**OLDHAM HULME GRAMMAR SCHOOL**

**BURSARIES & SCHOLARSHIPS POLICY**

*This Policy is applicable from year 7 through to year 13*

**Means Tested Bursaries**

**General**

The Governors of Oldham Hulme Grammar School are committed to broadening access to the school by offering to eligible parents/guardians means-tested financial support for the payment of school fees.  This support is known as a bursary and takes the form of a discount of up to 100% of the tuition fees depending on the academic performance of the pupil and the financial, compassionate or other pertinent circumstances of the parents.

Bursary awards are subject to repeat testing of parental means each year and may be varied upwards or downwards depending on parental circumstances. Awards are made by reference to a scale of remissions relative to the family’s financial circumstances. This scale of awards is reviewed on a regular basis. Although the awards are linked to this scale they may be varied upwards or downwards depending upon other factors such as individual parents’/guardians’ circumstances (e.g. their savings, investments and realisable assets, as well as their income, the size of their family, any other persons dependent upon them and like factors), compassionate or other considerations.

Requests for financial support usually fall into two categories:

* New applicants to the school, where a place has been offered but parents/guardians are unable to fund the tuition fees.
* Existing pupils where a sudden unforeseen change in parents’/guardians’ circumstances has resulted in difficulty in meeting tuition fees and may result in the child being withdrawn part way through a critical stage of education.

**New Applicants to the School**

**Awareness**

Information informing the parents/guardians of potential pupils about the means-tested financial support is included in:

* The School’s prospectus
* The School’s website
* The local press by means of advertisements

**The Application Process**

Bursaries may be made available to parents/guardians of children entering Year 7 or Year 12 of the School.  (See the School’s Admissions Policy).

They are awarded at the overall discretion of the Governors with the Principal and the school’s finance team being responsible for the management and coordination of the process.

**Step One**

Parents/guardians seeking a bursary are required to complete an application form (HM1) which seeks to establish the financial circumstances of the family by requesting details of income, expenditure and capital.  The completed forms should be submitted to the school’s finance team no later than a date towards the end of January.

**Step Two**

The school’s finance team assesses all applications in order to establish the likely level of support which will be required in order to allow the child to attend the School. The school reserves the right to request a visit to the parents’/guardians’ home to ensure the information has been correctly interpreted and the basis of the financial assessment has been fair.

**Step Three**

The school’s finance team prepares a recommendation on the amount of the award for each applicant in accordance with the Oldham Hulme Grammar School Scale of Awards.  The Principal considers the performance and potential of the candidates for awards and then produces a list of the awards to be offered based on the advice received from the school’s finance team.

**Step Four**

At the beginning of March each year the parents/guardians are advised whether their child is to be offered a place at the School and of any bursary offer that is being made. If the parents accept the place and the award they will be required to provide documentary evidence, via the HM2 form, of the data supplied on the application. If the parents fail to supply this documentation then the offer of the award shall be cancelled.

**Step Five**

Parents/guardians are then required to sign a letter accepting the place at the School and an acknowledgement agreeing to the conditions relating to the bursary.

Note the timings are different for 6th form awards in order to allow predicted GCSE results to be considered.

**The Case for Assistance**

The Principal and the school’s finance team will consider a number of factors 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 School is the first consideration in granting support.

**Suitability**

In assessing a child’s suitability attention will be given to the academic assessment result of each applicant but potential will also be considered as well as actual achievement. Bursary funds are limited and those judged most suitable will be given priority as those likely to gain most from the educational provision.  Each pupil to whom support is offered must, in the opinion of the Principal, be likely to make sound academic progress following admission and possess the potential to develop the quality of his or her work, and benefit from participation in the wider, extra-curricular activities on offer at the School.   In normal circumstances, each applicant should meet the School’s normal academic requirements.  Previous school reports may be consulted for evidence of good behaviour.

**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 annual budget.  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 correctly allocated 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 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.

**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 values in houses.

* In cases of separated parents the contribution made by the absent partner
* Contribution to household costs by other family members, any adults unrelated to the child or by outside sources.
* The School’s grant may take into account outgoings such as fees being paid to other schools (or universities).
* Acknowledging that others might have a different view, the School considers that the following would not be consistent with the receipt of a bursary:
* Frequent or expensive holidays
* New or luxury cars
* Investment in significant home improvements
* A second property or land holdings

**Other Factors**

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

* Where a child has siblings at the School.
* Where the social needs of the child are relevant (eg : may be suffering from bullying at their present school).
* Where a parent/guardian is terminally ill or is unable to secure permanent employment due to poor health.
* Where a separation has resulted in the child having to be withdrawn from the School adding to the stress of coping with the parents/guardians separating.
* Existing Pupils - Change in Family Circumstances

The School may, if funds are available, provide assistance for cases of sudden unforeseen need or where applications meriting bursary assistance are received out of the normal calendar cycle for bursary submission, scrutiny and award.  This sum will be set within budgetary constraints.  Parents/guardians with a child at the School whose financial circumstances suddenly change may apply to the Head of Finance for support and must explain the reason for their request. Such awards are subject to the availability of funding and cannot be guaranteed. Any funds available will be concentrated on supporting pupils within the key examination years 11, 12 and 13 and any such award will normally only be for one academic year.

**Annual Review**

All bursary awards are subject to annual testing of parental means and may be varied upwards or downwards depending on circumstances.  Current bursary holders will be issued with the necessary forms no later than the beginning of the Summer term. For those receiving bursaries the Principal and Head of Finance will have the discretion to effect the reduction or withdrawal of an award where a pupil’s progress, attitude or behaviour has been unsatisfactory or where the parents/guardians have failed to support the schools, for example by the late payment of any contribution they are making to the fees or in the return of means testing information such as the documentary evidence.

**Scholarships**

The School may, when Governors make funds available, award scholarships in order to encourage excellence. They will be given as remissions against tuition fees, will not be means tested and may take two forms:

**Principal’s discretion**

The Principal has the facility to award a scholarship to a pupil he feels will make a significant contribution to the school because of their academic, sporting, musical or dramatic abilities.

**Examination performance schemes**

Scholarships may be awarded on the basis of schemes set up by the School to recognise examination performance. At the current time scholarship schemes are in operation for Year 7 pupils which provide remissions based upon Entrance Exam performance, and for Year 12 pupils which provide remissions based on GCSE performance.

Scholarships will not require annual testing of parental means but will be conditional on the performance of the pupil and the parents’/guardians support for the School.

**Confidentiality**

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

**Bursary and Scholarships Policy Reviewed: January 2019**

Signed: Principal Date:

Signed: Chair of Governors Date:



**Next Review Due: January 2021**