

# Bursaries Policy and Procedure



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Wycombe Abbey is committed to providing academically gifted pupils from all backgrounds with the very best start in life, which includes enabling those whose parents may not otherwise be able to meet the full cost of fees with the opportunity to attend our School. The parents/guardians of candidates who require financial assistance are actively encouraged to apply for a means-tested Bursary. We are proud to offer Bursaries to ensure that all those worthy of a place at our School have the same opportunities regardless of their personal circumstances.

**If you would like to find out more about bursaries please call the Director of Admissions, Mrs Catriona Sutherland-Hawes on 01494 897008. When applying for a place at Wycombe Abbey, a registration fee of £250 is normally payable. If you are applying for a full bursary and the registration fee presents a difficulty Mrs Sutherland-Hawes will be happy to discuss this with you.**

The Bursary Application Form is available from the Admissions Office and must be submitted by secure link to the School, no later than 1st September in the academic year prior to entry. A Bursary application will not be considered after this date. All personal data is handled in accordance with the General Data Protection Regulations and Data Protection Act (2018). Further information is available in the School's Privacy Notice for Parents and Pupils. When you have completed the Bursary Application form and are ready to submit it, please email Ms Eileen Pinkney, Bursar's PA, on ([pinkneye@wycombeabbey.com](mailto:pinkneye@wycombeabbey.com)) who will send you a secure link to enable you to upload the application form and supporting documents requested in the form.

## Financial Assistance with Fees

Assistance, in the form of a Bursary, may represent up to 100% of the fees and is dependent on assessment of the parental financial circumstances. The Bursary is reviewed annually and may increase or reduce in accordance with changes to parental circumstances.

The financial assessment takes into account the value of assets held, including the family home, savings, investments, pension provision and other realisable assets, as well as income, the size of the family, and any other dependents.

In general, a family with a combined disposable income of less than £30,000 may be eligible for an award of up to 100%. Alternatively, a family with a combined gross income of over £120,000 may not qualify for any support. We also offer additional assistance to recipients of full fee bursaries to cover the cost of co-curricular activities, uniform costs and educational trips.

The number of awards made is dependent on the funds available at the time.

## Eligibility

Bursaries are normally only given to children of parents permanently resident in the UK.

The Bursary Panel considers a number of factors when assessing whether, and to what extent, any support will be awarded. The principal consideration will be a child's suitability and the likelihood of them thriving at the School.

- Suitability

An applicant must be likely to thrive at Wycombe Abbey, and benefit from participation in the wider, extra-curricular activities on offer. Candidates must also meet our academic requirements and perform well in the assessment process. Previous school reports will be consulted. Bursary funds are limited and those judged most suitable by the Headmistress will be given priority.

- Financial Limitations

The extent of the Bursary awarded to an applicant will not be influenced by their academic ability but by the extent of need. Each situation will be assessed on its own merits and awards will be made accordingly, subject to our ability to fund these within the context of our overall budget. It is recognised that judgements about what sacrifices a family should make to pay school fees will be personal. However, we have a duty to ensure that all Bursary awards are considered alongside current earnings. Other factors that will be considered in determining the 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 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/guardian
- Contribution to household costs by other family members, any adults unrelated to the child or from outside sources
- Where siblings are at other fee-paying schools or places of education, it would be expected that applications for financial assistance have been made to those organisations.
- 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

Lavish personal expenditure.

- 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. being bullied at their present school)

Where a parent/guardian is terminally ill or is unable to secure permanent employment due to poor health

Where a separation may result in the child having to be withdrawn from the School, adding to the stress of coping with the parent/guardians separating.

- Separated Parents/Guardians:

We recognise that the financial arrangements of and between parents/guardians who live separately can be complex. However, in general, the financial circumstances of both parents/guardians will be assessed.

If either of the applicant's parents/guardians is absent, we will decide to what extent the absent parent's/guardian's financial circumstances should be assessed.

In all situations, the financial information collected from each parent/guardian will be kept confidential and will not be disclosed without explicit consent.

In the case of divorce, court orders and financial agreements regarding the care of dependents must be submitted with the application.

## New Applicants to the School

### The Application Process

Bursaries may be made available to parents/guardians of pupils entering years 7, 9 and 12. They are awarded at the discretion of Council (the School's Governing body), and the Headmistress. The Bursar's PA 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, can be obtained by contacting the Admissions Department. The completed form is to be submitted via the secure Sharepoint link that will be issued by the Bursar's PA no later than **1st September** in any year for the award to start the following September. Applicants should be aware that, even if a full Bursary is awarded, the payment of the registration fee is still required.

- Step Two

Following the initial admission process, the Director of Admissions and the Headmistress will review the Bursary applicants' exam assessment reports.

- Step Three

A home visit in November will be made by Bursary Administration Limited (BAL), an external company appointed by us to review the necessary supporting documentary evidence, to ensure the information has been correctly interpreted and the basis of the financial assessment has been fair. BAL will then submit a confidential financial report to us.

- Step Four

The Headmistress and a panel of Seniors (former pupils) will interview a shortlist of candidates in January.

- Step Five

Parents/guardians are advised whether their child is to be offered a place at the School and whether they have been successful with their application for a Bursary. Depending on the funds available it may be that not all successful candidates will be offered a Bursary.

- Step Six

Parents/guardians are then required to sign a letter accepting the place and an acknowledgement agreeing to any conditions relating to the Bursary. Please note that payment of the School deposit will be reduced by the level of Bursary awarded. For example, a 50% award would reduce the deposit payable by 50%.

## Existing Pupils

### Annual Review

All Bursary awards are reviewed annually and may be increased or reduced to reflect changes in the financial circumstances of the parents/guardians. The review entails the completion of a Bursary Renewal application form along with submission of all necessary documentary evidence. The Headmistress and Bursar have the discretion to recommend to the Council the reduction or withdrawal of an award to an existing Bursary holder if a pupil's progress, attitude or behaviour has been unsatisfactory and/or the parents/guardians have failed to support the School, for example by the late payment of any contribution they are making to the fees.

### Change in Family Circumstances

The School makes provision annually, where possible, for cases of sudden or unforeseen need. These appeals will only be considered where there can be proved a significant recent change in the family's financial circumstances.

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

## Confidentiality

We respect the confidentiality of Bursary awards made to families. Recipients are also expected to respect such confidentiality.

## Other Sources of Bursary Assistance

In addition to our 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. We encourage 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:

- Educational GrantsAdvice: [www.isc.co.uk/schools/information-for-parents/fee-assistance-and-bursaries/](http://www.isc.co.uk/schools/information-for-parents/fee-assistance-and-bursaries/)
- The Educational Trusts Forum: [www.educational-grants.org](http://www.educational-grants.org)
- Actors' Charitable Trust (Industry link) 0207 636 7868
- ABF The Soldiers' Charity (Forces link) 0845 241 4820
- BMTA (Years 9 & 10, unforeseen circumstances) 01372 210124
- Buttle UK (Years 7-11, single parents, adopted and cared-for children) 0207 8287311
- Emmott Foundation (Years 12-13) 0115 937 6526
- Fashion & Textile Children's Trust (All ages, industry link) 0207 170 4117
- Lloyd Foundation (living overseas) 01432 760409
- Mitchell City of London Educational Foundation (Years 12 or 13, links to City of London) 01432 760409
- Ousley Trust (choral scholars) 01780 752266
- Reedham Trust (All ages, boarding only) 0208 660 1461
- Royal Medical Foundation (medical professionals) 01372 821010
- Royal National Children's Foundation (All ages, single parent) 01932 868622
- RN and RM Children's Fund (Service link) 02392 639534
- Royal Pinner School Foundation (All ages, travelling sales link) 0207 373 6168
- School Fees Charitable Trust (Years 11-13) 01306 746309
- Thornton Smith & Plevins (Years 12-13) 01582 611675
- Other trusts listed carry geographical or trade limitations
- Funderfinder: [www.funderfinder.org.uk](http://www.funderfinder.org.uk)

This site gives useful information on the grant application process and provides links to a large number (1200+) of charities. Some of these are grant-making, some support education, some are vocational.

### Vocational Trusts

Welfare funding covering the Trades and Industries for which you or your partner may have worked may be relevant. For example, electrical engineers can use [www.eeiba.org/about.shtml](http://www.eeiba.org/about.shtml) or civil servants can use [www.scbf.org.uk](http://www.scbf.org.uk). If you have worked in a retail environment you may be eligible under the Fashion & Textile Children's Trust ([www.ftct.org.uk](http://www.ftct.org.uk)).

### Geographical and Local Trusts

- Use your local Community Foundation to find out what is available in your area. Consider applying for financial support for Paid Extras or Trips rather than Fees. They may know what is available in your area.
- Use your local library. In the Reference section you may find details of Local trusts – ask your librarian. They may not cover school fees but may contribute in other ways.
- Talk to your local vicar. S/he may be a trustee on one of the local Trusts.

Member of staff: Bursar/Director of Admissions  
 Last review date: June 2020  
 Next review date: June 2021