

## BURSARY POLICY

### STATEMENT OF INTENT

**Our school offers a human-centred approach** where children can feel safe and be themselves and where relationships throughout the school community are valued and nurtured in a culture of mutual respect.

Our vision is to create a vibrant and diverse learning community, by forming genuine partnerships with parents and the wider community and cultivating in each child an openness to and appreciation of other world-views and identities. This policy is one way in which we can work towards achieving this vision.

As a school we value our independent status but recognise the inherent exclusivity of requiring families to pay fees. We are committed to the development of an inclusive school community and to providing financial assistance to families who would otherwise not be able to attend.

This policy should be read in conjunction with related policies and procedures, in particular our ***Equality Policy, Admission Policy and Finance Policies and Procedures***.

### 1. AIMS OF THE POLICY

1. To provide financial assistance to families within the school who are experiencing financial hardship
2. To provide fee remission to a proportion of new families entering the school who would otherwise not be able to attend
3. To support the development of an inclusive and diverse school community
4. To increase fee income across the school
5. To increase student numbers and improve student balance in target year groups
6. To identify and manage the financial risks associated with providing families with places at reduced cost
7. To identify and manage the risks to community relationships of providing families with places at reduced cost
8. To ensure bursaries and fee assistance opportunities are clearly communicated within and outside the school community
9. To ensure fair, transparent and accountable procedures for offering and reviewing bursaries and fee assistance
10. To ensure all parents, staff and governors involved in these procedures are clear of their roles and responsibilities

### 2. WHAT IS A BURSARY?

A bursary is a remission of fees, granted in response to parental financial need. Bursaries at Lewes New School are mean-tested, according to parents' income, assets and financial responsibilities.

Bursaries awarded vary according to need with a maximum 50% reduction of full fees available. All bursaries are subject to annual review and awards may change according to changes to a family's circumstances and/ or school circumstances.

All parents and prospective parents can apply for a bursary. If they are eligible and if the School is able to fund the bursary then it will be awarded.

### 3. THE BURSARY COMMITTEE

All bursaries are awarded by the Bursary Committee. This consists of the Head Teacher, a Governor and the Bursar.

If the Governor involved in the Bursary Committee has children at the school, their identity will remain confidential except to other members of the Committee.

The Committee will treat all Bursary applications as strictly confidential.

### 4. HOW ARE BURSARIES ALLOCATED?

#### 4.1 Priority

The school will always allocate bursaries in the following priority order:

1. Applications from existing parents experiencing financial hardship
2. Applications from prospective parents with children in year groups identified as in need (due to small student numbers or imbalance in the group)
3. Applications for children with younger siblings who also wish to attend the school
4. Applications for children in Later Years, in order to minimise financial risk to the school
5. Applications from parents in future reception year groups

#### 4.2 Allocation of bursary funds

The School does not receive additional funding for bursaries, but aims to allocate approximately 10% of core fee income across the school to supporting bursary places. This is because the School is committed to providing long-term support for families in need and relying on external funding would present too great a risk of withdrawal of funding.

The number of bursaries available in the school will vary depending on the amount of support each family in receipt of a bursary is eligible for. However, normally no more than two bursaries per year group are available.

However, in the event that a particular year group has experienced severe student losses, particularly if that loss has resulted in a gender imbalance or other imbalance that is perceived to be affecting the healthy functioning of the group, or to be making it difficult to recruit new students to the group, additional bursaries may be offered. The School will carefully weigh up the impact on staffing and on year groups immediately above and below the targeted year group before offering additional bursaries.

The school will always seek to retain a space for a full fee-paying child in any year group.

## 5. PROCEDURE FOR APPLYING FOR A BURSARY

1. Parents wishing to apply for a bursary should request a Confidential Statement of Financial Circumstances form from the Bursar.
2. **Prospective parents:** The Bursar will be able to offer guidance regarding whether or not bursary places are available in the relevant year group, and if appropriate will issue a form.  
**Existing parents:** The Bursar will issue a form in all cases.
3. Parents complete the form and send it to the Bursar in a sealed envelope (marked 'confidential') along with copies of all financial records requested on the form.
4. The Bursar will calculate parental resources by reviewing income, assets, and financial responsibilities and make a recommendation to the Bursary Committee.
5. The Bursary Committee will meet to consider the recommendation alongside any extraneous or compassionate circumstances (eg divorce, redundancy, siblings in school, contribution to school life), and the class/ year group size and balance.
6. Parents will be invited to meet with the Head to discuss the bursary offer, within three weeks of receiving an application.

### 5.1 Application deadlines

Existing parents may apply for a bursary at any time if there has been a significant change in financial circumstances since joining the school.

Bursary applications for all year groups *except Reception* can also be considered at any time.

Bursary applications for the start of the following Reception year will only normally be considered in the Spring Term of the preceding year.

## 6. REVIEWING BURSARIES

All bursaries are awarded for one academic year with effect from the date of the Bursary Agreement, or from September in the case of new families joining the school in Reception.

Bursaries are reviewed annually. Following the first year of a bursary being awarded all bursaries will be reviewed and awarded in line with the academic year. Families may be required to complete a further Confidential Statement of Financial Circumstances at Easter before a bursary is awarded to commence the following September.

All bursaries are awarded in the understanding that parents will inform the school **immediately** of any change in circumstances that may affect their ability to pay.

## 7. RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE SCHOOL

The school recognises the importance of clear and regular communication with all families

in need of support, and acknowledges the need for sensitivity in all dialogue relating to their circumstances.

The school is committed to providing long-term support for families where needed and will endeavor to provide that support for as long as is deemed necessary by the family's individual circumstances.

The school will provide a minimum of one term's notice to any changes any rate of fees.

The school adheres to absolute confidentiality around all financial agreements and bursaries.

## 8. RESPONSIBILITIES OF PARENTS

Parents are expected to apply for a bursary as a last resort. The School does not receive additional funding for bursaries so any remission of fees is paid for directly by the contributions of other parents. Parents should seek financial support from all other potential sources before approaching the School.

If fees are to be paid by a third party (such as a grandparent) the sponsor must complete the Confidential Statement of Financial Circumstances.

Parents must provide full and honest information about their circumstances at the request of the School, and must inform the School immediately of any changes to their circumstances that could affect their ability to pay fees.

Parents are required to treat all information regarding their bursary as strictly confidential.

## 9. WORKING IN LIEU OF FEES

The School is not currently able to support requests from parents to work for the School in lieu of payment of fees. Fees are required to cover the core teaching costs of the School which are not offset by work in other areas.

However, there are many ways in which parents can make an active contribution to school life and this is strongly encouraged.

## 10. INFORMATION

### PUBLICISING THIS POLICY

Lewes New School makes its policies and procedures available to all parents of children and of prospective children on the school's website and in the school office.

On completion or review, all policies and procedures are communicated to all staff (teaching

and support staff) and are linked to the induction of all new staff.

## MONITORING THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE POLICY

The Head Teacher and Bursar will consider all bursary offers and determine whether the policy and procedure used was appropriate and whether they can be improved. A report of the effectiveness of policy and practice will be reviewed by the Resources Committee of the Governing Body on a termly basis.

This policy will be reviewed and updated annually.