



Financial Assistance with School Fees

Canford School is committed to broadening access to the School for prospective pupils, as well as supporting current pupils. Help with the payment of school fees is available as means-tested financial assistance offered to parents/guardians who can demonstrate a genuine need for support. Financial assistance, traditionally known as a 'bursary' or 'scholarship supplement', is provided in the form of a discount of up to 100% of school fees, depending on the financial and other circumstances of applicants.

Requests for Financial Assistance usually fall into two categories:

1. New applicants to the school, whose parents/guardians are unable to fund the full school fees.
2. Existing pupils where a change in parents/guardians' circumstances has resulted in difficulty meeting school fees and may result in the child being withdrawn part way through a stage of education.

THE CASE FOR ASSISTANCE

The case for support will be judged on the following grounds:

1. **Potential of the pupil:** The likely benefit to the pupil (in academic and other ways), will be judged by past and present attitude and performance. The ability to take full advantage of Canford's opportunities and to benefit others will be important.
2. **The availability of funds:** The School has made a long-term commitment to providing financial assistance to support parents but all awards are made subject to the availability of funds.
3. **The ability to achieve the greatest impact:** The School must balance the impact of making a few higher level awards (in some cases up to 100% of the fees) against making Canford accessible to a wider number of pupils, whose parents may only need support with a small proportion of the fees.
4. **Financial need:** A comprehensive evaluation of parental/household income, expenditure and assets is made each year - the 'means-testing'. In undertaking this process the School uses data available from the Joseph Rowntree Foundation to inform its assessment of living standards, as it recognises that judgements about the sacrifices that a family should make to pay school fees will be personal. This assessment takes into account the composition of the family and excludes any costs relating to children over 18. The following guidelines may be useful:
 - a. Income from all sources will be considered net of taxes, as well as outgoings such as pension contributions and mortgage payments.
 - b. In cases of separation, the contribution made by the absent parent is considered alongside contributions to household costs by others, e.g. grandparents/family members, any adults unrelated to the child living in the home or by outside sources.

- c. 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 working 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.
 - d. Opportunities to release any capital; capital savings and investments would be expected to be used for the payment of school fees, as would equity values in houses.
 - e. Where school fees are being paid to Canford for siblings this commitment will be taken into account, as will the costs for siblings between the ages of 5 and 13. Accounting for the cost of educating children at other senior schools is rarely possible.
 - f. Acknowledging that others might have a different view, the School considers that frequent or expensive holidays, new or luxury cars, investment in significant home improvements or second property/land holdings, as well as excessive expenditure on luxuries, such as eating out or on retail goods and services, are rarely consistent with the award of financial assistance.
5. **Other pertinent factors:**
- a. There may be other factors that are taken into account in assessing merit for financial assistance, such as siblings already at Canford, a scholarship award, family ill-health, social or psychological needs and any other sources of funds.
 - b. Parents suffering financial hardship whilst their child is in an exam year will be a priority for support, with the aim being to allow the child to complete that stage of their education.
 - c. In assessing the affordability of school fees the cost of extras, such as for trips and activities, is taken into account. In addition, it is assumed that pupils are likely to bring laptops (or equivalent tablet devices) into school and so the cost of these has been incorporated into the assessment of living standards.

THE AWARD PROCESS

Enquiries - Prospective pupils

Financial assistance may be available from the point of a pupil joining Canford. The application form, which is available from and should be returned to the Registrar, seeks details of income, expenditure and assets with supporting documentary evidence. All parents are encouraged to seek advice from the Director of Finance before applying for financial assistance.

- I. At 13+:
 - o **Indicative Financial Assessments:** Applications for an Indicative Financial Assessment will be accepted between September of Year 6 and the end of October of Year 8. **An indicative assessment does not guarantee a future level of financial assistance** and should only be used as a guide to the possible level of support that might be given. Many factors can affect the assessment and the level of support that might be offered later. A Full Financial Assistance application will be required during Year 8 (see below).

- **Full Financial Assessment:** (For new applicants as well as those who have previously received Indicative Assessments). Applications are required by the end of January of Year 8 and parents will be notified of the outcome by mid-March.
2. At 16+ applications are required by the middle of October of Year 11. Parents will be notified of the outcome at the beginning of December.

Neither a signed application form nor an Indicative Financial Assessment is a guarantee of a place at Canford. Normal entry requirements need to be met. Please contact the Admissions Office regarding entry requirements.

Enquiries – Current Pupils

An application for financial assistance can be made at any stage, although parents should seek advice from the Director of Finance before submitting a form.

Assessment

The assessment process takes time and so forms should be submitted in good time. If advice is needed on the detail required, parents should speak with the Fees Administrator or Director of Finance on 01202 847551. Supplementary information and even a home visit may be required. Regrettably, some find the process intrusive but its rigour ensures fair distribution of limited funds. Decisions made by the school are final. Parents are advised as soon as possible.

The Award

The level of financial assistance is reassessed annually and forms are sent to existing award holders in the Autumn. If our assessment of financial need and pupil performance remain unchanged the offer of support is likely to remain the same, but this cannot be guaranteed as the level of financial assistance can rise or fall in response to both factors or, for example, the late payment of fees, or the availability of funds.

Parents should not assume that an award made before or on entry to Canford will continue at the same level throughout their child's time at the School. Awards may be increased, reduced or withdrawn depending on our assessment of parental circumstances as outlined above. Where there is a reduction we will explain the reasons for the change in our assessment.

Confidentiality

All financial details are treated by Canford as confidential and recipients of awards are expected to take the same approach.

Other Support

The Registrar or Bursar can supply details of charitable trusts that may assist with fees at independent schools, particularly when financial circumstances drastically alter during a child's exam course, or if additional support is required.

Some information is available from the Educational Trusts' Forum at: www.educational-grants.org

Useful Contacts

Admissions: 01202 847207 or admissions@canford.com

Bursary Team: 01202 847551 or fees@canford.com

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