

Scholarships Bursary and Awards Policy

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Governors

SCHOLARSHIPS, BURSARY AND AWARDS POLICY

INTRODUCTION

Box Hill School has the following discounts or awards available:

- Scholarships
- Headmistress's Discretionary Award
- Means Tested Bursaries
- Sibling Discounts

Staff Discounts are not included in the Scholarships & Bursary Fund (S&BF).

Scholarships are selective, offered for a fixed period of time and are normally worth up to a maximum of 25% of fees. The Headmistress has the discretion to award a greater scholarship if deemed appropriate. Scholars will be given other privileges and recognition in the School.

Headmistress's Discretionary Awards (HDA's) are offered to students whose contribution to the school is recognised as being significant but who have not been successful in achieving a scholarship, or for which no specific scholarship is appropriate, such as 'service'. HDA's are tenable for the same duration as Scholarships. This category is designed to reflect and support the IDEALS of the Round Square. HDAs could be offered for example on the basis of an exceptional interview.

Bursaries are selective, means tested, normally offered at the point of entry and are reviewed annually.

SCHOLARSHIPS

Scholarships are the remit of the Headmistress and are normally offered at entry into school (normally but not exclusively in years 7 and 9 or year 12). They can be awarded internally if a student develops high levels of skill or talent over time, bringing themselves to the notice of the school.

General

Scholarships are usually offered in the following areas:

- Academic
- Music
- Sport
- Art
- Drama

Scholarships will be tenable for a limited amount of time depending on the year group but would be expected to last up to the public exams (GCSE or A level/IB).

Application Process

External Candidates:

Each external applicant must submit a letter of application outlining their skills and attributes in their chosen area which should detail the reasons why they wish to be considered for a Scholarship.

Candidates will be invited to a Scholars' Day at the School where they will be required to undertake:

- An interview with the Headmistress and/or the Head of specialism
- Drama scholars: performance of a monologue, a group improvisation with other candidates
- Music scholars: performance of a piece or pieces of music in their chosen instrument(s)
- Art scholars: will need a portfolio and will be required to sit a specific art examination
- Sports scholars: tests of skills in at least two sports areas and a review of specialism (eg cricket at county level, etc).

Academic scholarships will be awarded on the basis of an applicant's performance in entry tests for the school. No formal application is required for this particular award.

Internal Candidates:

All awards will be made following recommendations from key staff to the Headmistress rather than through an application procedure.

Recommendations for scholarship awards will be made by the appropriate Heads of Key Stage for Academic Scholarship using our internal testing and assessment data and taking into consideration their academic progress and predicted performance in internal and external examinations as relevant at each key stage.

Recommendations for the practical scholarships will come from the Heads of specialisms and take into account a student's performance, ability and contribution to that specialism during their time at the school.

HEADMISTRESS'S DISCRETIONARY AWARDS

These are the remit of the Headmistress and are intended to support and encourage those students whose particular attributes are not reflected in the categories above but whose contribution to the school is valuable and recognised in line with Round Square principles.

MEANS TESTED BURSARIES

General

The Governors of Box Hill School are committed to broadening access to the school by offering to eligible parents/guardians means-tested financial support with the payment of schools fees. Such support is known as a bursary and bursaries are awarded in the form of a discount on basic fees payable, depending on the financial circumstances of applicants.

Bursary awards are subject to repeat testing of parental means each year and may be varied upwards or downwards, depending on parental circumstances. Awards are made on the basis of the confidential Box Hill School scale of awards, which sets out the potential award levels in relation to a family's financial circumstances. The scale of awards is reviewed and revised annually by the Chief Operating Officer and the Finance Manager to reflect any changes in fee costs and is approved by the Governors.

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 fully 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

Awareness - information provided by the school alerting the parents/guardians of potential pupils to the possibility of gaining means-tested financial support is normally discussed at interview.

Prior to this the school aims to publish details in:

- The school literature.
- The school website.

The Application Process

Bursaries may be made available to parents/guardians of children entering any year-group of Box Hill School. They are awarded at the discretion of the Governors, the Headmistress and the Chief Operating Officer are responsible for the management and coordination of the process.

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 on the School website and must be accompanied by full documentary evidence. The completed forms, together with the necessary documentary evidence, are to be submitted to the Chief Operating Officer no later than the date of the entrance exam in any year for bursaries to start the following September.

Step two - the Chief Operating Officer assesses all applications in order to establish the likely level of support that may be awarded in accordance with the Box Hill School confidential scale of awards. This may involve the Chief Operating Officer, 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.

Step three – this information is presented to the Awards Committee for discussion and decision.

Step four - Parents/guardians are advised whether their child is to be offered a place at the School and of the bursary offer by an appropriate date.

Step five - 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.

The Case for Assistance

The Headmistress and Chief Operating Officer will consider a number of factors when making the judgement as to the justification for support and the extent of such support. In the main, the child's suitability for the school is the first consideration in granting support.

- *Suitability* - in assessing a child's suitability, 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 Headmistress, 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. In normal circumstances, each applicant should at least meet the

School's normal academic requirements. Previous school reports will be consulted for evidence of good behaviour.

- *Financial limitations*- the amount of the bursary award is not influenced by the level of the academic ability of the child but 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 the context of its overall budget. It is recognised that judgements about what sacrifices a family should make to pay school fees will be subjective. 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.
 - 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 universities the School's grant will take these outgoings into account.
 - 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.
- *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 a child has siblings at the school.
 - 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.
 - The School will not make any allowances for pupils at other fee paying schools.

Existing Pupils - Change in Family Circumstances

Within overall budget funding, the School will in normal circumstances set aside each year a hardship fund, for cases of sudden, unforeseen need or where applications meriting bursary assistance are received out of the normal calendar cycle for bursary submission, scrutiny and award. This sum will be set within budgetary constraints. Parents/guardians with a child at the school whose financial circumstances suddenly change may apply for a bursary to the Chief Operating Officer, explaining their situation and using the forms on the School website. Such awards are subject to the availability of funding and cannot be guaranteed.

Annual Review

All bursary awards are subject to repeat testing of parental means each year and may be varied upwards or downwards depending on parental circumstances. Current bursary holders will be issued with repeat means-testing forms each year for return by the 31st December. For those previously in receipt of bursaries, the Headmistress and Chief Operating Officer, in making their joint recommendation to the Awards Committee, have the discretion to recommend to the Governors 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.

Confidentiality

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

Sibling Discounts

A 25% discount on the youngest child only is available to parents with two or more children in School.

It should be noted that all awards are at the discretion of the school, and can be revoked. The most obvious cause for termination of the award would be poor behaviour at school, but other factors, such as non-participation in the area of specialism (e.g. refusing to play sport or perform in drama) may also lead to a cancellation. Awards could also be revoked for example if a scholarship is awarded in a subject that is not then included in GCSE/A'Level/IB choices made by the pupil.



Stuart Ansell Chief Operating Officer & Clerk to the Governors

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