



## BRADFIELD COLLEGE BURSARY POLICY

### **Awareness**

The College is committed to publicising the existence of means-tested bursaries, including the availability of 100% bursaries. Information alerting parents/guardians of potential pupils to the possibility of means-tested support for fees, is therefore given through the following areas:

- The College prospectus
- The College website

As well as being available on the College website and in the prospectus, this policy statement is also available as a separately published document from the College's Admissions Office.

The College appreciates that the bursary policy and process may be unfamiliar to applicants. It is committed to helping applicants understand and follow the process. Parents/guardians who wish to apply for bursarial support are advised to contact the Headmaster for help and guidance.

### **Open Access**

Bradfield College is very aware that the contribution of its pupils holding bursaries has been significant in recent times. This contribution has been strong in both the academic and extra-curricular domains. The College is particularly proud that it attracts pupils from economically (and socially) disadvantaged backgrounds who successfully compete for scholarships, exhibitions and awards (with means-tested bursaries added), and then further boost their self esteem by their successful careers here. Equally, a number of pupils from similar backgrounds, who have satisfied the admissions criteria and who contribute to the life of the College without hitting the headlines, are granted means-tested bursaries to enable them to attend, although these funds are necessarily finite. Since the majority of these pupils would normally transfer to senior school at the end of Year 6 (age 11), whereas Bradfield College only admits at 13+ (Year 9) and 16+ (Year 12), the College aims to encourage, support and liaise with these families over a number of years. Reassurance to such families, that bursary help will be available should their child's application be successful, is crucial to the smooth management of the process. In such cases, the College tries to give an indication of the likely level of bursarial assistance in advance, although the actual sum is dependant on the financial constraints of the particular year of transfer to Bradfield.

The Council of Bradfield College is committed to broadening access to the College by offering to eligible parents/guardians financial support with the payment of College fees through the provision of Bursaries. Such bursaries are means-tested and, for parents on low incomes, may be a discount of up to 100% of tuition fees. The College is committed to helping talented boys and girls from all backgrounds to enjoy a Bradfield education.

Bursaries are awarded following a means-tested assessment of the applicants circumstances. The College will also take into account compassionate and other relevant circumstances in deciding on the level of support. Bursaries are awarded approximately six months before the start of the academic year to which the bursaries relate. Bursaries are subject to annual review and parents may be asked to provide updated financial information. The annual review may result in bursaries being varied upwards or downwards.

### **Categories of financial support**

Requests for financial support usually fall into four categories:

1. Applicants to the College, who have won a College Scholarship, Exhibition or another College Award, but their parents/guardians are unable to afford the full fees;
2. The equivalent of a full fee is offered each year to pupils from state maintained schools where their parents/guardians are unable to afford the full fees;
3. Existing pupils where a change in parents/guardians circumstances has resulted in difficulty in meeting the full fees and may result in the child being withdrawn part way through a stage of the Bradfield education;
4. Other applicants to the College who have not won a College Scholarship, Exhibition or Award, but whose parents/guardians are unable to afford the full fees.

Although the College's level of bursaries (as a percentage of fees) is higher than average for the senior boarding school sector, the Council allocates a fixed percentage of fees every year to bursaries. The total level of bursaries is therefore fixed and finite.

Applicants in categories 1 and 2 receive priority in the allocation of bursaries. Applicants in these two categories can therefore rely on receiving bursaries (in category 1 on top of the College Scholarship, Exhibition or Award) to a level of support which should enable the applicants to afford the fees. Up to 100% support is available for families on low incomes.

Applicants in categories 3 and 4 are considered after bursaries have been allocated to categories 1 and 2. Bursaries for categories 3 and 4 are allocated on an order of priority, defined below (in the section "the Consideration of Bursary Applications – Page 4) as decided by the College. The College will only be able to provide bursaries to a proportion of applicants before its bursary funds are exhausted. Applicants in categories 3 and 4 should not therefore assume or rely on that their application will be granted, as resources available for non-award holders are limited. The College always assists such families in forming a "Plan B" (a good alternative school) should the application to Bradfield not work out.

### **Decision making**

All bursaries are awarded at the discretion of the Council. The Headmaster and Bursar are responsible for the management of the process, and a review by the Finance and General Purpose Committee of the Governors at their summer meeting. The decision of the College is final and not subject to appeal.

## The Admissions Process

The bursary resources available to the College are distributed in the spring of the entry year. The fair allocation of the College's resources depends on transparency and making sure that the families applying for bursaries are in the appropriate admissions channel. Applicants for admission are asked to confirm in writing which of the following Admissions routes they would like to pursue. For those who go on to apply for Bursaries:-

1. They either pay the Final Entry Fee and pursue a House place, but with the College's knowledge that they will need financial assistance,  
  
or
2. They pay the Final Entry Fee for a reserved Headmaster's Place on the Bradfield List. In this case applicants are uncertain about affording the full fees, and would only realistically be able to take up a place should the pupil win a College Scholarship, Exhibition or Award. The Headmaster's Place would be on a central list, and the Headmaster would allocate the pupil a House in the June before entry. If the pupil was unsuccessful in winning a College Scholarship, Exhibition or Award then the entry fee would be fully refunded if the applicants decided to send the pupil to another school. Since the bursary allocation would not be confirmed until the spring before the date of entry, families are advised to have a "Plan B".

## The Bursary Application Process

- Step one:**        **Before 17 March of the year of entry.**        Parents/guardians seeking a bursary are required to complete a "Confidential Statement of Financial Circumstances". This Statement requests details of income and capital and must be accompanied by full documentary evidence. Blank copies of the Statement of Financial Circumstances can be obtained from the Headmaster. The completed Statements and supporting documentary evidence must be submitted to the Headmaster no later than 17 March in any calendar year for bursaries to start in September at the beginning of the academic year. Statements of Financial Circumstances submitted after 17 March will not normally be considered.
- Step two:**        The Bursar assesses the Confidential Statements of Financial Circumstances from all applicants for bursaries, in order to establish the likely level of support which will be required in order to allow the prospective pupil to attend the College. This may involve the Bursar, or his representative, meeting with or talking to the parents/guardian to ensure that the information has been correctly interpreted and the basis of the financial assessment has been fair.
- Step three:**        The College makes a decision on the level of bursarial support to be offered, based on the Bursar's assessment and after discussion with the Headmaster.
- Step four:**        **By 31 March.**        Parents/guardians are advised of the bursary offer. They are asked to reply indicating acceptance of this offer, including any conditions relating to the bursary, and confirming their acceptance of the place at Bradfield.

Parents/guardians will be normally given 14 days to accept any bursary offer. The College appreciates that occasionally the offer might be less than the parent/guardian was hoping for and that the parent/guardian might need to consider carefully before accepting. However, if the parent/guardian does not accept the bursary offer within 14 days, the College has the right to withdraw the offer and may do so in order to support applicants whose bursary applications were not initially successful.

### **The Consideration of Bursary Applications**

If the relevant criteria are met and resources are available, the College will process applications in Categories 1 and 2 as a priority. A number of factors do come into consideration 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 College is the first consideration in granting support.

#### *Suitability*

In assessing a child's suitability, attention will be given to the College's assessment of each applicant, with potential also being considered as well as current achievement. Bursary funds are limited and those judged most suitable will be given priority as those likely to gain most from the well-rounded educational provision and contributing ethos of a Bradfield education.

#### *Financial need*

The amount of bursary award 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 funds the College has available for bursaries. The College 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 unable to be through incapacity or the need to care for children under College age or other dependants;
- Opportunities to release any capital: significant capital savings and investments would be expected to be used for the payment of College fees, as would equity values in houses. Second property/land holdings would also be an opportunity to release capital;
- In cases of separation: the contribution made by the absent parent; or the contribution which the absent parent could be expected to make towards the child's education;
- Contribution to household cost by other, wider, family members, and any adults unrelated to the child or by outside sources;
- Where fees are being paid to others schools (or universities) the College's grant will take into account all these outgoings.

#### *Other factors*

It is recognised that, in addition to academic ability, contribution to the life of the College, and financial constraints, there may be other circumstances which should be considered. These include:

- The social and economic needs (and background) of the child;
- Where the current educational provision does not fulfil the child's needs/abilities;
- Where a parent/guardian is terminally ill or is unable to secure permanent employment due to poor health;

- Where a child has siblings at the College;
- Where a parental separation has resulted in the possibility of the child having to be withdrawn from the College, adding to the stress of coping with the parents/guardians separating;
- Where a parent/guardian is a member of the Clergy. Bradfield is a Church of England foundation;
- Where a parent/guardian is a serving member of H M Forces;
- Where a parent/guardian is an Old Bradfieldian. Bradfield College regards itself as an extended family, and is supportive of OBs' desire to educate their children at Bradfield.

### **All these applications are means-tested**

#### **Availability for parents/guardians with low incomes**

For many years the College has encouraged and welcomed applications from parents/guardians with low incomes. As indicated above, there are two ways in which the College can financially assist parents/guardians on low income.

1. If the pupil wins a College Scholarship, Exhibition or Award the College will provide automatic bursarial augmentation up to a total award of 100% of tuition fees
2. The parent can apply for a bursary (the equivalent of a full fee is available each year) reserved for pupils from state maintained schools. Bursaries up to 100% of fees are available.

Pupils receiving bursaries are not in any way treated differently from other pupils. They are fully integrated into one of the College's boarding houses. However the College does pay particular attention to ensuring that pupils from the state maintained sector are settled and happy. Bradfield sees partnership with its families as key to the high level of its Pastoral Care.

#### **Annual review**

All bursary awards are subject to an annual review, which may require a repeat testing of parental means, and may be varied upwards or downwards depending on parental circumstances. For those in receipt of bursaries, the Headmaster and Bursar have the discretion to recommend to the Council 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 College, for example by the late payment of the contribution they are making to the fees.

#### **Confidentiality**

The College respects the confidentiality of bursary awards made to families and recipients are expected to do likewise.

## **What happens once your son/daughter has been awarded a means-tested bursary at Bradfield College:**

1. The College devotes considerable time, energy and staff time to helping the recipients of means-tested bursaries make a smooth and seamless transition to school life at Bradfield College. Even though the highest quality pastoral care is a well known feature of Bradfield life, the College recognises that the boarding element, the high level of commitment expected in extra-curricular activities and the long school days might seem initially challenging: the College has systems of tutorial support and “buddy” pairings with existing pupils to overcome this. The friendly atmosphere created by the strong sense of community amongst staff and pupils helps with some natural nerves: the College runs specific induction programmes for new pupils at Lower Sixth Level and for entrants at Year 9 (Faulkner’s level) the whole concept of Faulkner’s (Bradfield’s state-of-the-art Boarding house) as a pupil-friendly and focused transition from “old” school to “new” helps the process of settling in and belonging,
2. Subject to good conduct and academic progress on the pupil’s part, the College is 100% committed to the maintenance of the means-tested awards for the complete duration of a pupil’s time at Bradfield. That means for five years from entering Faulkner’s, or for two years following Sixth Form entry. Families are asked to confirm each year whether their financial position has changed, but has budgeted to maintain the bursary in normal circumstances at that level for the whole of the pupil’s career here. Should a family’s financial position worsen, then the College would seek to extend its support, subject to available resources,
3. Bradfield College is not a school where there should be significant extras on the pupil’s bill: the College aims to guide families receiving means-tested bursaries to keep such extras to a minimum. Families receiving such means-tested bursaries are encouraged to apply for financial help from the Headmaster should their sons/daughters want to go on a special school trip/sports tour abroad/take up a special activity,
4. Families in receipt of a means-tested bursary should budget about £400 to buy the school uniform, although there are some items which can be bought second hand. Should there be a need, the College will help in this respect,
5. Bradfield College has supported pupils with significant means-tested bursaries for a long time: there is a tradition of this here: this record gives confidence to applicants,
6. The whole ethos of Bradfield comes back to the theme that it is a “normal”, balanced and un showy school, one where hard-working, down-to-earth and unpretentious parents send their children: it is easy to fit in and feel welcome.

## **100% bursaries: protocol for dealing with extras and other financial pressures on parents or guardians of pupils on 100% bursaries.**

1. At the time of awarding the 100% bursary, the College will discuss with the parents or guardians the likely level of extras and agree with them the contributions which it is reasonable for the parents to make.
2. If the parents or guardians cannot reasonably be expected to pay any extras, or pay for school uniform, the College will agree to fund these items over and above the 100% bursary.
3. The College may, at the Headmaster’s discretion, waive or reduce the College’s normal entry fee.

4. If the pupil excels at particular skills or activities, for which participation in College organised trips would be advantageous, the pupil's place on these trips may, at the Headmaster's discretion, be funded by the College.
5. All 100% bursary-holders will be made members of the Old Bradfieldian Society, without payment of the normal subscription.
6. Extras bills for 100% bursary holders will be reviewed by the pupil's Housemaster/mistress before they are despatched to the parents or guardians. This will help ensure that the extras are consistent with the agreement between them and the College and that the extras bills do not contain unexpected items which will cause concern or worry to parents or guardians.

### **Glossary**

The Headmaster

The Bursar

The Council

Bursaries

Scholarships, Exhibitions & Awards

Bradfield College

Simon Henderson MA

Trefor Llewellyn BA FCA

The Governors

Means-tested financial grants for Bradfield families

Academic, All-Rounder, Sport, Art, Music, Drama and Design Awards

13-18 coeducational boarding school

01.09.11