

Section 3.14 - SCHOLARSHIP AND BURSARY AWARDS POLICY

Last reviewed	March 2024
Review cycle	1 year

Issue Control		
Date of next review	Comment	Ownership
March 2025		Director of Finance & Resources

Introduction

Frensham Heights School (“The School”) is a registered charity (Charity Number: 312052) that is committed to providing significant public benefit. The School has a long history of providing financial assistance to students and their families. It is aware of its obligations under the Charities Act 2011 and seeks to adhere to the public benefit principles identified by the Charity Commission. One element of this provision is our programme of means-tested bursaries to attract students who would not otherwise be able to access education at the School. The Board of Governors allocates an annual amount of charitable funds for the purposes of awarding bursaries.

Non-Monetary Scholarship Awards – Years 7-11 - Ambition and Enrichment

Context:

In September 2023 we changed our approach to scholarships in Years 7-11 at Frensham Heights to fit more comfortably with our ethos. We no longer award traditional scholarships until key stage 5, but instead offer an ambition and enrichment programme to students who show participation, commitment, passion and willingness to be challenged. We feel that any student, regardless of natural ability or talent, who consistently and earnestly engages will naturally grow and achieve.

The ambition and enrichment fund provides a pathway of enrichment to all who are interested and keen, and specialised activities for subject ambassadors who want to engage more deeply with a subject.

Ambassador and enrichment opportunities are consistently provided and calendared during each term and are intended to be balanced throughout the academic year.

Purpose

To support and mentor students who are willing and ready to be challenged and learn and express an interest in engaging more deeply with a subject.

Aim

To stimulate and develop a student’s potential while building confidence, experience and critical thinking skills that can be used throughout their lives.

Subject Departmental Role

- To offer one ambition and enrichment opportunity per term that fosters interest and engagement in the subject at a deeper level. This can range from ECAs, workshops, events, trips and guest speakers.
- To identify students who show high levels of participation, commitment and passion and invite them into the programme.

- To mentor student ambassadors to develop and reach their potential in a subject.

How are subject ambassadors awarded?

- A subject ambassador role can be offered in Academics, Creative Arts, Performing Arts and Sport. If students are offered an Academic ambassador role this will have a subject focus e.g. English ambassador.
- Heads of departments will identify those students who they feel meet the criteria of a subject ambassador and provide a register to the Head of Ambition and Enrichment.
- Any student is welcome to express interest in becoming a subject ambassador and must be able to demonstrate high levels of participation, commitment and passion to learning at a deeper level in their chosen subject.
- Students can join the programme at any point in the academic year, students in year 7 and new joiners in year 9 can join the programme after their first full term.

The Head of Ambition and Enrichment is responsible for creating a programme of events to ensure that ambassadors' have access to opportunities both out of school and on site and manages the budget accordingly. They work with Heads of Department to support the organisation and financing of such opportunities and ensuring that there are sufficient opportunities across the different subject areas and year groups.

The Head of Ambition and Enrichment is line managed by the Deputy Head.

Sixth Form Arts Awards

Monetary awards are offered to selected students in the following areas:

- Dance
- Drama
- Music
- Fine Art
- Photography
- Graphics

These awards are given after a rigorous audition process for the performing arts, and submission of portfolio work for the creative arts.

In addition, academic awards are given, based on the student's academic profile and commitment to their subjects.

These awards are given as a discount against the termly fees. The discount is not a set amount, rather it is determined by funds available and the number of awards being offered.

Bursary Awards

A bursary award is made for financial need only and is based on a means-tested assessment. Depending on the resources available, but having no significant endowments, the School offers bursaries ranging from 10% to 90% and a limited number of 100% bursaries (usually one in each Year Group from Year 7 to Year 13). Bursaries for the Junior School, where the fees are comparably lower than the Middle School, Senior School or Sixth Form, are often lower and less frequently awarded. The School does not offer bursaries for children in the Nursery. The overall amount the School sets aside for bursaries each year is a non-fixed percentage of net

fee income determined by the Governors, who are mindful of the Charity Commission's published guidance on the public benefit requirement under the Charities Act 2011.

To ensure full disclosure and to allow fair and equitable treatment, Frensham Heights asks all applicants to submit a bursary application form through an external organisation called Bursary Administration Limited (BAL). The figures contained in the application for bursary funding will be verified by, for example, annual P60s, company accounts, DSS assessments or mortgage statements. The application form is scrutinised to assess the following:

Gross income

Total income after tax;

Mortgage or other reasonable housing commitment;

Other debts;

Net disposable income;

Other assets and liabilities;

Number of other children in the household;

Any other declared and relevant factors.

Each case is assessed on its own merits. 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 awards are well-focused and these factors will also be considered in determining the level of an award:

- 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 dependants, or the requirements of their partner's work;
- Opportunities to release any capital. Significant capital savings and investments would be expected to be used for the payment of school fees; as would the equity in the main residence and any other assets which could be sold or transferred towards fee payment;
- In cases of separation, the contribution made by the other parent;
- Contribution to household costs by other, wider, family members or any adults unrelated to the child or by outside sources;
- Where fees are being paid to other schools (or universities) the school's award should take into account these outgoings; and
- The amount of fees for the relevant Year Group and whether they are day or boarding fees.

It is recognised that in addition to financial factors there may be other circumstances which should be considered. These could include:

- Where a child has siblings at the school;
- Where the social or medical needs of the child are relevant;
- Where a parent/guardian is terminally ill or is unable to secure permanent employment due to poor health;
- Where a parent/guardian has paid two or more years full fees and is now in hardship;
- Whether a parent/guardian unavoidably needs to afford boarding, but is unable to do so; and
- For the continuation of a bursary into the next phase of education: the value of the contribution the student makes to the School.

The Director of Finance & Resources prepares a recommendation for discussion with the Head and, if deemed necessary, a representative of the Board of Governors. Careful judgement is

exercised in each case whilst applying as much parity of treatment as may be possible – the decision is final.

Although bursary applications can be submitted at any time throughout the year, in order to maximise equitable consideration of financial need, the majority of bursaries will be considered according to the following timetable:

- November – existing bursary holders, whose children are anticipated to continue their education at Frensham Heights the following September, are to submit updated statements of need using the third party provider's portal;
- November – new applications submitted for the following September;
- January – reports to be completed by BAL for consideration and;
- Late February – notification to existing bursary recipients and new applicants for the academic year starting in September.

New applications received after these dates can only be successful if the bursary fund has not been fully utilised; a small in-year hardship allocation exists for existing students.

Review of awards

When bursaries are awarded, it is clearly stated that they will be reviewed annually and it is the responsibility of the Director of Finance & Resources and Head to ensure that this is done.

The timing of these reviews must take into account the need for parents/guardians to have a suitable period to consider the implications of reduced financial support (assuming that if the school believed more financial help to be appropriate, there would be little need for parents/guardians to make alternative arrangements). All awards will be reviewed, and parents/guardians notified of the outcome, before the start of the Summer Term.

Sibling discount

The school recognises the commitment and loyalty of parents/guardians choosing to educate several children at Frensham Heights by offering a sibling discount of 10% for third and subsequent children at the school. Where at least 2 siblings have each completed, or are expected to complete, at least one phase of education at Frensham Heights (a phase of education is defined as being at least 3 years in the Junior and Middle Schools or 2 years in the 6th Form) then the third child and any subsequent children joining the School will receive a 10% discount throughout their time at the School.

Late Payment of Fees

The School retains the right to permanently or temporarily cancel any Bursary Award or Sibling Discount and charge full fees in the event of late payment or part-payment of fees from the date that they are due.