



## 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 Bursar 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, thereby qualifying for means-tested bursaries, 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 dependent 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 15 October of the year prior to entry** (eg 15 October of Year 8 or Year 11). 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 Bursar. Statements of Financial Circumstances submitted after 15 October 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. In the majority of applications, the College employs a third-party firm, Bursary Administration Limited (BAL), to conduct the process of the means inquiry – this will involve a meeting with the fee-payer(s) and the gathering of all the relevant financial information that will be relied upon by the College in the consideration of the application for fee assistance. BAL are market-leaders in the sector and all information is subject to strict policies and procedures relating to confidentiality and data protection.

**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.

### *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 a member of the teaching profession;
- 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**

### *Financial limitations*

Since the College receives more bursary applications than funds available, the College as a charity has a fiduciary duty to ensure that all bursary awards are well focused and justified. It is a matter of personal judgement about what sacrifices a family should make to pay the College's fees. However in assessing the level of bursary awards, the College will consider other factors, as well as current earnings, including:

- The ability to improve the financial position or earning power for the family. Where there are two partners, both would be expected to be employed unless one is prevented from doing so, through for example incapacity.
- Opportunities to release any capital. Significant capital savings and investments would be expected to be used for the payment of school fees, as would significant equity values in houses.

- In cases of separation, the contribution made by the absent parent, or the contribution which could reasonably be expected from the absent parent.
- Contribution to household costs by other, wider, family members, any adults unrelated to the child or by outside sources.
- The College considers that the following, as examples, would not be consistent with the receipt of a bursary award, and would certainly influence the level of any bursary award:
  - Frequent or expensive holidays
  - New luxury cars
  - Investment in significant home improvements
  - A second property or land holding

### 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.

### Glossary

The Headmaster	Dr Christopher Stevens MA DPhil
The Bursar	Patrick Burrowes LLB
The Council	The Governors
Bursaries	Means-tested financial grants for Bradfield families
Scholarships, Exhibitions & Awards	Academic, Music, Dr Gray All-Rounder Exhibition, Sport, Art and Design, and Performing Arts Exhibitions
Bradfield College	Coeducational boarding and day school 13 - 18