



Cedars School of Excellence

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Financial Assistance Policy

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Introduction

Cedars School of Excellence has endeavoured to ensure that children who would benefit from an education at the School are not excluded for financial reasons. We offer means-tested financial assistance with the payment of school fees to parents or guardians who would otherwise be unable to afford them. This assistance is known as a Bursary and they may be awarded in the form of a discount of up to 100% on tuition fees, depending on the financial, compassionate or other pertinent circumstances of applicants.

In order to make prospective families aware of the availability of this means-tested support, information is included with the School prospectus and on the School website.

Eligibility

Bursary awards are subject to repeat testing of parental means annually and may be varied, depending on parental circumstances. The School operates a sliding scale for Bursary awards which it reserves the right to vary in special cases. Though awards are generally tied to this scale, they may be altered upwards or downwards depending on individual parents' or guardians' circumstances (e.g. their savings, investments and realisable assets, as well as their income, the size of their family, any other persons dependent upon them and like factors), compassionate or other pertinent considerations.

All awards are made at the absolute discretion of the School and the number which can be made each year is limited. The Bursar can provide guidance in individual cases.

Requests for financial support usually fall into two categories:

- New applicants to the school, where a place has been offered but parents or guardians are unable to fund the tuition fees.
- Existing pupils where a change in parents' or guardians' circumstances has resulted in difficulty in meeting tuition fees and may result in the child being withdrawn part way through a stage of education.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

The Application Process

Bursaries may be made available to parents or guardians of children entering any year group of the School. (See the School's Admission's Policy.) They are awarded at the discretion of the Governors, and the Head and School Bursar are responsible for the management and coordination of the process.

Parents or 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 obtained on request from the School. The completed forms, together with the necessary documentary evidence, are submitted to the Bursar.

The Bursar will take the following actions:

- Assess all applications in order to establish the likely level of support which will be required in order to allow the child to attend the School. This may involve the Bursar, or their representative, visiting the parents' or guardians' home to ensure the information has been correctly interpreted and the basis of the financial assessment has been fair.
- The Bursar prepares a recommendation in accordance with the School Scale of Awards, which is considered with the Head, and a joint recommendation is then reached.
- The joint recommendation is presented to the Board of Governors for approval.
- The parents or guardians are advised whether their child is to be offered a Bursary.
- Parents or 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.

Non-compliance with any term of the offer could mean that any financial assistance is withdrawn and, in this event, the pupil's parents will become responsible for payment of the totality of the fees including any financially assisted element.

The Case for Assistance

The Head and Bursar will consider a number of factors when making the judgment as to the justification for financial assistance, and the extent of such assistance. On the whole, the child's suitability for the school is the first consideration in granting financial assistance.

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 its overall budget.

It is recognised that judgments about what sacrifices a family should make to pay school fees will be personal. Conversely, the School has an obligation to ensure that all bursary awards are well distributed and so, as well as current earnings, other factors, which will be considered in determining the necessary level of award, 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 dependants, or the requirements of their partner's work.

- Any significant capital savings and investments would be expected to be released for use in the payment of school fees, as would equity values in houses.
- 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 other schools (or universities) the School's award will take into account all these outgoings.
- In cases of separation, the contribution made by the absent parent.

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 or 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 or guardians separating.
- Where a child has a parent who is a member of staff at the School.

Existing Pupils – Change of Circumstance

Finances permitting, the School will aim to help in cases of sudden unforeseen need. Parents or guardians whose financial circumstances suddenly change may apply for a Bursary to the Headmistress or the Bursar, explaining their situation and using the forms available from the School. Such awards are subject to the availability of funding and cannot be guaranteed.

Confidentiality

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

Other Sources of Bursary Assistance

In addition to the School's Bursary awards, there are a number of educational and charitable trusts which provide assistance with tuition fees. In the majority of cases, these are to assist children who are already attending a fee-paying school and due to a change of circumstances may be unable to remain. Cedars School of Excellence encourages parents or guardians to apply for support where it is felt a good case can be made for assistance. Further information on how to pursue such assistance may be obtained from the Bursar.

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Headmistress and Advisor to the Board of Governors