



# St Lawrence College

## Bursary Policy

## AMENDMENT RECORD

<b>Date</b>	<b>Issue</b>	<b>Authorised by</b>
<b>Feb 2009</b>	<b>1.0</b>	<b>Bursar</b>
<b>Dec 2011</b>	<b>1.1</b>	<b>Bursar</b>
<b>Sep 2013</b>	<b>1.2</b>	<b>Bursar</b>
<b>Apr 2021</b>	<b>1.3</b>	<b>Bursar</b>

Reference:	
Owner:	Bursar
Version:	1.3
Last reviewed	Sep 23
Next review due:	Sep 25

## **INTRODUCTION**

1. This policy has been authorised by the Governing Body of St Lawrence College. The policy is advisory only and intended to inform parents and guardians of current and prospective pupils regarding the College's Bursary award process.

2. This policy contains an overview of the College's Bursary Scheme currently in operation. The policy, and all associated documentation, will be made available upon request.

## **AIMS**

3. The aims of this Bursary policy are:

3.1 to widen pupil access to the School and to ensure that an education is provided to children from a broad spectrum of society;

3.2 to continue the School's long tradition of providing public benefit;

3.3 to meet and if possible exceed the Charity Commission's public benefit requirements applicable from time to time.

4. More specifically, this policy aims to:

4.1 enable children with cases of clear social need to achieve their full potential in a caring and supportive environment. Such cases may or may not be supported by a Scholarship.

4.2 enable academically very able children to attend the College and achieve their full potential, by offering financial assistance in addition to Scholarship awards.

4.3 enable other gifted and talented children to attend the College, with or without associated Scholarship awards.

## **BACKGROUND**

5. The School is a registered charity that is committed to providing significant public benefit. The School is aware of its obligations under the Charities Act 2006 and seeks to adhere to the public benefit principles identified by the Charity Commission. This policy is reviewed regularly to take into consideration the latest guidance from the Charity Commission.

6. The School's Bursary Policy covers the procedures for the award of Bursaries to the parents of new pupils and Hardship / Emergency / Rescue Bursaries. The latter bursaries apply to those parents and guardians whose financial position worsens unexpectedly once their child is already at the School.

7. The Bursary awards are designed to assist parents or prospective parents on low incomes who, for financial reasons, might otherwise be unable to send or continue to send their child to the School.

## PUBLICITY

8. The College views a socially diverse pupil population as a key component of a full and balanced education. The availability of bursaries at the School is advertised widely through local and national media and on the College website.

9. New applicants to the School are advised of the availability of means-tested fee assistance via:

- a. The School prospectus.
- b. The School website.
- c. Information available during open days

## BURSARY APPLICATION PROCEDURE

10. Bursaries may be made available to the parents or guardians of children entering the School from Year 3 onwards and are awarded at the discretion of the College Awards Group (CAG). The Head of College and School Bursar are responsible for the management and coordination of the award process. The College follows a 5-step process when considering a Bursary award as follows:

**a. Step One - Means testing** Applicants are required to undergo a means test process. The process is administered on the College's behalf by a third party, Bursary Administration Limited (BAL). Once the means test is complete, BAL submit a confidential report to the College Awards Group (CAG), comprising a narrative report and an estimate of the level of Bursary support needed. The means test process may involve a home visit in order to ensure that the information has been correctly interpreted and the basis of the financial assessment has been fair.

**c. Step Two - Consideration of all applications by the CAG.** The CAG convenes as required to review applications and determine awards.

**d. Step Three - Notification of Parents/guardians regarding their suitability for an award.** Each Bursary offer will reflect the particular circumstances of the recipient and be expressed as a percentage of fees. Bursaries awarded on pupil admission are normally awarded for one academic year and remain subject, throughout that period, to the conditions of award provided with the Letter of Offer. Hardship Bursaries may be awarded on a termly basis depending on the circumstances surrounding the provision of the award. All bursaries are paid at the discretion of the School and are subject to review by the CAG at any time.

**e. Step Four - Acceptance of an award** Parents / guardians will be required to sign and return a Letter of Offer, accepting the terms and conditions related to it.

11. In order to have their application for a Bursary considered by the CAG, applicants must complete the online bursary application form fully and provide BAL with any supplementary information that is requested. A covering letter must also be sent to the Bursar, setting out how their child(ren) would benefit from a St Lawrence education, what they have to offer the College and why the family needs financial assistance. It is important that applicants answer all of the questions carefully and in full.

12. Applying for a Bursary will not prevent parents of pupils or of prospective pupils from applying for a scholarship or other award in respect of their children.

## **ELIGIBILITY FOR BURSARY AWARDS**

13. The College views a socially diverse pupil population as a key component of a full and balanced education. All parents and guardians of current and prospective pupils at the School are therefore eligible to apply for a Bursary. The first point of contact should be the Head of College or Director of External Relations, or the Head of the Junior School or Junior School Admissions Officer, who will then refer the potential applicant to the Bursar for an initial discussion on the candidate's suitability for means testing.

14. The size of the Bursary award is not influenced by the academic ability of the child 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 its overall budget. It is recognised that judgements about what sacrifices a family should make to pay school fees will be subjective. The School has a duty to ensure that all Bursary grants are well focused and so, as well as current earnings, other factors will be considered in determining the necessary level of grant. These might include:

- a. the potential 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.
- b. 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.
- c. in cases of separation, whether a contribution is made by the absent parent.
- d. contribution to household costs by other, wider, family members, any adults unrelated to the child or by outside sources. These latter sources might include trust support. Details of potential trust support available will be issued with the Bursary Application Form. In reviewing eligibility, the CAG will expect to see evidence that applicants have investigated the availability of trust support.

15. Acknowledging that others might have a different view, the School considers that indications of wealth such as the following would not be consistent with the receipt of a Bursary:

- a. frequent or expensive holidays;
- b. new or luxury cars;
- c. investment in significant home improvements;
- d. a second property/land holdings;
- e. valuable works of art.

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

- a. the social needs of the child (e.g. suffering from bullying at their present school);
- b. where a parent is terminally ill or is unable to secure permanent employment due to poor health.

### **SUITABILITY OF APPLICANT**

17. Bursary funds are limited and priority will be given to those likely to gain most from the educational provision. The potential contribution of the candidate to the wider School community will also be taken into consideration, as will the likely impact of the award on the enhancement of the candidate's educational opportunity. References from the pupil's current school will form an important part of the process.

### **HARDSHIP BURSARIES**

18. Within overall budget funding the School will, in normal circumstances, set aside funds each year for cases of sudden, unforeseen need or where applications meriting Bursary assistance are received out of the normal calendar cycle. This sum will be set within budgetary constraints. Parents or guardians with a child at the School whose financial circumstances suddenly change may apply for a Bursary explaining their situation and requesting assistance. Such awards are subject to the availability of funding and the suitability of the candidate and may be limited to facilitate completion of a school year or the next stage of education. Applications for Hardship Bursaries will be considered by the CAG as soon as practicable after the Bursar has been notified by parents of a change in their financial position

### **ANNUAL REVIEW**

19. All Bursary awards are subject to a review of parent / guardian means each year and may be varied upwards or downwards depending on parental circumstances. Current Bursary holders will need to reapply online for Bursary support at the beginning of April each year and applications will need to be completed by the end of April to be considered by the CAG. Where continuation of a bursary award is requested, the Governors may reduce or withdraw an award in cases where a pupil's progress, attitude or behaviour has been unsatisfactory, or where the parents/guardians have failed to support the School (for example by the late payment of any contribution they are making to the fees).

20. Should any of the information disclosed during the Bursary application process become inaccurate at a later date, the School must be informed without delay. For example, should the financial position of parents with a pupil already at the School worsen or improve unexpectedly, they should contact the Bursar as soon as possible so that a way forward can be agreed. Failure to divulge requested information or a change in circumstances to the School could lead to a Bursary award being withdrawn or withheld.

**CONFIDENTIALITY**

21. All Bursary applications are treated in the strictest confidence. Pupils will not be made aware that they benefit from a Bursary and parents must not disclose information concerning the precise nature of the award.

Reference:	
Owner:	Bursar
Version:	1.3
Last reviewed	Sep 23
Next review due:	Sep 25