



THE DOWNS
MALVERN

BURSARY POLICY

January 2021

General

The School is committed to broadening access to the School by offering parents means-tested, financial assistance with the payment of school fees. Such financial assistance is known as a bursary. A bursary is a reduction of fees of up to 100%. The level of bursary award depends on the financial, compassionate or other relevant circumstances of the applicants.

Bursaries are awarded at the discretion of the Bursary Committee, which will calculate an award in relation to a family's financial and other circumstances (e.g. savings, investments and realisable assets, as well as income, the size of the family, any other dependents and like factors). Bursaries are subject to an annual review of parental means and in subsequent years, awards may be varied upwards or downwards, depending on changes to the family's circumstances.

The School is fortunate to have bursary funds, designed to widen access to the School, but it does not have sufficient funds to satisfy all the bursary applications received. The School's admissions process takes no account of funding needs at the point of assessment in order to ensure no family should feel it cannot consider the possibility of a place for their child at the School. However, bursary applicants need to be aware that the offer of a place at the School does not guarantee that bursary funding can or will be put in place. If a bursary application is turned down because the Bursary Committee considers that the fees cannot be afforded without financial assistance, the child's offer of a place will be withdrawn.

Requests for a bursary usually fall into two categories:

- Applicants to the School whose parents are unable to fund the School fees (in full or in part).
- Existing pupils where a change in parents' circumstances **after the point of entry** has resulted in an inability to pay School fees in full or in part and would result in the pupil being withdrawn.

NEW APPLICANTS TO THE SCHOOL

Information about bursaries

Information for prospective parents about the possibility of applying for bursaries is available from the Registrar and is included on the School's website.

Bursaries are not usually awarded prior to the child entering Year 3. However, in exceptional circumstances an application may be considered by the Bursary Committee prior to this stage.

The Bursary Application Process

The child must be registered with the School and the registration fee paid. The deadline for submission of the bursary application can be found in the offer letter.

Bursaries are awarded at the discretion of the Bursary Committee, which includes the Headmaster, a Governor and the Director of Finance. The Director of Finance is responsible for the management and coordination of the process by which bursary applications are considered.

The process is as follows:

Stage 1: Parents complete a Bursary Application Form. This Form is intended to establish whether the household/family has sufficient means to pay all, some or none of the required School fees. The form, which requests details of assets, borrowings, income and expenditure, must be accompanied by full documentary evidence to support the application. The completed form, together with the supporting documentation, must be submitted to the Director of Finance.

Stage 2: All applications are subject to detailed review. This may include a home visit by Bursary Administration Limited.

Stage 3: The Director of Finance collates all the information about the application. An initial recommendation is made by the Director of Finance. The Bursary Committee considers the application and a decision is made.

Stage 4: Parents are notified in writing of the Bursary Committee's decision.

Stage 5: Parents who are offered a bursary are required to sign a letter accepting the offer and agreeing to any conditions relating to the bursary.

Parents should not assume that a bursary award will continue throughout their child's time at the School as parental means are subject to periodic review. However, where there are no significant changes in financial circumstances, parents can assume that the level of the award will not change from year to year.

Similarly, parents should not assume that a bursary award will continue if their child continues their education at Malvern College. A separate application should be made to Malvern College when the child enters Year 7 at the School. However, where there are no significant changes in financial circumstance, it is probable that the application will be viewed favourably by Malvern College.

The Case for Assistance

The Bursary Committee will consider a number of factors when making a decision about a bursary.

The School has a duty to ensure that its charitable funds are allocated appropriately. As well as current financial need, other factors which will be considered in determining the level of any award will include:

- The ability of the family to maximise the financial position or earning power of the household/family. For example, where there are two partners, the School would expect both to be earning unless one is prevented from doing so, for example, by reason of incapacity, the need to care for children under school age or other dependents, or the requirements of their partner's work.
- Opportunities for the family to release any capital. Savings and investments would be expected to be used for the payment of the School fees, as would significant equity in properties.
- Contributions to household costs by other family members, or any adults (e.g. step-parents, god parents) unrelated to the child or from any other source.
- The School will take into account fees being paid by the family to other schools (but not universities). There is an expectation that bursary applications, where possible, will have been made to other schools in respect of siblings so that the shortfall in school fees is shared among the schools.

This list is not exhaustive and any of the above may result in the immediate withdrawal of a bursary.

It is a condition of any award that the balance of fees is paid in full on its due date. In the event that fees are paid late, the Bursary Committee may withdraw the award with immediate effect.

The award of a bursary to one child does not guarantee awards to current or future siblings.

The Bursary Committee is sympathetic to changes in family/household circumstances arising from illness or bereavement but any application submitted for these reasons is means-tested in the same way as any other award.

In cases where demand on the School's bursary fund exceeds the availability of funds, the Bursary Committee will consider each child's academic potential, potential in co-curricular areas and actual achievement (where appropriate). Those judged likely to gain most from the educational provision at the School will be offered bursaries. Inevitably, difficult decisions have to be made at this stage which may result in no award.

EXITING PUPILS

Change in Family/Financial Circumstances

Parents with a child at the School who experience a change in their financial circumstances after the point of entry may apply for a bursary. Parents will be required to complete a Bursary

Application Form and include an explanation of their situation. All applications will be dealt with in exactly the same manner as set out in the Bursary Application Process above.

The Bursary Committee is unlikely to take a sympathetic view of applications received in respect of a child already at the School where it becomes apparent that fees could never have been afforded and no previous bursary application has been submitted.

PERIODIC REVIEW

Bursaries are reviewed periodically, in the Spring. Parents will be asked to provide an update of their financial circumstances. Awards may be varied upwards or downwards depending on financial need. Parents can assume that an award will not change from year to year unless there has been a material change in their financial need.

The Bursary Committee has the discretion to withdraw a bursary where a child's progress, attitude or behaviour has been unsatisfactory or where parents have failed to notify the School of a significant improvement in their financial circumstance.

CONFIDENTIALITY

The School respects the confidentiality of bursary applications and awards. Recipients are politely expected to do likewise.

Kate Collyer
Director of Finance

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