

## **Bursary Policy**

### **The Royal Hospital School (RHS, the School)**

Persons responsible for Policy: Bursar

Policy Approver(s): Finance & Resources Sub Committee

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### **Overview**

The Royal Hospital School (RHS) seeks to provide an inclusive and diverse school community and therefore is active in supporting pupils and their families who are unable to pay the full fees. The School looks to achieve broad access through its own means but also working with partnership organisations which include Greenwich Hospital, The Royal National Children's Springboard Foundation and Local Authorities. We are committed to broadening access to our school and seek to help children who will benefit from an RHS education.

In order to be eligible for an RHS bursary, the pupil must have secured a scholarship, exhibition or award. In general, the value of the combined bursary and scholarship may be up to 50% of the full fees. However, for exceptional pupils the School retains the discretion to increase this amount. RHS has a finite resource from which to fund bursaries and therefore the level of provision may vary and will not undermine the wider long term sustainability of the school.

Each year the need of applicants exceeds the funds we have for bursaries, meaning the School cannot accommodate all applications.

In attempting to reach fair and just decisions, we keep in mind the charitable aims of the School, as well as the funds available to support applicants, and make judgements about those who will most benefit and flourish within the community of the school.

### **Eligibility for Awards**

All bursary applications have to show that financial assistance with the payment of fees is required in order for the pupil to attend the School.

Bursaries may be made available to parents or guardians of children entering Years 7, 9, or 12 at RHS, and for children entering other year groups if there are *exceptional* reasons.

The amount of the bursary award is assessed following a financial review and a means-testing process. Each case is assessed on its own merits.

It is recognised that judgements about what sacrifices a family should make to pay school fees will be subjective. The school has a duty to ensure that all bursary grants are well focused and so, as well as current earnings, other factors will be considered in determining the necessary level of financial assistance. These might include:

- the ability to improve the financial position or earning power of the family. For example, where there are two adults, 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 significant equity values in houses.
- in cases of separation, the contribution made by the non-resident parent.
- contribution to household costs by other, wider, family members, any adults unrelated to the child or by an outside source.
- the level of fees paid previously to other independent schools. Where fees are being paid to other schools, the means-tested bursary may consider these outgoings. However, where other schools are involved, there is a presumption that they too will contribute to the financial support provided to the family to facilitate independent education.

**Acknowledging that others might have a different view, the School considers that indications of wealth such as the following would not be consistent with the receipt of a bursary:**

- Significant savings and investments
- frequent or expensive holidays.
- new and/or prestige cars or other such assets.
- investment in significant home improvements.
- a second property/land holdings.
- valuable works of art.
- failure to honour payments to other educational institutions

It is recognised that, in addition to academic ability and financial constraints, there may be other circumstances which may be considered. These might include:

- the particular needs of the child;
- a sudden and significant change in family circumstances
- instances where a parent is terminally ill or is unable to secure permanent employment due to poor health.

**Bursary funds are strictly limited, and priority will be given to those who will most benefit.** The potential contribution of the candidate to the wider school community will also be taken into consideration, as will the likely impact of the award on the enhancement of the candidate's educational opportunity. References from the candidate's current school will also be taken into account.

### **The Application Process**

If an application for bursarial support is required, then the registration form will need to have been completed by 1<sup>st</sup> November in the year preceding admission. It is essential that applicants indicate on this form that a means tested bursary is required. Applicants will then be invited to complete a pre-assessment bursary form.

Late applications may still be considered, but this will be subject to the criteria specified above, as well as funds available at the time.

Once the pre-assessment form has been reviewed, the School will be in touch to confirm whether the bursary application is likely to be successful should a scholarship or award be granted.

All applicants for Years 7 and 9 must sit the entrance and scholarship assessments. Candidates who have been successful in their scholarship application will be invited to complete a more detailed mean-tested bursary form.

The Finance Department is responsible for assessing financial need, although there may be times when the School uses a specialist organisation to evaluate as appropriate. The Admissions Department coordinates the process.

### **Indicative Bursaries**

Bursaries which are made more than ten months before entry can only be indicative. This is because fees, the amount of bursary funding available, and parents' exact financial circumstances at the time of entry cannot yet be known. A review will be made closer to the pupil's entry date to the school.

### **Overseas Bursaries**

The School's policy is that bursaries are available only to UK residents, partly related to the difficulty of assessing bursaries based on information from overseas economic and tax regimes.

### **Review of bursaries given**

All bursary awards are subject to periodic repeat testing of parental means and may be varied upwards or downwards depending on parental circumstances. Awards remain subject to conditions of award provided with the letter of offer, which includes maintaining a scholarship, exhibition, or award.

If it is found that an application for bursary support has been made without declaring all the financial facts, then the School reserves the right to request repayment of the bursary. This may also result in the removal of the pupil from the School.

### **Confidentiality**

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