



**MAGDALEN COLLEGE SCHOOL
OXFORD**

FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE WITH FEES

**MAGDALEN COLLEGE SCHOOL BURSARY
SCHEME**

September 2017

Introduction

1. The Governors of Magdalen College School, Oxford (MCS) are committed to ensuring that pupils who would benefit from an education at MCS are not excluded from entering the School for financial reasons. The Governors offer financial support towards the payment of School fees to eligible parents/guardians/carers. Such support is known as a “bursary”. Most bursary awards are from the “School Governors’ Bursary Scheme” but some awards are funded by separately named trusts controlled by the School (see section 7 below).
2. A bursary is usually awarded in the form of a discount on tuition fees payable. The amount of the bursary awarded is dependent on the financial and other personal circumstances of applicants. The maximum amount of bursary that may be awarded is 100% of tuition fees (but see section 8 below).
3. The School has charitable status and the Governors wish to ensure that the limited pool of available funds is used prudently to support parents/guardians/carers who otherwise would not be able to send their son or daughter to the School. Whilst every effort will be made to provide support, there are limits on the resources available to provide such help. The number of awards made is dependent on the funds that are available at the time. There should be no expectation that assistance with tuition fees will be forthcoming on an automatic basis.
4. A bursary may be awarded to a pupil entering the School (that is, a pupil who has satisfied the academic criteria for admission to the School) whose parents/guardians/carers are of limited financial means. Separate hardship awards may be made available to a pupil already in the School whose parents/guardians/carers (or other fee payers) suffer financial hardship. The assessment process for both types of award follows a similar pattern.
5. Bursaries awarded on admission to the School are made on the basis of information supplied with the initial application for support and are subject to repeat testing of means annually. Each year they may be varied upwards or downwards, depending on circumstances. Bursary holders will be issued with repeat means-testing forms during the month of December each year for return by the end of January.
6. In assessing the means of parents/guardians/carers factors that may be taken into account include investments and realisable assets, savings, ownership of property (including the family home), size of family, number of dependent persons and other similar factors. Family income is also taken into account. All sources of income (employment, investment, contributions from the wider family and third parties, etc.) are taken into consideration. A home visit from a representative of the School may be made to discuss the assessment, at the time of the initial application and during subsequent reassessments.
7. For the most part awards of bursaries are described as “Governors’ Bursaries”. A small number of bursaries are supported from specifically designated funds, and awards of these bursaries bear the name of the relevant fund or the donor.
8. Consideration will be given to those awarded a full fee bursary receiving a grant towards certain “extras” which are directly related to attendance at MCS (see Annex A).

9. As a rule, bursaries will not be offered to pupils on admission to the Junior School. Junior School pupils may be considered for hardship awards if, being already in the School, their parents/guardians/carers (or other fee payers) suffer financial hardship (see section 4 above). At the other end of the scale priority for hardship awards may be given to pupils in their GCSE or A-level (A2) year.

Criteria for making an award

10. The School does not have inexhaustible funds for bursaries and the Governors will try consistently to apply the following criteria in making awards.

i. Academic ability:

The decision to award a bursary, and the amount of the bursary award, is not influenced by the level of the academic ability of the child but by the extent of the financial need. That said, a bursary will not be given to any pupil who has not met the academic standard required for admission to the School. Each pupil to whom support is offered must, in the opinion of the Master, be likely to make sound academic progress following admission and possess the potential to develop the quality of their work, and benefit from participation in the wider, extra-curricular activities on offer at the School.

ii. Financial Limitations:

Each case is assessed on its own merits and awards are made accordingly, subject to the School's ability to fund these within the context of its overall budget.

The principal measures of eligibility for a bursary are

- family assets
- family income

The School uses a sliding scale to relate bursary awards to these two criteria.

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 properly focused on cases of greatest need. Therefore the following factors are taken into consideration:

- 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 houses.
- In cases of separation, the contribution made by the absent parent/guardian/carer (see also section 11 below).
- Contribution to household costs by other members of the wider family, by other adults unrelated to the child, or by outside sources
- Where siblings are at other fee paying schools or places of education, it would be expected that those organisations were offering bursaries of a similar value to that being offered by MCS.
- 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 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.

This list is indicative but is not exhaustive.

MCS considers that the following would not be consistent with the receipt of a bursary:

- Frequent and/or expensive holidays.
- New or luxury cars.
- Investment in significant home improvements.
- A second property or land holdings.

This list is indicative but is not exhaustive.

iii. Other Factors:

MCS recognises that in making decisions about bursary awards there may be other circumstances which should be considered. The following examples are indicative but not exhaustive:

- Where an applicant has siblings at the School.
- Where the social needs of the child are relevant.
- Where a parent/guardian/carer is terminally ill or is unable to secure permanent employment due to poor health.

Separated Parents/Guardians/Carers

- 11.**
 - i.** MCS recognises that family separation can be a painful process for all members of a family and may be particularly stressful for children. The School values the quality of its pastoral care and does not wish to increase the pressure that pupils may suffer as a consequence of parental separation or divorce. At the same time the School reminds parents of the commitment (which in most cases will be a joint commitment) that they have made to pay School fees and expects that joint commitment to be honoured in the event of separation or divorce. Separation or divorce is not of itself likely to be sufficient to prompt the award of a bursary.
 - ii.** The School recognises that the financial arrangements of and between parents/guardian/carers who live separately can be complex. However, in general, the financial circumstances of both parents/guardians/carers of an applicant will be assessed, and both assessments will inform the decision as to whether or not an award will be made.
 - iii.** If either of an applicant's parents, guardians or carers are absent, the School will decide to what extent the absent parent's/guardian's/carer's financial circumstances should be assessed.
 - iv.** In all situations, the financial information collected from each parent/guardian/carer will be kept confidential and will not be disclosed to the second parent/guardian/carer without explicit consent.

The Application and Reapplication Process

12. i. New Applications

Parents/guardians/carers of new pupils should apply for a bursary at the same time as they confirm that their son or daughter will sit the entrance examination, usually 31st October each year. It should be noted that if parents/guardians/carers do not apply for a bursary at the time they confirm that their son or daughter is to sit the entrance examination it is unlikely that they will be awarded a bursary as the School cannot reserve funds for award at a later stage. Parents/guardians/carers seeking a bursary are required to complete a means testing form in support of the application to establish the financial circumstances of the household. The form, which requests details of assets and income, must be accompanied by full documentary evidence. The deadline for the return of the means testing form is the end of November.

Reapplications

Parents/guardians/carers who are already in receipt of bursaries and who wish to have that bursary renewed for a future year, must apply annually for renewal of the bursary in the preceding year (see section 13 below). The deadline for the return of the means testing form is 31st January of the academic year preceding that for which the bursary is to apply.

- ii. All bursary applications will be assessed by the Bursar and colleagues in order to establish the likely level of support required to enable the child to attend the School. It should be noted that this may involve a representative of the School visiting the parents'/guardians'/carers' home to ensure that the information has been correctly interpreted and that the basis of the financial assessment has been fair.

The School will endeavour to advise applicants of the **likely** outcome of their application for a bursary as early as possible and before the child takes the School admissions test. However the School will not be able to **confirm** the outcome of a bursary application until after all decisions on admission to the School have been made and the demand for bursaries is known. Notification of the likely outcome of a bursary application must be regarded as a provisional indication of a bursary award only, and is not binding on the School. Notification of the likely outcome of a bursary application is not an indication that the child is to be offered a place in the School.

- iii. Once the child's academic suitability for entry into the School has been assessed by the Master and colleagues, the parents/guardians/carers will be advised whether their child is to be offered a place at the School, whether or not a bursary will be available and confirmation of the amount of that bursary.
- iv. Parents/guardians/carers are required to sign a form accepting the place at the School. This form provides information as to who will be taking responsibility for the payment of fees and other sums to the School. Separately parents/guardians/carers are required to sign a Bursary Acceptance Form agreeing to any conditions relating to the bursary.
- v. The standard level of deposit required to secure a place at the School is £500. Parents/guardians/carers awarded a bursary are required to provide a deposit reduced by the level of the bursary award, with a minimum deposit payable of £100. (For example, a pupil awarded a 60% bursary would pay a deposit of £200; those receiving a bursary worth in excess of 80% of fees will pay £100.)

13. Annual Review

- i.** All bursary awards are subject to repeat testing of means each year and may be varied upwards or downwards depending on circumstances. Bursary holders will be issued with repeat means-testing forms during December each year for return by the end of January and the process of reassessment may include a home visit.
- ii.** For those previously in receipt of bursaries the level of bursary offered in subsequent years may be increased or reduced, dependant on changes in the family's financial circumstances. Additionally the School has the discretion to recommend to the Governors 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/carers have failed to support the School, for example: late payment by the parents/guardians/carers of their share of the fees or other monies due to the School; or other failure to comply with the behaviour expected by the School and described in Annex B.

14. Confidentiality

The School respects the confidentiality of bursary awards made to families and recipients are expected to do likewise. Breach of confidentiality may result in the termination of the bursary award.

15. Terms and Conditions

Once parents/guardians/carers accept the offer of a bursary award they will be required to sign a copy of the Bursary Acceptance Form attached herewith.

16. Other Sources of Bursary Assistance

- i.** 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.
- ii.** MCS encourages parents/guardians/carers 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:

Educational Grants Advice
Independent Schools Council
c/o Royal National Children's Foundation
Sandy Lane
Cobham Surrey KT11 2ES

Tel. No. 01932 865619 (between 09:00 and 11:00)

Website: www.rncf.org.uk

The Educational Trusts Forum

Website: www.educational-grants.org

ANNEX A to 'Financial Assistance with Fees for New Applicants'

Financial Assistance with Extras

Grants towards the following extras, which are directly related to attendance at MCS, will be considered for those awarded a full fee bursary receiving a grant:

- uniform and sports equipment
- school lunches
- field trips which are part of the curriculum
- public examination entry fees

Uniform and Sports Equipment

Pupils attending MCS are expected to wear the designated school uniform as set out in the Red Diary and on the website. For those on a full fee bursary a grant of £300 will be made at the beginning of the pupil's first term at the School to assist with the purchase of the school uniform. A further grant of £100 will be made in the following September and each year thereafter until the pupil either leaves the School or enters the School's Sixth Form.

School Lunches

New pupils are expected to take school lunches in the Dining Hall for at least the first term. If the pupil is on a full fee bursary the School will meet the cost of school lunches; however, items purchased at breakfast or morning break will be charged to the pupil's account.

Field Trips which are part of the Curriculum

Throughout their time at the School pupils will be expected to attend various field trips which are an essential part of the curriculum for that subject.

For those on a full fee bursary a grant of not more than 50% of the cost will be made to cover the expenses of any travel and accommodation required as a result of the trip. The Head of Department will decide whether or not a trip is a requirement of the curriculum.

Public Examination Entry Fees

The fees for public examinations, which are part of the School curriculum, will be met by the School, providing the pupil is on a full fee bursary.

The cost of any examination for which a pupil enters but which is not part of the School curriculum will be debited to the pupil's account.

ANNEX B to ‘Financial Assistance with Fees for New Applicants’

Bursary Terms and Conditions

1. Grant of Bursary

A bursary is granted at the sole discretion of Magdalen College School, Oxford.

2. Annual Review

All means-tested awards are subject to annual review and parents/guardians/carers shall each year be required to complete a financial means questionnaire. After any annual review, the School reserves the right to vary the value of the bursary with immediate effect and will confirm the new value in writing to the parents/guardians/carers.

3. Withdrawal of the Bursary

The bursary may be withdrawn by written notice sent to the parents/guardians/carers from the Governors. In particular it should be noted that failure to comply with the School’s standard Terms and Conditions, including the prompt payment of monies owed to the School, may lead to withdrawal of bursary support, and attention is drawn to paragraph 11 in ‘Financial Assistance with Fees: Magdalen College School Bursary Scheme’ regarding the joint commitment of parents to meet financial obligations to the School .

4. Repayment of the Bursary

The parents/guardians/carers will be required to repay all or part of the bursary if it is terminated in the following circumstances:

- a. if the parents/guardians/carers knowingly or recklessly provided false or inaccurate information about their financial position;
- b. if the pupil has been found to have committed a serious breach, or series of persistent minor breaches, of discipline for which the sanction would normally be expulsion or required removal.

Tim Knowles
Bursar
September 2017



Magdalen College School, Oxford

BURSARY ACCEPTANCE FORM

Please return this form to the Bursar:

Mr Tim Knowles, Bursar, Magdalen College School, Oxford, OX4 1DZ

I / We accept the offer of a bursary on behalf of as set out in the letter from the Bursar dated

I / We agree to abide by the Bursary Terms and Conditions stated in Annex B of the 'Financial Assistance with Fees: Magdalen College School Bursary Scheme'.

Parent/Guardian/Carer

Relationship to pupil

Date

Parent/Guardian/Carer

Relationship to pupil

Date