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## BURSARY POLICY

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Red House School is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people, along with their protection and expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment.

### **AUTHORITY AND CIRCULATION**

This policy has been authorised by the Governing Body of Red House School ("the School"). Its status is advisory only. It is addressed to parents of pupils and of prospective pupils and to all members of the teaching and administration 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 and prospective parents on request.

### **AIMS**

The aims of this policy are:

- to widen pupil access to the School and ensure that a Red House education is provided to children from a broad spectrum of society
- to meet and if possible exceed the Charity Commission's public benefit requirements applicable from time to time.

### **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's Bursary Scheme includes both admissions bursaries for the parents of new pupils and hardship / emergency/rescue bursaries for parents whose financial position worsens unexpectedly once their child is already at the School. The Scheme is designed to assist parents or prospective parents on low incomes who for financial reasons might otherwise be unable to send or continue to send their child to the School.

Bursaries are means tested and are awarded on an annual basis to parents 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 all applications may be successful. The amount available for allocation will vary from year to year and consequently the school retains an absolute discretion as to the number of awards each year. Similarly, the School has absolute discretion to remove awards.

All bursary applications are treated in the strictest confidence by the School and recipient families are expected to respect this confidentiality. Failure to adhere to confidentiality will result in the withdrawal of the assistance. Pupils will not be made aware that they benefit from a bursary unless informed by their parents.

In some circumstances up to 100% fee remission is available, plus extras and uniform where appropriate but in the majority of cases some parental contribution is expected.

### **PUBLICITY**

We view a socially diverse pupil population as a key component of a full and balanced education. The availability of bursaries at the School is advertised locally.

### **ELIGIBILITY AND PROCEDURE**

All parents and prospective parents of pupils at the School are eligible to apply for a bursary on the condition that they have the right to live and work in the UK. Please contact Head of Finance and Compliance at the School in the first instance for more information.

### **NEW APPLICANTS TO THE SCHOOL - THE APPLICATION PROCESS**

Bursaries may be made available to parents/guardians of children in or entering the Senior School (Years 7 – 11) at Red House School (see the School's Admissions Policy). However, no bursary can be offered unless / until the applicant has first satisfied the School's academic requirements in order to be offered a place (for application details please contact the Head of Admissions on 01642 558119). Bursaries are awarded at the discretion of the

Governors together with the Headmaster and Head of Finance and Compliance who are responsible for the management of the Bursary application process.

No action will be taken on the form until the academic assessment process is complete. The deadline for applications is February in the year of entry and applications will be assessed at the meeting of the Management Committee during the Spring Term.

### **Step 1**

Parents/guardians seeking a bursary should complete the bursary application form which seeks to verify the identity of the applicant and establish the financial circumstances of the household. The form, which requests details of income, capital and outgoings, must be accompanied by supporting evidence. The completed form, together with the supporting documentation, is to be submitted to the Head of Finance and Compliance by the parents/guardians. Each parent or guardian will be required to provide evidence of their financial situation.

Please note that families who may be classified as 'low income' but have substantial assets may be ineligible to receive a bursary.

### **Step 2**

The Head of Finance and Compliance 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 Head of Finance and Compliance, or representative, visiting the parents'/guardians' home to ensure the information has been correctly interpreted and the basis of the financial assessment has been fair. If there is difficulty interpreting any aspect of the form an interview may be requested.

### **STEP 3**

The Head of Finance & Compliance prepares a recommendation in accordance with the RHS Scale of Awards which is considered with the Headmaster and a joint recommendation is then reached.

### **STEP 4**

The recommendation is presented to the Management Committee for approval.

### **STEP 5**

The parents/guardians are advised in writing whether their child is to be offered a place at the School and of the bursary offer.

### **STEP 6**

Parents/guardians are then required to sign a letter accepting the place at the school with the registration fee (as appropriate). An acknowledgement agreeing to any conditions relating to the bursary must also be signed.

The Case for Assistance

The Headmaster and the Head of Finance & Compliance will consider a number of factors when making the assessment of the requirement for support. In the main, the child's suitability for the school is the first consideration in granting support.

## **SUITABILITY OF THE CHILD**

This is an overriding and principle requirement. The child will be required to undertake and pass the entrance assessment to Red House School. Bursary funds are limited; priority will be given to children who are likely to gain the most from the educational provision provided by the School. Each pupil to whom support is offered must, in the opinion of the Headmaster, be likely to make sound academic progress and would benefit from participation in the wider, extra-curricular activities on offer at the School. Where the pupil is already attending the school, a report will be sought from teachers as to the educational attainment and potential of the child. Previous school reports may be consulted for evidence of good behaviour and attainment in both cases.

## **FINANCIAL LIMITATIONS**

The amount of the bursary award is not influenced by the level of 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 overall bursary budget. It is recognised that judgements about what sacrifices a family should make to pay school fees will be personal to that family. However, the School has a duty to ensure that all bursary grants are allocated appropriately and so, as well as current earnings, other factors will be considered in determining the level of any bursary grant to be awarded. These will include (but are not limited to):

- The ability to improve the financial position or earning capacity 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.
- The opportunities available to release any capital to fund school fees.
- 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, any contribution made by the absent parent.
- Where fees are being paid to other schools (or universities) the School's grant will take into account 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
- Investment in significant home improvements
- A second property / land holdings

As a guide, assistance is given on a sliding scale linked to gross household income. The School will consider making an award where annual gross household income is less than £40,000 per annum.

#### 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 need to be taken into account
- where a parent/guardian is terminally ill or is unable to secure permanent employment due to poor health
- where a parental separation or parental bereavement may result in the child having to be withdrawn from the School.

### **EXISTING PUPILS – CHANGE IN FAMILY CIRCUMSTANCES**

Within the overall bursary budget, the School may consider cases of sudden, unforeseen need. Parents/guardians with a child at the School whose financial circumstances suddenly change are advised to discuss the matter with the Headmaster, who will be able to supply a bursary application form. Such awards are subject to the availability of funding and cannot be guaranteed.

Each bursary offer will reflect the particular circumstances of the recipient and be expressed as a % remission of tuition fees. All bursaries are awarded for one academic year and remain subject throughout that period to the conditions of award provided with the letter of offer.

### **ANNUAL REVIEW**

All bursaries are subject to an annual means-tested review and may be varied depending on parental circumstances. Should any of the information disclosed become inaccurate at a later date, the School must be informed without delay. For example, should the financial position of parents/guardians with a pupil already at the School worsen unexpectedly, they should contact the Head of Finance and Compliance as soon as possible so that a way forward can be agreed. Failure to divulge requested information or a change in circumstances to the School could lead to a bursary being withdrawn or withheld. For those already in receipt of bursaries, the Headmaster and Head of Finance and Compliance, in making their joint recommendation to the Management Committee, have the discretion to recommend to the Governors the reduction or withdrawal of an award where a pupil's progress, attitude or behaviour has been unsatisfactory.

Annual review documentation must be completed and returned to the School by 31st May. Failure to return the form by the stated date may jeopardise the financial value of the award for the following academic year.

#### Other sources of bursary assistance

In addition to the School's bursary fund, 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. Red House School encourages parents/guardians to apply for support where it is felt a good case can be made for assistance.

Reviewed by A Tomlinson  
Ratified by the Management Committee of School Council  
November 2018