

Hulme Hall Grammar School



Means Tested Bursary Policy

Policy Control	
Report	Bursary Policy
Approval Body	Full Governing Body
Date Reviewed	November 2020
Review Schedule	Two Years
Next Review due	November 2022

Overview

It is the stated aim of the Governors of Hulme Hall Grammar School (The Board) to set and maintain the level of fees at Hulme Hall Grammar School at an “affordable level” whilst continuing to deliver high quality education.

Hulme Hall Grammar School offers means tested bursaries and discounts and these are expected to account for around 10% of gross fee income. All bursaries are means tested and subjected to annual review whilst discounts and scholarships are awarded at the discretion of the Headmaster and Business Manager of Hulme Hall Grammar School.

Means Tested Bursaries

General

The Governors of Hulme Hall Grammar School are committed to broadening access to the School by offering to eligible parents/guardians means-tested financial support with the payment of school fees. Such support is known as a bursary and bursaries may be awarded in the form of a discount of up to 50% on tuition fees payable, depending on the financial, compassionate or other pertinent 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 scale of awards which sets out award levels in relation to a family's financial circumstances. The scale of awards is reviewed and revised annually by the Business Manager to reflect any changes in fee costs and is approved by the Governors. Though awards are generally tied to this scale, they may be varied upwards or downwards depending on individual parents'/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.

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 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parents'/guardians' circumstances has resulted in difficulty in meeting tuition fees and may result in the child being withdrawn part way through a stage of education.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

Information is provided by the School alerting the parents/guardians of potential pupils to the possibility of gaining means tested financial support with the payment of Schools fees is included in:

- The School prospectus. Schools may wish to include the actual application form for financial assistance in with the prospectus papers
 - The School website
 - The local press by means of advertisements.
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The Application Process

Bursaries may be made available to parents/guardians of children entering Year 7 of Hulme Hall Grammar School. (See the School's Admissions Policy). They are awarded at the discretion of the Governors and the Headmaster and Business Manager 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, should be obtained from the Admissions Manager and must be accompanied by full documentary evidence. The completed forms, together with the necessary documentary evidence, are to be submitted to the Business Manager on the date stipulated, which will usually be around the date of the Assessment Day. Applications made after this time are unlikely to be successful due to the allocation process of the limited funds available.

Step Two - the Business Manager assesses 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 Business Manager, 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 - the Business Manager prepares a recommendation in accordance with the Hulme Hall Grammar School confidential scale of awards which is considered with the Headmaster and a joint recommendation is then reached.

Step Four - the joint recommendation is presented to the Governors' for approval.

Step Five – late March. The parents/guardians are advised whether their child is to be offered a place at the School and of the bursary offer.

Step Six - 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 Headmaster and Business Manager 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 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 Headmaster, be likely to make sound 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 meet the School's normal academic requirements. Previous School reports and references will be consulted for evidence of good behaviour.

Financial Limitations

The amount of the bursary awarded 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 personal. 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 other schools (or universities) the School's bursary will consider all these outgoings
- 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.

Extenuating Circumstances - there may be occasions when extenuating circumstances may arise which results in the need for a bursary award. These will be considered on a case by case basis and where applicable be considered outside of the annual application process.

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 Headmaster or Business Manager, explaining their situation and using the Bursary Application Form, which can be obtained from the Admissions Manager. 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 early January each year for return by mid-March in relation to the academic year starting in September of that year. For those previously in receipt of bursaries, the Headmaster and Business Manager, in making their joint recommendation to the Governing Body, 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.

Other Sources of Bursary Assistance

In addition to the School's bursary fund, there are a number of educational and charitable trusts which aid 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. Hulme Hall Grammar School encourages parents/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 Business Manager
Hulme Hall Grammar School
Beech Avenue
Stockport
SK3 8HA



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www.hulmehallschool.org