

GUIDANCE ON BURSARIES

March 2024



HARROW
SCHOOL

Introduction

Harrow was founded in 1572 under a royal charter from Queen Elizabeth I by local landowning farmer John Lyon. It soon became one of the greatest schools in the country, attracting pupils from all over the world. This distinguished history enriches the daily life of our entire community. From the boys' distinctive dress to Harrow's own unusual form of football and the communal singing of Harrow songs, these customs develop a strong corporate spirit and sense of belonging.

This guidance is intended to help parents understand the School's approach to bursary awards. It is not intended as a set of binding rules.

What is a bursary?

A bursary is financial support offered to boys who would benefit from the education Harrow offers but whose parents would not otherwise be able to afford to pay either the whole or part of the cost of sending their son to Harrow.

Availability of bursaries

Each year, Harrow provides a considerable number of bursaries, with individual bursaries varying between 5% and 100% of the fees, depending on the level of financial help needed. For those on the largest bursaries, this includes additional support for books, equipment, exam entry fees and essential educational visits.

Although the School is able to offer many bursaries, it receives more requests for bursaries than it has funds available. Inevitably, this involves difficult decisions, and some applicants will be disappointed.

Who can apply for a bursary?

Prospective parents must indicate when they register their son for the School that they will need a bursary in order to accept the offer of a place.

The School will not consider late bursary applications from parents who accept the offer of a place at Harrow without applying for a bursary by the required deadline, except in the most exceptional and wholly unforeseeable circumstances.

Location

Parents must be fully resident in the UK. Harrow School is a UK-based charity and is not allowed to consider applications from overseas.

How to apply

The Bursar and Awards Registrar manage and co-ordinate the process. The Bursary Committee (comprising two Governors, the Head Master and the Bursar) reviews the awards for boys who have applied for a place at Harrow. The Committee may consult other staff, particularly House Masters, as it sees fit.

Bursaries are awarded based on a sliding scale, which sets out award levels in relation to a family's financial circumstances. Awards are generally tied to this scale, but they may be higher or lower depending on individual parents' circumstances (for example their savings, investments and realisable assets, as well as their income, the size of their family and any other dependants), and compassionate or other relevant considerations.

All prospective parents who wish to apply for a bursary for their son must complete the bursary application form on the registration online portal so that reasons for the support and the level needed can be ascertained. Details required include:

- family circumstances;
- family finances, including income and expenditure, and assets and liabilities;
- why a bursary is needed, the level of support required, and the measures the family has taken to find alternative sources of funding, including from other family members.

The form must be completed in full, with supporting information, by all those with parental responsibility for the applicant. Where parents are separated, each parent may complete a separate form. An application will not be accepted if the form or documentary evidence is incomplete.

We ask for this detailed information because bursaries may be financially extremely significant, with a full five-year award amounting to well over £250,000.

The School may involve an independent third-party organisation, Bursary Administration Limited, for assessments or reviews. All parents applying should expect to be visited at home by a representative of the School. The School will not offer a bursary if parents do not agree to and co-operate with a home visit, where requested.

Factors in assessing applications

Bursaries are awarded solely at the Governors' discretion. The description that follows is not intended to be prescriptive. The School reserves the right to approach each case flexibly according to the specific circumstances. The School will consider a number of factors when assessing whether financial support might be available and, if so, the amount of such support. In the main, this will be determined by the pupil's suitability for Harrow, parents or guardians' financial circumstances, and the level of funding available to the School.

Suitability

Each pupil to whom support is offered must meet Harrow's admission criteria. In addition to making sound academic progress following admission and possessing the potential to develop the quality of his work, the pupil must be likely to benefit from participation in the wider co-curricular activities on offer and play a full part in the life of the School.

Financial limitations

The amount of the bursary award is influenced by the extent of need rather than the level of the pupil's academic or co-curricular performance. Each case is assessed on its own merits, and awards are made accordingly, subject to the School's ability to fund these. It is recognised that the School will have to make judgements about what sacrifices a family should make to pay school fees. The School tries, however, to ensure that all bursary awards are consistently assessed and applied. As well as an assessment of current income, outgoings and assets, other factors that may be considered in determining the level of bursary required 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 dependants, or the requirements of their partner's work.
- Future changes in the family's circumstances. For example, if a parent will be promoted or start a new, more highly paid job, or the family is expecting a windfall.
- In cases of separation, the contribution that is being made, or should be made, by the absent parent.
- Contribution to household costs, including school fees, by other members of the wider family, by any adults unrelated to the child or by outside sources.
- Whether fees are being paid to other schools or universities. It is expected that, wherever possible, parents will apply to these other schools and universities for financial assistance for siblings so that the burden of fees is shared among these organisations.
- Choices in the use of family income and assets. The School expects families to give priority in the use of available resources to school fees over other expenditure. The School considers that the following, for example, may not be consistent with the receipt of a bursary:
 - substantial and/or non-contractual pension contributions;
 - substantial and/or non-contractual mortgage payments, especially accelerated capital repayments;
 - substantial rental payments;
 - voluntary surrender of paid employment in favour of business start-ups or extended retraining;
 - use of capital for purposes other than school fees;
 - self-improvement, for example by giving away assets or selling them at an undervalue.
- The School also considers that the following, for example, may not be consistent with receipt of a bursary:
 - frequent or expensive holidays;
 - luxury cars;
 - investment in significant home improvements;
 - a second property or land holdings;
 - failure to honour school fee payments to other schools.

Other Factors

In addition to financial matters, the School may consider other factors. These include:

- if a boy has brothers already at the School (though a bursary award to one child does not guarantee awards to siblings);
- where the social needs of the pupil are relevant;
- a parent is critically ill or is unable to secure permanent employment due to poor health or incapacity;
- a parental separation might result in the pupil having to be withdrawn from the School, adding to the pupil's stress of coping with his parents separating.

Application process

For 11+

Harrow School can provide a small number of bursaries to support exceptional candidates for Years 7 and 8 at their local prep school, ahead of the pupil joining Harrow School.

- Parents whose sons meet the criteria for a Year 7 award must register by the deadline via the School's online portal. There will be no exceptions.
- A preliminary financial assessment of the family of shortlisted candidates will be conducted, but the School may refer an application to Bursary Administration Limited.
- References will be requested from the candidate's current school.
- Candidates will take the ISEB Common Pre-Test (ISEBCPT).
- Exceptional candidates needing 100% support will be invited for the second round of assessment at the end of November of Year 6.
- Candidates and their parents/guardians will be interviewed as part of the second round of assessments.
- All applicants will be subject to a home visit by a representative of the School (see above) and may also be asked to meet the Bursar at the School.
- The Awards Registrar will consider all information to make recommendations to the Bursary Committee.
- Admissions will inform parents of the value of any bursary by the end of May of Year 6, in conjunction with the offer of a place.

For 13+

Awards will only be made after a satisfactory performance in the general entrance examination or scholarship assessment. The School will adhere strictly to all closing dates.

- Parents must indicate that they intend to seek bursary assistance when completing the online registration form.
- Parents who will need a bursary must inform the Admissions Office in writing no later than October of Year 6, to be reviewed as part of the assessment stage 2, which takes place between January and March of Year 6.
- The School will consider the application and prepare recommendations.
- All applicants may be visited at home by a representative of the School (see above) and may also be asked to meet the Bursar at Harrow.
- Admissions will inform parents of the value of any bursary by the end of May of Year 6, in conjunction with the offer of a place.

Sixth Form

This is a broadly similar approach to 11+ and 13+. Where practicable, the School will notify parents of the level of any bursary at the same time as the result of their entrance application.

Parents offered a bursary will be required to sign a letter accepting the offer and any conditions related to the bursary.

Review of awards

All bursaries are conditional on the recipient's good behaviour and continuing high performance. All awards are reviewed at least annually and are subject to repeat testing of parents' means. The amount awarded may increase or decrease, or even be withdrawn, if parents' circumstances change.

All bursaries will be reassessed in detail before a pupil enters the Sixth Form and cannot be carried through unless a pupil has met the minimum academic requirements for entrance to the Sixth Form, has behaved well and has consistently made a good contribution to the School's co-curricular programme.

The School has the discretion to reduce or withdraw an award not only where a pupil's progress, attitude or behaviour has been unsatisfactory but also where the parents have failed to support the School, for example by late payment of their contribution to the fees.

The difference between applying for a place and applying for a bursary

Please note that Harrow makes its decisions to offer provisional places at the School before parents' need for financial support with school fees is assessed. Parents who will need bursary support should be aware that the offer of a place at the School does not guarantee the award of a bursary, or necessarily the level of bursary that has been requested. If we are unable to offer parents a bursary, the School reserves the right to withdraw the provisional offer of a place where it is apparent that the fees cannot be afforded without financial assistance. Where demand for bursaries exceeds the funds available, the School will offer bursaries to enable as many applicants to come to Harrow as funds allow. Preference will be given to those judged likely to benefit most from an education at Harrow.

What bursaries do and do not cover

When a boy on a high-level bursary first joins Harrow, the School can offer financial assistance at the same level with the cost of uniform and a laptop. During the boy's time at Harrow, financial support for curriculum trips and public examination costs may be provided on the same pro rata basis. Parents must contact the Awards Registrar to seek guidance before signing up to any trip or extra activity. The School would not expect boys on bursaries to go on voluntary overseas trips.

Confidentiality

In applying for a bursary, parents are entering into a special relationship with the School, and we expect you to respect our good faith. The School respects the confidentiality of bursary awards made to families, and recipients are expected to do the same. It is not the School's policy to tell pupils that they are receiving a bursary, nor to identify bursary holders to any other pupil. Parents are welcome to tell their child.

Other sources of bursary assistance

In addition to the School's Bursary Fund, there are several educational and charitable trusts that provide assistance with tuition fees. In most cases, these are to help children who are already attending a fee-paying school and who, due to a change of circumstances, may be unable to remain in that school.

Harrow School encourages parents and guardians to apply for support where it is felt a good case can be made for assistance. More advice and information may be obtained from The Educational Trust Forum website (educational-grants.org).