

## BURSARY POLICY

The Governors of Leweston School are committed to offering to eligible parents/guardians means-tested financial support with the payment of school fees to enable a pupil to attend Leweston School who otherwise would not be able to do so. Such support is known as a bursary and may be awarded in the form of a remission depending on the financial, compassionate or other pertinent circumstances of applicants.

Bursaries are awarded at the discretion of the Board of Governors. The Bursary Committee is responsible for the management and co-ordination of the process.

Bursary awards are subject to an annual review of the pupil's and his or her parent's financial circumstances, with fresh information being required about the pupil's parents' circumstances for every year that their child attends the school. Bursary awards may be removed or varied upwards or downwards, depending on the pupil's and parents' financial circumstances.

A bursary may be withdrawn in its entirety in accordance with the terms upon which such an award is made or otherwise in accordance with the school's Terms and Conditions. A bursary may also be withdrawn in its entirety if, in the opinion of the Head, the child's attendance, progress and/or behaviour (and/or the parents' behaviour or conduct (or the behaviour or conduct of one of the parents)) no longer merit the continuation of the award. This applies also where the parents/guardians have failed to support the school, for example by failure to pay fees by the due date.

The school reserves the right to amend the way in which awards are assessed.

Information provided by the school alerting parents of prospective pupils to the possibility of gaining means-tested financial support with the payment of school fees and other educational expenses is included in:

- The school's prospectus.
- The school's website.
- The school's Registration Form.

### **Categories for Financial Support**

Requests for financial support usually fall into three categories:

- Applicants who have won a scholarship or other merit award but who require further financial assistance with termly fees in order to take up their place at Leweston ('Award Holder Bursaries');
- Existing pupils where a change in parents/guardians' circumstances has resulted in difficulty in meeting termly fees and may result in the pupil being withdrawn part way through a key stage of their education ('Hardship Bursaries').
- Other applicants who have not won a scholarship or other award whose parents are unable to meet the full fee ('Open Bursaries').

The bursary resources available to the School are determined annually by the Board of Governors. The total level of bursaries is therefore fixed and finite.

Award Holder Bursaries receive priority in the allocation of bursaries. They are awarded in accordance with the order in which awards are made, the top award holders being allocated funds first. Therefore, depending on the requirement for assistance in any one year, it is not always possible to award a bursary to all award holders even if their family's financial circumstances justify it. **Scholarship candidates who believe that additional financial support may be required must submit their Bursary Application Forms alongside their scholarship application.**

Pupils who do not receive a bursary at entry are eligible to be considered for a bursary in the event that their family financial circumstances change whilst they are at the School. The application process and factors for consideration will be the same as those for new entrants but in addition a pupil's progress, attitude and behaviour at the School will be taken into account.

Open bursaries will be considered after bursaries have been allocated to the previous categories.

The School will only be able to provide bursaries to a proportion of applicants before its funds have run out. Those judged likely to gain most from the School's educational provision will be given priority. Each pupil to whom support is offered must, in the opinion of the Head, be likely to make sound academic progress following admission and possess the potential to develop the quality of her/his work. They will be expected to benefit other pupils through their participation in the wider, extra-curricular activities on offer at the School. Previous school reports will be consulted for evidence of good behaviour. Any pupil in receipt of a bursary will be expected to abide by all the School's policies and to meet its academic expectations.

### **The Application Process**

Bursaries may be made available to parents of children entering the Senior School (Year 7 upwards). Awards are typically between 10-20% of the current day fees but can rise to as much as 40% in exceptional circumstances. All applicants must be registered with the School before a bursary application is made.

**Step one** – both parents seeking a bursary are required to complete a form which seeks to establish the identity and financial circumstances of the family and of each parent. In the event both parents are separated and/or divorced, financial information from both parents should still be provided, as should the financial information of any other adults in the same household of either of the parent. The form, which requests details of all income, savings and capital must be accompanied by full documentary evidence. The completed forms, together with the necessary documentary evidence, are to be submitted to the Director of Business Strategy and Operations **no later than the 7 January in any year for bursaries to start the following September.**

Both parents seeking a bursary will be required to sign a declaration stating that the information they have provided is both accurate and complete as well as requiring, in the event their application for a bursary is successful, them to update the school in the event those circumstances change during the academic year in question. If any information provided in the application, or as part of the broader assessment process, is subsequently discovered to be false or misleading or incomplete, the

school may withdraw any award which has been made with immediate effect and, depending on the circumstances may require reimbursement. The school may also terminate its Terms and Conditions and require the removal of the child in such circumstances.

**Step two** - the Head of Finance or their nominee assesses all applications to establish the likely level of support which will be required to allow the child to attend the school. This may involve a representative of the school visiting the parents' home(s) to ensure the information has been correctly interpreted and the basis of the financial assessment has been fair. Parents may also be asked to meet the Head or their nominee at the school and/or provide additional supporting information as may be requested.

**Step three** - the Head of Finance or their nominee prepares a recommendation which is presented to the Bursary Committee for approval. The Bursary Committee may request further information to inform their deliberations.

**Step four - end of February.** The parents are advised whether their child is to be offered a place at the school and of the bursary offer.

**Step five** – both parents are then required to sign a letter accepting the place at the school and an acknowledgement agreeing to any additional terms and conditions relating to the bursary.

**All personal data processed in connection with the school's arrangements for bursaries shall be processed in accordance with the school's privacy policy which is available on the school's website and is otherwise available from the school upon request.**

### **The Case for Assistance**

The Committee will consider a number of factors when making the judgement as to the justification for support and the extent of such support; inevitably this is a holistic judgment. 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 their assessment results in accordance with the school's published entry criteria. Bursary funds are limited and those judged most suitable will be given priority as those likely to gain most from the school's educational provision. Each pupil to whom support is offered must, in the opinion of the Head, be likely to make good 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. Previous school reports will be consulted for evidence of the pupil's attainment, progress and behaviour.

**Financial limitations** - the amount of the bursary award is not influenced by the child's academic ability but by the extent of need. Each case is assessed on its own merits and awards are made subject to the school's ability to fund these 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 (but are not limited to):

- The ability to improve the financial position or earning power of each parent. 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 property assets.
- Joint income level is less than £70,000 pa (gross);
- In cases of parents who are divorced or separated, the contribution that is being made or could be made by both parents, regardless of who the child lives with, and based on the principle that liability for the fees is joint and several. This means that the school may consider the financial circumstances of each parent separately and together, treating each parent's household separately.
- The number of school aged children in the household.
- Contribution to household costs including school fees by other family members, any adults unrelated to the child or by third parties / outside sources.
- Any fees which are being paid to other schools (or universities).

Acknowledging that others might have a different view, the school considers that the following would not be consistent with the receipt of a bursary. It should be noted that the list is not comprehensive:

- frequent or expensive holidays;
- [new or] luxury cars;
- investment in significant home improvements;
- a second property/land holdings;
- failure to honour school fee payments to other schools.

Other factors - it is recognised that, in addition to meeting academic requirements and financial constraints, there may be other circumstances which should be considered as part of the school's holistic judgment. These include:

- Where a child has siblings at the school (though a bursary award to one child does not guarantee an award to a sibling).
- Where the social needs of the child are relevant (for example, where a child is suffering from bullying at their present school).
- Where a parent is critically or terminally ill or is unable to secure permanent employment due to poor health or incapacity.
- Where a separation has resulted or is likely to result in the child having to be withdrawn from the school, adding to the stress of coping with the parents separating, although the school will nonetheless consider the financial circumstances of both parents in such cases.
- Where a previous school has awarded bursary support (but please note that bursary support from a previous school is no indication or guarantee that the parents would be eligible for bursary support at [name of school]).

## Confidentiality

The School respects the confidentiality of bursary awards made to families and recipients are expected to do likewise. The School reserves the right to withdraw the bursary should this clause be breached.

## 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. Leweston 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 Director of Business Strategy and Operations or from the Independent Schools Educational Grants Advice helpline 01932 865619. A list of some of these, although not comprehensive, is below.

- Educational Grants Advice: [www.isc.co.uk/schools/information-for-parents/fee-assistance-and-bursaries](http://www.isc.co.uk/schools/information-for-parents/fee-assistance-and-bursaries)
- The Educational Trust Forum: [www.educational-grants.org](http://www.educational-grants.org) Actors' Charitable Trust (industry link) 0207 636 7868
- ABF The Soldiers' Charity (forces link) 0845 241 4820
- BMTA (Years 9 & 10, unforeseen circumstances) 01372 210124
- Buttle UK (Years 7-11, single parents, adopted and cared-for children) 0207 828 7311  
Emmott Foundation (Years 12-13) 0115 937 6526
- Fashion & Textile Children's Trust (All ages, industry link) 0207 170 4117 Girls Day School Trust (Member Schools only) 0207 393 6666
- Haberdashers Company (Years 11 or 13) 0207 246 9988 Lloyd Foundation (living overseas) 01432 760409
- Mitchell City of London Educational Foundation (Years 12 Or 13, links to City of London) 01432 760409
- The NFL Trust (Age 11-18, Christian girls) Applications in writing Ousley Trust (choral Scholars) 01780 752266
- Reedham trust (All ages, boarding only) 0208 660 1461
- Royal Medical Foundation (medical professions) 01372 821010
- Royal National Children's foundation (All ages, single parent) 01932 868622 RN and RM Children's fund (Service link) 02392 639534
- Royal Pinner School Foundation (all ages, travelling sales link) 0207 373 6168 School Fees Charitable Trust (Years 11-13) 01306 746309
- Thornton Smith & Plevins (Years 12-13) 01582 611675
- Other trusts listed carry geographical or trade limitations
- Funderfinder: [www.funderfinder.org.uk](http://www.funderfinder.org.uk) This site gives useful information on the grant application process and provides links to a large number (1200+) of charities. Some of these are grant making, some support education, some are vocational



### **Vocational Trusts**

Welfare funding covering the Trades and Industries for which you or your partner may have worked may be relevant. For example, electrical engineers can use [www.eeiba.org/about.shtml](http://www.eeiba.org/about.shtml) or civil servants can use [www.scbf.org.uk](http://www.scbf.org.uk) If you have worked in a retail environment you may be eligible under the Fashion & Textile Children's Trust ([www.ftct.org.uk](http://www.ftct.org.uk)).

### **Geographical and Local Trusts**

Use your local Community Foundation to find out what is available in your area. Consider applying for Extras or Trips rather than fees. They may know what is available in your area.

Use your local library. In the Reference section you may find details of local trusts – ask your librarian. They may not cover school fees but may contribute in other ways.

Talk to your local vicar. S/he may be a trustee on one of the local Trusts.