



## **BURSARIES AND SCHOLARSHIPS POLICY AND PROCEDURES**

### **Bursary Awards Policy**

As a charity Manchester High School for Girls (MHSG) is committed to providing education to academically gifted girls regardless of circumstance, and offers financial assistance through a small number of part or full means tested bursaries as resources allow. A proportion of these bursary awards will offer assistance with tuition fees according to a sliding scale that is linked to family income. Students from families in receipt of a Bursary may qualify for free school lunches.

Where there are two or more sisters attending Manchester High School for Girls at the same time and both are in receipt of financial assistance, parents may qualify for a further 20% reduction in their contribution to fees only under the bursary scheme. All bursaries are means tested – support will be given on a sliding scale depending on income.

As part of the process of assessing Bursary applications it is the School's practice to visit the parents of a sample of applicants at home. Bursary assistance will be re-evaluated annually to ensure any changes in circumstance are taken into account. Owing to a high demand and a limited number of bursary places available, bursary assistance will be awarded on the basis of academic achievement.

It is important to note that by applying for a Bursary parents are not guaranteed any financial assistance. Families will receive notification of their bursary when they are advised whether their daughter has been awarded a place at MHSG. Bursaries will be awarded on the basis of an annual grant, the maximum amount of which will be specified when a place is offered. All awards, whether calculated according to family income or on a flat rate, will be based on a combination of academic merit and a parental statement of need. They will be subject to an annual review of income. Details will be confidential but supporting documentation will be required and the School reserves the right to seek any other documentary evidence in support of the income figures submitted which it deems necessary.

Pupils, who are in receipt of a bursary and live at a considerable distance from school, may qualify for an annual grant towards the costs of travel. A uniform grant may also be available to pupils in receipt of a bursary at the beginning of the first year in school only. To be considered for any of these extra grants (which are limited) parents must make a written request to the Head Mistress following their acceptance of a place.

## **Bursary Awards Procedures**

### **The Application Process**

Bursaries are awarded to students who attend Manchester High School for Girls at the discretion of the Governing Body. The Head Mistress and Bursar are responsible for the management and co-ordination of the process.

**Step one:** Parents should apply for a bursary assisted place when they confirm that their daughter will sit the entrance examination. Parents seeking a bursary are required to complete an application form so that the School can establish the financial circumstances of the household. The form, which requests details of income and capital, must be accompanied by full documentary evidence. All of this information should be submitted to the Bursar for an initial assessment. The bursary grant award is then finalised in the following April/May based upon actual figures submitted, for bursaries to start in the September.

**Step two:** All applications will be assessed to establish the likely level of support required to enable the child to attend the School. This may involve the Bursar, and/or his representative, visiting the parents' home to ensure the information has been correctly interpreted and the basis of the financial assessment has been fair.

**Step three:** The Bursar prepares a recommendation which is considered by the Head Mistress, and a joint recommendation is reached.

**Step four:** Parents are advised whether their child will be offered a place at the School, and whether or not a bursary will be available.

**Step five:** Parents are required to sign a letter accepting the place at MHSG and an acknowledgement agreeing to any conditions relating to the bursary. Parents of girls who are awarded a bursary assisted place are required to provide a reduced place deposit based on the level of the award.

### **The Case for Bursary Assistance**

The Head Mistress and Bursar will consider a number of factors when making the judgement for 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; therefore awards will be made on the basis of the applicant's performance in the entrance examination. In the opinion of the Head Mistress, each pupil to whom support is offered must be considered likely to make sound academic progress following admission, possess the potential to develop the quality of her work, and benefit from participation in the wider, extra-curricular activities on offer at the School. Previous school reports will be consulted for evidence of good behaviour.

## **Financial Limitations**

1. 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 need.

2. 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 within its overall budget.

3. 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 well focused and so, as well as current earnings, other factors which will be considered in determining the necessary level of grant include:

- The ability to improve the financial position or earning power of the family. For example, where there are two partners, within reason 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 equity values in houses.
- In cases of separation, the contribution made by the absent parent.
- Contribution to household costs by other, wider, family members, any 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 such organisations were offering bursaries of a similar value to those of MHSG.

## **Other Factors**

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

- A child has siblings at the School.
- The social needs of the child are relevant.
- A parent is terminally ill or is unable to secure permanent employment due to poor health.
- A separation has resulted in the child having to be withdrawn from the School adding to the stress of coping with the parents separating.

## **Annual Review**

All bursary awards are made subject to repeat testing of parental means each year, and may be increased or decreased depending on parental circumstances. Bursary holders will be issued with repeat means-testing forms at the beginning of April each year for return by the end of that month. For those previously in receipt of bursaries, the Head Mistress and the Bursar have the discretion to recommend to the Governing Body 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 have failed to support the School, for example by the late payment of any contribution they are making to the fees.

## **Confidentiality**

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

## **Scholarships Policy**

### **Academic Scholarships**

One or more academic scholarships may be awarded by the Governing Body for excellence in performance in the entrance examination, taken at the age of 10 or 11, for admission to the Senior School in September. Applicants for Music, Sport and Dance Scholarships should note their interest in applying when they complete the registration form.

For the **Music Scholarship** applicants should have reached ABRSM Grade 3 or equivalent and, if chosen for audition, be prepared for sight-reading and aural tests as well as a performance on their choice of two instruments (or one instrument plus voice).

For the **Dance/Sports Scholarships** girls may be invited to come for an assessment where their performance will be evaluated against their peers. A written recommendation is required from a dance teacher or sports coach along with copies of any awards or certificates achieved.

A scholarship is generally a percentage of fees paid and is not a fully sponsored place. The maximum allowed is 50% but most are substantially less than this.

### **Joint Application for a Scholarship and Bursary Assisted Place**

A student may be in receipt of a scholarship and a bursary. However, if a joint award is made, the total value of the support provided will not exceed the value of the bursary, had a scholarship not been awarded.

Prepared by: John Moran, Director of Finance & Estates (Bursar)

Reviewed and approved by: Finance Committee Meeting on 9<sup>th</sup> November 2017