



PINEWOOD

Est. 1875

PINEWOOD SCHOOL BURSARY POLICY

Introduction

1. This policy has been authorised by the Governors and forms part of the School's Public Benefit Strategy.
2. The Governors are committed to broadening access to the School by offering eligible parents/guardians means-tested financial support with the payment of school fees. Such support is known as a Bursary and these may be awarded in the form of a discount of up to 100% on tuition fees payable, depending on the financial, compassionate or other pertinent circumstances of applicants. Further financial assistance may also be available on other chargeable activities for those awarded 100% bursaries.
3. Bursaries are means-tested and awarded on an annual basis to parents who satisfy the financial criteria as set by the School, from time to time, in relation to their income and capital assets.
4. The aim of this policy is to ensure that prospective and current parents/guardians are aware of the bursary provision and the process by which they can apply. It will be placed on the School website and made available to all parents on request.
5. The term 'parents' used throughout the remainder of the document refers to both parents and guardians who are legally responsible for the child concerned.

Types of Bursary Offered

6. There are two categories of bursaries:
 - a. Entry Bursaries. Bursaries will normally be provided at the time when pupils enter the School. These are known as Entry Bursaries and will be offered to parents who are unable to provide the tuition fees.
 - b. Hardship Bursaries. Subject to the budgetary constraints for the bursary scheme, the School shall also provide means-tested assistance with fees for cases of sudden, unforeseen need experienced by families of existing pupils. These are known as Hardship Bursaries.

7. The Governors are committed to providing bursaries up to 100% of the Day Tuition Fees. In certain circumstances those awarded 100% bursaries may also be provided with financial assistance on other school charges including Learning Support and attendance on Pinewood Adventure activities. Assistance may also be available for the provision of school uniform, sports gear and equipment and travel costs. Exceptionally, financial assistance may also be provided to help parents meet the Weekly Boarding fees.

8. The level of a bursary is determined by the extent of financial need and therefore applicants are required to complete a Bursary Application Form which provides details of their income and capital. Where there is no financial need, no bursary will be granted.

9. A range of factors is considered in making the awards and there are no hard and fast rules and as a result the number and size of bursaries can vary considerably. In considering the financial need of an applicant, the size of family and the level of income and capital assets are taken into account. Relevant personal circumstances of the parents and those of the child may also be taken into consideration.

Duration of Bursaries

10. The duration of bursaries will depend on the individual family needs, however, normally:

a. Entry Bursaries last until the child leaves the School although they will be reviewed on an annual basis at the start of the Spring Term to ascertain whether or not the family's financial circumstances have changed significantly. The level of the bursary for the forthcoming academic year (commencing in the September) may be subject to amendments to reflect the revised need of the family and may in some cases be removed. Particular attention is paid when reviewing bursaries for entry into the Upper School (Years 7 and 8), which implies commitment to continuing with private education into senior school, to ensure it would be in the child's best interest educationally to remain at Pinewood

b. Hardship Bursaries may be awarded and reviewed in the same manner as the Entry Bursaries on an annual basis but may also be offered on a termly basis. The duration of the Hardship Bursaries will depend on the circumstances surrounding the provision of the award.

Bursary Application Procedure

11. The School uses an external company called Bursary Administration Ltd to review each credible bursary application submitted. This is a highly regarded company which provides a similar service to many other independent schools including some in the nearby locality of Pinewood. This company will carry out home visits and financial checks on the bursary applicants on behalf of the School. They will then provide a report

to the School in order that the School's Bursary Panel can make an informed decision on each bursary application.

12. The Application Procedure for obtaining a bursary is at Appendix A.

Confidentiality and Data Protection

13. All bursary applications are treated in the strictest confidence. All information provided by the parents will be processed in accordance with the Data Protection Act 1998, the School's Data Protection Notice and Bursary Administration Ltd's data protection procedures. It will be used for the purpose of assessing the need for a bursary and not for any other purpose.

Other Sources of Bursary Assistance

14. There are a number of educational and charitable trusts which provide assistance with tuition fees although they tend to be for children aged 7 and above. The School encourages parents to apply for support where it is felt a good case can be made for assistance. Most trusts will contact the School to seek information regarding the pupil's conduct and general performance. Further information on how to pursue such assistance can be obtained from:

Royal National Children's Foundation
Sandy Lane, Cobham, Surrey KT11 2ES
Tel: 01932 868622 Website: www.rncf.org.uk

Monitoring the Policy and Review

15. This Bursary Policy will be monitored and reviewed by the Governors' Bursary Panel and Finance and General Purposes Committee as required.

THE APPLICATION PROCEDURE

Submission of the Bursary Application Form

1. The process for applications commences with the submission of the Bursary Application Form as follows:
 - a. Entry Bursaries. When making an application for a place at the School, parents are to request a Bursary Application Form from the Headmaster or the Bursar if they wish their child to be considered for an Entry Bursary. They will then be sent a Bursary Application Form which should be completed and returned to the Bursar, together with a letter setting out the justification for their application.
 - b. Hardship Bursaries. Parents of existing pupils seeking a Hardship Bursary should request a Bursary Application Form from the Bursar. When completed it should be returned to the Bursar, together with a letter setting out the justification for the application.
2. The Bursar will be able to provide advice of the bursary process and assist parents in the completion of their Bursary Application Forms should they require it.
3. The Bursary Application Form requires details of the family income and regular commitments such as mortgage payments, etc. Unearned income must also be shown. Details of other children in the family are required and information about their current status e.g. whether they are attending school or place of further education, or in work, etc. This is intended to provide a clear picture of the family's position in order to make a fair assessment.
4. The Bursary Application Form will be passed to Bursary Administration Ltd. They will contact parents directly to meet with them at their home and at this visit they will request to see various financial documents to support the application. They will inform parents of which documents they wish to see prior to the visit.
5. Bursary Administration Ltd will provide a written report to the School in order that the School's Bursary Panel can make an informed decision.

Assessment - Financial Factors Taken into Consideration

6. The amount of the bursary award is not influenced by the level of the academic ability of the child but by the extent of the financial 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 the overall budget.

7. It is recognised that judgments about what sacrifices a family should make to pay school fees will be personal, however, the School has a duty to ensure that all bursary grants are well focused. For this reasons various factors in addition to earned income will be considered in determining the necessary level of grant. These will include:

- a. 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.
- b. Opportunities to release capital will be considered. Significant capital, savings and investments would be expected to be used for the payment of school fees as would any equity value in the family home.
- c. In cases of separation, the contribution which should be made by the absent parent will be considered.
- d. Any contribution to household costs by other members of the wider family, would be considered, including any made by adults unrelated to the child or by sources external to the family.
- e. The School considers that, in principle, a family that enjoys frequent or expensive holidays or new or luxury cars or who invest in significant home improvements or the purchase of a second property would not be eligible for a bursary.

Bursary Approvals Process

8. Applications will be considered by the School's Bursary Panel. This is a panel of Governors including the Chairman of the Governance Committee and the Chairman of the Finance and General Purposes Committee, in consultation with the Bursar and Headmaster. The level of any award will be agreed and a formal offer or rejection will be made in writing to the parents. The cut-off for awards is determined by the point at which bursary funds are exhausted. Unsuccessful cases are usually the result of either lack of evidence of financial need or insufficient availability of bursary funds. There is no bar to re-apply. Matters arising in respect of this policy can be raised with the Chairman of the Governors.

Timetable

9. Wherever possible Bursary Application Forms in respect of bursaries should be returned to the School by 31st December, prior to the school year for which the bursary is sought.

10. Parents may apply for a place at the School for their child on the basis that acceptance will be conditional upon receiving bursary support.
11. The Bursar will inform the parents by the end of March. The parents should then advise the School if they wish to take up the bursary and (if an Entry Bursary, the place at the School) within two weeks of receiving the offer.
12. In exceptional circumstances, applications for bursaries may be considered at other times of the year but awards will be dependant upon the availability of bursary funds.

Representation and Appeals Process

13. A Representation to a decision made by the Bursary Panel is allowed in the following circumstances:
 - When it is made within 3 months of being informed of the Bursary Panel's decision.
 - When there is a material change in the family's financial situation since the original application.
14. Any Representation based upon the above criteria will be reviewed by the Bursary Panel. If it is outside of the 3 month window then it will be subject to the submission of a new application.
15. An Appeal against a final decision made by the Bursary Panel can be made to the Chairman of Governors.

Reviewed March 2018
Reviewed by Governance Committee
Next Review Date: January 2019