form (Year 9) made to a child in Year 6 or Year 7 will be provisional only and subject to a re-assessment of the family financial circumstances in the Autumn of Year 8.

#### **5. Existing Pupils - Change in Family Circumstances**

Parents/guardians with a child at the Belmont or Mill Hill School whose financial circumstances suddenly change may apply for a bursary to the Head/DFR, explaining their situation and completing the relevant application form. Such awards are subject to a similar process as with new admissions to the School detailed above and are equally subject to the availability of funding and cannot be guaranteed.

#### **6. Annual Review**

All bursaries are conditional on good conduct and continuing good performance of the recipient.

All awards are reviewed annually and are subject to repeat testing of parents means. If financial circumstances change during the year for Bursary recipient families, they must notify the Foundation as soon as possible. Following the annual

review of change in circumstances bursary awards may be varied upwards or downwards or even withdrawn. However, where a bursary is awarded to a new entrant to the Foundation, parents can assume the level of award will not change from year to year, provided that their financial circumstances do not change. There is no automatic continuation of bursaries from Year 11 to sixth form.

If the Foundation becomes aware that the information provided is not accurate the bursary award may be amended or terminated. The Foundation reserves the right to reclaim awards of fraudulent claims.

Existing bursary recipients will be contacted annually with details of the years review. The results will normally be advised before Easter.

## **7. Accuracy of Information & Confidentiality**

Families are required to make full, accurate disclosure regarding their financial situation. The Foundation respects the confidentiality of bursary applications and awards made to families and recipients are expected to do likewise.

Information relating to bursary applications will be treated in accordance with the Foundations Data Protection Policy, Privacy Notice and Retention of Records Policy.

## **8. Final Remark**

Bursaries are awarded without any legal obligation to repay them however we would be most grateful if families would consider repaying all or part of the bursary received, when and if their circumstances allow. There are limited funds available for bursaries, and any repayment of funds would help the Foundation to offer financial assistance to future applicants.

## **9. Review**

Last Review: June 2021

Next Review: Summer 2024

This Policy has been approved by the Finance Committee of the Court of Governors

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