



## WELLINGBOROUGH SCHOOL BURSARY POLICY

**Priority for Bursary awards is given to pupils who, in the view of the School, will be most able to benefit from a Wellingborough education, are academically strong *and* require financial assistance.**

### General

1. The Governors of Wellingborough School are committed to broadening access by offering to eligible parents/guardians means-tested financial support with the payment of School fees. Such support is known as a bursary and bursaries may be awarded in the form of a discount of up to 100% on tuition fees payable, depending on the financial, compassionate or other pertinent circumstances of applicants.

2. Bursary awards are subject to repeat testing of parental means each year and may be varied upward, downwards or totally withdrawn. Awards are dependent upon parental circumstances, financial information provided and the availability of funding from the School within the context of overall School Budgets for that given year.

3. 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.
- 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parents'/guardians' circumstances has resulted in difficulty in meeting tuition fees and may result in the child being withdrawn part way through a stage of education.

### New Applicants to the School

4. **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 school fees is included in:

- The School prospectus.
- The School website.
- The press by means of advertisements.

5. **The Application Process.** Bursaries may be made available to parents/guardians of children entering Wellingborough School at any age, although focus is given to those entering public examination cohorts. (For further details please see the School's Admissions Policy). They are awarded at the discretion of the Governors, although the Head and Bursar & Head of Finance are responsible for the management and coordination of the process:

a. **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, may be found at Annex A and must be accompanied by full documentary evidence. The completed forms, together with the necessary documentary evidence, are to be submitted to the Bursar & Head of Finance on the date stipulated, which will always be prior to the date of the Entrance Exam. Applications made after this time are unlikely to be successful due to the allocation process of the limited funds available.

b. **Step Two.** The Bursar & Head of Finance 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 & Head of Finance, or his representative, visiting the parents'/guardians' home to ensure the information has been correctly interpreted and the basis of the financial assessment has been fair.

c. **Step Three.** The Bursar & Head of Finance prepares a recommendation in accordance with the School's aims and means and discusses this with the Head and a joint recommendation is then reached.

d. **Step Four.** The joint recommendation is discussed with Governors, as necessary, for approval.

e. **Step Five.** The parents/guardians are advised whether their child is to be offered a place at Wellingborough School and of the bursary offer.

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

6. **The Case for Assistance.** The Head and the Bursar & Head of Finance will consider a number of factors when making the judgement as to the justification for support and the extent of such support:

a. **Pupil's Suitability.** In assessing a child's suitability, close 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 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. Previous School reports will be consulted for evidence of good behaviour.

b. **Financial Limitations.** The amount of the bursary award is primarily influenced by the level of the academic ability of the child, and then 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 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:

- 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 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. Please note that both parents will usually be assessed unless there is evidence that it would not be reasonable to do so.
- 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 grant will take into account all these outgoings. However, the School would expect support to be provided from these schools as well.

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;
- Significant deposits or investments.

c. **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 the social needs of the child are relevant (e.g.: may be suffering from bullying 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 has resulted in the child having to be withdrawn from the school adding to the stress of coping with the parents/guardians separating.

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

7. Parents/guardians with a child at the School whose financial circumstances suddenly change may apply for a bursary to the Bursar & Head of Finance, explaining their situation and using the forms at Annex A. It is likely that following an application, an interview or home visit will be required. Such awards are subject to the availability of funding and cannot be guaranteed.

### **Annual Review**

8. All bursary awards are subject to repeat testing of parental means each year and may be varied upwards, downwards or withdrawn. Current bursary holders will be issued with repeat means-testing forms at the beginning of January each year for return by the end of that month. For those previously in receipt of bursaries, the Head and the Bursar & Head of Finance, in making their joint recommendation to the Governors, have 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/guardians have failed to support the School, for example by the late payment of any contribution they are making to the fees. Please see the bursary terms and conditions at the end of this document.

9. Please note that bursary funding may not continue if the review forms are not completed and returned, with the necessary documentation, by the requested date.

### **Confidentiality**

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

## Other Sources of Bursary Assistance

11. 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. The School encourages parents/guardians to apply for support where it is felt a good case can be made for assistance.

## BURSARY TERMS AND CONDITIONS

**1. Grant of Bursary.** A bursary is granted at the sole discretion of Wellingborough School.

**2. Obligations of the Pupil.** The pupil who is subject of a bursary is required to work hard, to continue to contribute positively to the life of the School, to be a credit to the School, and set a good example to other pupils. The pupil must adhere to the School's required standards of conduct and progress.

**3. Obligations of the Parent(s).** The parent(s) are required to support and encourage the pupil, treat members of the School community reasonably, and comply with the School standard terms and conditions.

**4. Annual Review.** All means-tested awards will be subject to annual review and parents shall each year be required to complete a financial means questionnaire. After any annual review, the School reserves the right to vary the value of the bursary with immediate effect and will confirm the new value in writing to the parents.

**5. Withdrawal of the Bursary.** The bursary may be withdrawn by written notice sent to a parent if, in the opinion of the Governors acting in good faith, the pupil or a parent has not complied with the obligations set out in paragraphs 2, 3 and 4 above or otherwise the pupil has fallen below the required standard of conduct and progress and in the further opinion of the Governors there has been no significant improvement following consultation with a parent and/or the pupil and a written warning. Withdrawal of the bursary shall take effect from the start of the following term.

Further, **the bursary may be withdrawn by written notice if the balance of the account remains unpaid 28 days after a written reminder has been sent to the parents.**

**6. Repayment of the Bursary.** The parent(s) will be required to repay all or part of the bursary if it is terminated in the following circumstances:

a. If parents have knowingly or recklessly provided false or inaccurate information about their financial position.

b. If the pupil has been found to have committed a serious breach, or series of persistent minor breaches, of discipline for which the sanction would normally be expulsion or required removal, up to three terms benefits may be repayable.

**7. Fees in lieu of notice.** For the avoidance of doubt, the benefits payable under the bursary do not apply to any term for which the School has required payment of fees in lieu of notice.

**8. Conditions of the Bursary.** These conditions take precedence over any of the School's standard terms and conditions which are inconsistent with them but in all other respects the School's Terms and Conditions as amended from time to time shall apply and these bursary conditions shall be interpreted with them.

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**End of Document**