



St Mary's School CAMBRIDGE

Bursary Policy

This policy is authorised by the Bursary Committee of the Governing Body.

Last review: September 2024

Next review: September 2026

Authority and circulation

This Policy has been authorised by the Governing Body of St Mary's School Cambridge. Its status is advisory only. It is addressed to Parents/Guardians of pupils and of prospective pupils and to all members of the teaching and support staff.

This Policy contains an overview of the Bursary Scheme currently in operation at the School. The Policy, together with all ancillary documentation including a financial means questionnaire, is made available to all Parents/ Guardians on request.

Aims

The School views a socially diverse pupil population as a key component of a full and balanced education. The aims of the Bursary Policy are therefore:

- To widen pupil access to the School and ensure that education is provided to children from a broad spectrum of society
- To continue the School's tradition of providing education services as a public benefit on a sustainable basis
- To meet and, if possible, exceed the Charity Commission's public benefit requirements on a sustainable basis.

Introduction

The School is a registered charity that is committed to providing significant public benefit. The School is aware of its obligations under the Charities Act 2011 and seeks to adhere to the public benefit principles identified by the Charity Commission. This policy is reviewed on an annual basis to take into consideration the latest guidance from the Charity Commission. The School has a history of providing financial assistance to pupils and their families. While the costs of running the School require that those who can pay full fees must do so, every year the School forgoes a sustainable percentage of its income through bursaries and scholarships.

St Mary's offers both Admissions Bursaries for new pupils and Hardship/Emergency Bursaries for Parents/Guardians whose financial position worsens unexpectedly once their child is already at the School. The aim is to assist Parents/Guardians on low incomes, who, for financial reasons, might otherwise be unable to send or continue to send their child to the School

Bursaries are entirely means tested and are awarded on an annual basis to Parents/Guardians who are financially eligible and who meet the application requirements set out below in full. Due to the limited financial resources of the School, not every eligible application for a bursary will be successful. Please note that families who may be classified as 'low income' but have substantial assets may be ineligible to receive a bursary.

The School respects the confidentiality of bursary awards made and recipients are expected to do likewise. Pupils will not be made aware that they benefit from a bursary unless informed by their Parents/Guardians.

The value of individual bursaries ranges from 5% of tuition fees to full-fee bursaries, although the School would normally expect parents to make some contribution towards fees. All bursaries are fully means-tested and are assessed on a sliding scale depending on the parents' combined annual income, net assets, and any other relevant information.

Eligibility

Bursaries may be made available to Parents/ Guardians of children entering Year 7, 9, 10 and 12. In exceptional circumstances bursaries may be available to children entering the Junior School. Applications for Admissions Bursaries in other years may be considered, subject to review by the Bursar. All UK Parents/Guardians of current and prospective pupils at the School are eligible to apply for a bursary and should contact the Bursar at the School in the first instance for more information. Parents/Guardians in receipt of a bursary award are also eligible to apply for a scholarship or other award in respect of their child/ren. Applications from overseas students are not normally considered for Bursary Awards.

Application process

Parents/Guardians will be sent a link to a portal where they will enter the relevant details. They should also provide any supplemental information requested. All applications include a financial means questionnaire to provide a full picture of the income and assets of applicants. This will ensure that the School's Bursary Committee can determine those to whom an offer of a bursary would be most beneficial. It is critical that Parents/Guardians answer all the questions carefully, in full, and upload all supporting information required. An assessment cannot proceed without this information. Submission deadlines and interview dates will be published on the School's website.

All bursary applications and renewal requests will be administered on behalf of the School by Bursary Administration Limited (BAL), a third party. This is subject to contractual assurances that personal data will be kept securely and only in accordance with the School's specific direction. BAL will normally schedule an appointment with applicants (to be held at the applicants' home or online) at which the bursary application will be discussed in more detail. Following this meeting, BAL will present the school with a report/recommendation, which will then be presented to the Bursary Committee for consideration.

In processing Bursary applications, the School reserves the right to ask for financial information from Parents/Guardians at any time and to make such checks on financial information (or require such checks to be made on their behalf) as the School deems appropriate and the School does expect the full co-operation of Parents/Guardians with such checks.

In cases of separation or divorce, the financial circumstances of parents will be considered as part of the bursary assessment irrespective of any financial or other arrangement made between them. This will include consideration of the level of income and net assets of any step-parent or partner living in the same household, together with any financial commitments relating to children from previous marriages/relationships. Individual Statement of Financial Circumstances forms will be supplied to separated or divorced parents for completion.

Each Bursary offer will reflect the circumstances of the recipient and will be expressed as a percentage remission of tuition and/or boarding fees. Bursaries are awarded for one academic year and remain subject throughout that period to the conditions of award provided with the letter of offer. Hardship/ Emergency Bursaries may be awarded on a termly basis depending on the circumstances surrounding the provision of award.

Decisions regarding bursary awards will be notified to the parents in writing. The decision of the School regarding the award or level of bursary is final.

Bursary Award annual review

All bursaries are reviewed at least annually, and all Parents/Guardians are required to submit new, up-to-date financial information to support their annual applications. Parents/Guardians are also required to inform the School immediately of any change in their financial circumstances while a bursary is being provided. Failure to divulge requested information or a change in circumstances to the School could lead to a bursary being withdrawn or withheld or a request for repayment made.

Conditions applying to Bursary Awards

By accepting the bursary, Parents/Guardians accept that their child will be required to work hard, to contribute positively to the life of the School and to set a good example to other pupils. In the unlikely event that this is not the case, the School reserves the right to withdraw all or part of the financial support and is not obliged to provide reasons for such a decision.

All bursaries are paid at the sole discretion of the School and are subject to review by the School at any time. The bursary award details in the letter provided to successful applicants will take precedence over any of the School's standard terms and conditions which are inconsistent with them. In all other respects, the standard terms, and conditions, as amended from time to time, will still apply.

Parents failing to pay the termly net fees, after deduction of the advised and agreed bursary, on time in accordance with the School's terms and conditions may have their advised and agreed bursary withdrawn.

Timing

The deadline for Admission Bursary applications is included on the school website and is usually towards the end of October prior to the year of entry. It is imperative that all documentation is uploaded to the portal to meet this deadline, as applications and supporting paperwork received after that date may not be considered. Once the Bursary Committee has considered the applications, the Bursar will notify applicants of whether they have been successful by letter, unless further information to support the application is required. Successful applicants will be sent a letter of offer specifying the conditions of award and requiring them to accept formally any offer and its conditions.

Renewal Bursaries are considered each year in the Spring Term, for the following academic year. The portal will be used to enter information and upload documentation, which should be submitted by 20th January to

ensure that they are considered by the Committee. Applicants will be notified by the school of the outcome by the end of the Spring Term.

Applications for Hardship/ Emergency Bursaries will be considered by the Bursary Committee as soon as possible after the application has been received.

Data Protection

The School processes all personal data (which includes the information supplied to the School as part of the Bursary eligibility process) in accordance with data protection law. Please see the School Privacy Policy on the School website for more information about how the School processes personal data about individuals.
