

The King Alfred School

Bursary and Financial Support Policy

General

King Alfred School offers financial support, in the form of means tested bursaries and exceptional temporary support, in order to make the benefit of KAS education more accessible to all children.

Requests for support may fall into two categories:

- Bursary awards to students entering Middle School or Sixth Form, where a place has been offered in accordance with the school's admissions policy but parents/guardians are unable to fund the full tuition fees.
- Temporary support for existing KAS students where an unanticipated and exceptional change in family circumstances has caused such difficulty in meeting tuition fees that the child may have to be withdrawn part way through a stage of education.

Separate budgets are provided for each category. Budgetary availability will be taken into account during the school's annual review of the number and value of bursaries that may be considered.

What will the financial support cover?

Both categories of support will be given in the form of discounts on school fees. The awards and the level of discount will depend primarily on the recipient families' means but may also take into account compassionate or other relevant circumstances.

In the most exceptional cases an award may also provide a contribution towards the cost of curricular extras, such as trips and textbooks.

What are the criteria for offering financial support?

Awards will be determined on the basis of individual parents'/guardians' income and other circumstances e.g. their savings, investments and saleable assets, the size of their family, any other dependents, etc. Further details about this are given below. It is expected that most awards will provide discounts ranging from 50% to 100% of fees.

Who will be eligible to apply for a bursary?

Bursary applications will be considered for students who are offered places in Year 7 or Year 12, in accordance with the school's normal criteria. Applications are equally welcome

for those who are already KAS students and for those applying from outside the school. Awards will be offered for the remainder of the student's career at KAS.

If funds remain available after consideration of Year 7 and Year 12 applications, bursaries may be considered for students applying for casual vacancies in Middle or Upper School

All bursary awards are subject to annual repeat means testing of and may be varied upwards or downwards depending on parental circumstances.

It is emphasized that a significant change to the level of award, particularly downward, will only occur if there has been a substantial change in the family's circumstances. It would not be the school's intention for small increases in income or assets to be eliminated by an increase in fees payable to the school.

However, any bursary award is subject to timely payment by parents or guardians of their contribution to fees. Awards may be withdrawn if such payment is not made. Parents who encounter difficulties should contact the Bursar without delay.

Following future reviews of this policy, bursaries may, at some stage, be extended to Lower School.

What is the bursary application process?

Bursaries are awarded at the discretion of Council. The Bursar is responsible for the management and coordination of the process. Offers of a place in the school and of a bursary are separate matters and are treated accordingly. Academic staff who consider admissions are not involved in consideration of bursaries. The school's normal admissions policy therefore applies to all applicants.

Prospective parents are invited to indicate at an early stage (in the case of Year 7 this will generally be 16 months before admission) whether they expect to apply for a bursary. Those who do will receive bursary application forms at the same time as their children are invited for a visit (Sixth Form) or assessment (Year 7). Whenever possible, initial consideration will be given to the bursary application and parents given an indication before the visit or assessment as to whether a bursary is likely or not. This will enable them to consider whether to proceed with the visit or assessment.

In some cases it will not be possible to carry out the initial consideration of the bursary application before the visit or assessment. In these cases parents should be aware that attendance for the visit and any offer of a place gives no indication whatsoever whether or not a bursary will be offered.

The Bursary application form includes financial information and space for other relevant information. The Bursar may ask to meet the parents, in school or at their home, and will request any supporting documentation and additional information that may be required. Parents may also find it helpful to have an initial discussion with the Bursar before submitting an application.

Any bursary offered will be confirmed to parents by the Bursar at the same time as a place is offered or as soon afterwards as possible.

The Registrar and Bursar manage the detailed procedures necessary to facilitate the process described above.

For how long would temporary support apply?

Temporary financial support may be considered for an existing KAS student where an exceptional change in family circumstances causes such difficulty in meeting the fees that the child might have to be withdrawn part way through a stage of education. Each award will be considered in the light of the family's particular circumstances and the educational stage reached. Awards will generally enable the student to complete a school year or, where appropriate, a particular stage of education (e.g. GCSE).

Applications will be considered on the same basis as applications for bursaries, taking into account family means and other circumstances. Repeat means testing will apply in the same way as for bursary awards.

Further support, subject to circumstances and budget availability, or the grant of a bursary if the student is eligible might be considered on expiry of the temporary support.

What is taken into account in considering financial support?

The amount of an award is not influenced by a child's ability but by the extent of need. 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 what is viable and the School's budget. It is recognized that judgments 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 taking into account current earnings (net of tax, national insurance, mortgage interest and/or rent), consideration will be given to:

- The family's ability to improve its financial position or earning power. 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 dependants, or the requirements of their partner's work.
- The realizable value of savings, investments and other assets.
- The value of the family home and the amount of equity that can be viably released.
- In cases of separation, any maintenance payments that must be paid or received or any contributions to school fees that may reasonably be expected from the absent parent.
- Contributions to household costs by members of the extended family, any adults unrelated to the child or by outside sources.
- Fees paid to other schools (or universities) and the support applied for and received from those institutions.
- Contributions to fees from extended family and other sources, noting that the School would expect parents to apply to external grant giving bodies where possible. The Bursar can give advice about possible grant giving organizations.

- The School considers that the following would not normally be consistent with the receipt of a bursary:
 - Frequent or expensive holidays.
 - New or luxury cars.
 - Investment in significant home improvements.
 - A second property/land holdings.

Confidentiality

The School respects the confidentiality of financial support given to families and recipients are expected to do likewise.

Communication

The availability of bursaries will be published in or with the prospectus, in advertisements and on the website. The policy will be available from the Registrar and from the website.