Gad's Hill School
Fee Assistance Policy (Scholarships, Bursaries etc)

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STAFF RESPONSIBLE: BURSAR
GOVERNOR RESPONSIBLE: RESOURCES COMMITTEE

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1. Introduction

The School offers a range of fee assistance to enable as many suitable pupils as possible, from a diverse variety of backgrounds and circumstances, to benefit from the education we offer. The purpose of this policy is to set out the main types of fee assistance offered along with details of how applications can be made and are decided. Finally, the policy sets out how the various forms of fee assistance may and may not be combined.

Please note that not every form of fee assistance can be combined. For further details please see section 5 below. In all cases the lunch element of the school fee is excluded from the scholarship award unless specified in the terms.

2. Scholarships

These may be awarded to an existing Upper School pupil or a new entrant to the Upper School who, through their application for a scholarship along with supporting evidence, shows significant skill and achievement in one of the following categories: academic ability, sport, performing arts or creative arts. Please note the pupil must be in or about to enter years Upper Shell, Lower Fourth or Upper Fourth (National Curriculum Years 7 to 9) to be considered for a scholarship.

Academic Scholarships

The Charles Dickens 11+ Scholarship Award Examination

The school offers annually academic scholarships, worth up to 100% fee assistance towards school fees, for which our students in Lower Shell and for external pupils in Year 6 elsewhere can be assessed. The examinations are similar to the Kent and Medway 11+ tests and students are tested in English and Mathematics. Students who show a high academic ability may subsequently be offered a place in our Upper Shell year group (Year 7) here at Gad's Hill with an accompanying scholarship which will see fees reduced by up to 100% for the duration of that child's secondary education here (subject to the conditions attached to the scholarship award). To qualify for the scholarship, applicants are required to attend Gad's Hill School for the scholarship assessment which is usually held in September each year.

Other Academic Scholarships

Parents of pupils or prospective pupils in Lower 4th and Upper 4th (Years 8 and 9) may apply for an academic scholarship for their child. To be considered for a scholarship, it will be necessary to show skill and achievement well in excess of a typical pupil of similar age. Academic scholars will achieve exceptional academic grades and applications should be supported by documentation from tutors, class teachers, school reports etc. On receipt of the application the school will ask relevant members of our staff their professional opinion in respect of the pupils' ability. If the school is satisfied that the pupil is of an exceptional ability and that other entrance criteria are met, then it may make an award of between 10–30% fee assistance towards school fees, subject to the conditions attached to scholarship awards.

Non-Academic Scholarships

In addition to academic scholarships, the school also offers a number of non-academic awards for children who show exceptional talent in sport, performing arts (music/drama) and creative arts (art/DT). An application for such an award would need to be supported by accompanying evidence and relevant members of our school staff would be asked to help assess the child's suitability. These awards are in high demand and the school is only able to offer a limited number of scholarships. The applicant will be assessed and the school will make a final decision, with the scope to make an award

of between 10-30% fee assistance towards school fees, subject to the conditions set out in this policy.

Criteria for Scholarships

In order to secure a scholarship, it will be necessary to show skill and achievement well in excess of a typical pupil of similar age. For example, sports scholars will have the potential to compete at county or national level in at least one sport, or already be competing at that level (or a sport specific equivalent). Sports scholars are likely to have a track record of sporting success significantly above that of the majority of their peers. Creative arts scholars will have a portfolio of work demonstrating outstanding ability using a variety of media. They are likely to have exhibited their work, or to have entered local or national competitions. Music scholars are likely to have achieved or be working towards Grade 3 in at least one instrument. They are likely to be participating regularly in concerts, whether as part of a band or orchestra, or as a soloist. At audition, they will demonstrate musical ability significantly above the standard expected of pupils of their age. Performing arts scholars will have a demonstrable record of lead roles in theatrical productions, whether with their school or local and national theatre groups. They may have LAMDA or other nationally recognized qualifications to evidence their ability. At audition, they will demonstrate outstanding dramatic ability in a short performance of their choosing.

On receipt of the application the school will invite the applicant to attend an audition which will also include completing standardised tests in English and Mathematics.

If the school is satisfied that the pupil has exceptional ability and that other entrance criteria are met, then it may make an appropriate award of fee assistance.

All scholarship holders are expected to uphold the values and ethos of the school and to have a good behavioural record, making a positive impact on the school community.

Applying for a Scholarship

Parents of pupils who feel that they meet the criteria for the award of a funded scholarship should register their child and complete a scholarship application form. In the application they will be asked to provide evidence of their achievements. The Headmaster's PA or Admissions Manager will forward an application form on request.

3. Bursaries

Due to the ongoing national and international financial uncertainty, the School is, for the moment, prioritising continuity of education for existing bursary recipients and is therefore only able to consider new applications in the following circumstances:
To new applicants to the school, where a child is a "Looked After Child" (i.e. in the care of a local authority) and the Headmaster is of the opinion that the child would benefit particularly from the education available at Gad's Hill School;

To new applicants to the school, children recognised as refugees, asylum seekers or similar, for the time being resident with (a) a member of staff of the school or (b) a family

with one or more children already at the school. The relevant child(ren) must have the (temporary or otherwise) right to reside and study in the United Kingdom. Subject to the child being deemed suitable for a place at Gad's Hill School, a bursary offered under this sub-section will be automatically at 100% of fee level;

To existing pupils where an unavoidable change in parents'/guardians' circumstances (such as a death) has resulted in difficulty in meeting tuition fees and may result in the child being withdrawn part way through a stage of education.

Applying for a Bursary

Awareness

Information provided by the School alerting the parents/guardians of potential pupils to the possibility of gaining means- tested financial support with the payment of school fees is included on the School website.

Level of Assistance

The level of assistance provided will be dependent on family circumstances and a detailed assessment of their assets, liabilities and day-to-day finances. Costs directly related to education, including examination fees, and trips which are considered to be part of the course to be studied, such as field trips, may be covered. Other more "recreational" trips, such as ski trips or sports tours, would not be considered for support.

The Application Process

Bursaries may be made available to parents/guardians of children entering or already at the school subject to the limitations set out above. They are awarded at the discretion of the Governors. The Bursar is responsible for the management and coordination of the process.

To be considered for fee assistance, all applicants must have completed the relevant assessment process for entry to the school to establish the financial circumstances of the household. The form, which requests details of income and capital, must be accompanied by full documentary evidence. In the context of prospective pupils, a full application for admission should have been made too, along with successful assessment at an appropriate Taster/Assessment Day.

The completed forms, together with the necessary documentary evidence, are to be submitted to the Bursar. For divorced/separated parents/guardians, financial details will be required from each party. This will be acquired through the completion of separate forms which will not be shared with the other party to preserve confidentiality. All applications will be means tested by an external third party.

However, it is possible that in communicating the outcome of the application, some indication of information may be given to the first party of the second's resources, coupled with information which the school publishes generally as levels of assistance. For instance, if the application is unsuccessful as a result of a significant income of one party, but the other party is in receipt of a very modest income. Parties entering this process must accept that this is a possible outcome.

The Bursar prepares a recommendation which is considered with the Headmaster.

The parents/guardians are advised whether their application for assistance has been successful and if so, the level of the award.

Parents/guardians are then required to accept the place offered and an acknowledgement agreeing to any conditions relating to the fee assistance.

Annual Review

All bursary awards are subject to review each year. Pupils in receipt of a Bursary must reapply on an annual basis. A detailed timetable will be provided each year, however dates will be roughly as follows:

- Applications must be received by the school by 1st February each year for support to commence or be continued the following academic year;
- All applications will be considered by the Resources Committee during their meetings in February & March that year;
- Awards may vary upwards or downwards, depending on parental circumstances, pupil performance and available funds;
- Parents will be notified of the outcome before the Easter break.

The Annual review will also focus on the Pupil's contribution and performance, as set out in the award letter. Where the Headmaster or Resources Committee believes that these conditions are not being met, the award may be withdrawn or reduced.

6. Upper School Sibling Fee Assistance – for families with TWO or more children at the school (excluding Nursery), at least one of which is in the Upper School

Gad's Hill School recognises the benefits offered to pupils and parents alike of being an "all through" school for pupils aged 3 to 16 and therefore offers "Upper School Sibling Fee Assistance" which is applied automatically for families with two or more children at the school (excluding any in the Nursery), at least one of which is in the Upper School. Subject to section 6 below, Upper School Sibling Fee Assistance will be applied to the Upper School child(ren) at a value of 5% assistance against our standard fees.

For the purpose of this form of fee assistance pupils will be deemed to be siblings if they have at least one common parent, either biological or legally adopted.

7. Family Fee Assistance Guarantee – for families with THREE or more children at the school (excluding Nursery)

Taking further the principles set out above, Gad's Hill School offers a Family Fee Assistance Guarantee for larger families meaning that families with three or more children at the school, excluding any children in the Nursery, will receive at least 20% fee assistance on all but their two youngest children. The guarantee operates as follows:

1. The guarantee applies to families with three or more "eligible" children in the school during the term relevant for invoicing purposes
2. "Eligible" children are those full-time pupils in Reception or above i.e. all full-time pupils apart from those in the Nursery
3. The "family fee assistance guarantee" is applied to all but the two youngest eligible children (i.e. a family with three eligible children receives the guarantee in respect of the eldest child. For a family with four it would be for the two eldest and so on)
4. As a "family fee assistance guarantee", the actual level of assistance applied depends on the specifics of each family, particularly with regard to any other fee assistance already in place. For a family with five eligible children, if the eldest pupil were

already in receipt of a 30% scholarship, no further assistance would be applied. If the second eldest were in receipt of a 10% scholarship, top-up fee assistance of 10% would be applied to meet the guarantee of at least 20% fee assistance. If the third eldest child were due to be charged full fees, 20% fee assistance would be applied to meet the guarantee.

For the purpose of this form of fee assistance pupils will be deemed to be siblings if they have at least one common parent, either biological or legally adopted. Annex A shows some examples of how the Family Fee Assistance Guarantee would be applied in specimen cases.

For the avoidance of doubt, any children from the family not receiving the family fee assistance guarantee would be eligible for Upper School sibling fee assistance if appropriate, and subject to section 5.0 below.

8. Multiple Awards

Where a pupil is potentially eligible for more than one form of fee assistance, they will only be applied in combinations as set out in the table below and in the event of any conflict, as determined by the Bursar in his absolute discretion. If you wish to explore a particular set of circumstances regarding fee assistance, you are encouraged to contact the Bursar, in confidence, who will aim to resolve any queries you may have.

	Receive the HIGHER OF:	THEN ADD:	THEN ADD:
For the 1st (ranked by age, youngest being 1st) and 2nd eligible children (i.e. full-time pupils other than any in the Nursery) *Younger children*	Staff Fee Assistance (see separate policy) or Scholarship Fee Assistance	5% Upper School Sibling Fee Assistance for child(ren) in the Upper School with sibling(s) anywhere in the school, excluding nursery, subject to the child(ren) receiving not more than 100% Fee Assistance overall	Means-tested Bursary if awarded
For the 3rd and subsequent eligible children (i.e. full-time pupils other than any in the Nursery) *Older children*		Family Fee Assistance Guarantee applied if necessary to bring overall Fee Assistance up to 20% if not already at that level due to other Fee Assistance	

9. Termination of Scholarship and bursary Fee Assistance

The Governors' Resources Committee (and Headmaster in cases of urgency) have the discretion to reduce or withdraw an award in the following circumstances as may be applicable in any given case:

1. Where a pupil's progress, attitude or behaviour has been unsatisfactory;
2. Situations where the parents/guardians have failed to support the school, for example by the late payment of any proportion of fees they are liable for, breach of confidentiality regarding Fee Assistance, and so on; and/or
3. In the case of a non-academic Scholarship, where the Scholar reduces or discontinues their participation in the field (i.e. Sport, Art, Drama or Music) in which the Scholarship has been awarded.

10. Repayment

All forms of Fee Assistance are funded by the school, either from reserves or other income received from fee payers and are awarded on the understanding that the pupil will remain at Gad's Hill School for the duration of the child's education until the completion of their GCSE year. If the pupil is withdrawn from the school by their parents to attend another school or if the pupil is permanently excluded as a result of their conduct, behaviour or as a result of non-payment of school fees then the parents will be required to refund to the school the fee assistance applied to invoices in respect of that pupil.

For example, an Upper Shell (Year 7) pupil benefits from 40% fee assistance in the form of a bursary. For the purpose of this example imagine that standard school fees for the academic year are £10,000 per year. The pupil's parents would therefore pay £6,000 per year. If the pupil left the school after two years of receiving this fee assistance (and therefore prior to his/her GCSE year) the parents would be liable to repay to the school an amount equal to the 40% fee assistance they had received over the two years – in this example equating to a sum of £8,000.

Parents entering into an agreement to receive a Bursary or Scholarship from the school must undertake to repay any fee assistance given should their child leave Gad's Hill School prior to the end of their GCSE year.

11. Confidentiality

The School respects the confidentiality of information provided in support of applications for bursary fee assistance, and awards made to families. Pupils and parents are required as a condition of the award to do likewise.

12. Other Sources of Fee Assistance

In addition to the School's Funds, there are a number of educational and charitable trusts which provide assistance with tuition fees. In the majority of cases, these are to assist children who are already attending a fee-paying school and due to a change of circumstances may be unable to remain. The School encourages parents/guardians to apply for support where it is felt a good case can be made for assistance. Further information on how to pursue such assistance may be obtained from the Bursar.

Annex A: Worked Examples of Upper School Sibling Fee Assistance and Family Fee Assistance Guarantee (FFAG and effect of FFAG highlighted in green)

FAMILY A: THREE CHILDREN, ONE IN NURSERY, ONE IN JUNIORS, ONE IN UPPER SCHOOL

	Children in Nursery 	Children  in KR to Lower Shell	Children  in Upper School
Starting Point	Early Years Foundation Stage Funded sessions as eligible with or without chargeable sessions in addition	Full fees	Full fees
Upper School Sibling Fee Assistance	None	None	5%
Family Fee Assistance Guarantee	None	None	None as one of only two eligible children
Total Fee Assistance	None	None	5%

FAMILY B: FOUR CHILDREN, ONE IN NURSERY, TWO IN JUNIORS, ONE IN UPPER SCHOOL

	Children  in Nursery	Children in KR to Lower Shell 		Children  in Upper School
Starting Point	Early Years Foundation Stage Funded sessions as eligible with or without chargeable sessions in addition	Full fees	Full fees	Full fees
Upper School Sibling Fee Assistance	None	None	None	5%
Family Fee Assistance Guarantee	None	None	None	15%
Total Fee Assistance	None	None	None	20%

Family C: Three Children, One in Nursery, Two in Upper School

	Children  in Nursery	Children in KR to Lower Shell None	Children in Upper School	
				
Starting Point	Early Years Foundation Stage Funded sessions as eligible with or without chargeable sessions in addition	N/A	Full fees less 10% Drama Scholarship	Full fees
Upper School Sibling Fee Assistance	None	N/A	5%	5%
Family Fee Assistance Guarantee	None	N/A	None as one of only two eligible children	None as one of only two eligible children
Total Fee Assistance	None	N/A	15%	5%

Family D: Three Children, One in Kindergarten (not Nursery), Two in Upper School

	Children in Nursery None	Children  in KR to Lower Shell	Children in Upper School	
			 (younger)	 (older)
Starting Point	N/A	Full fees	Full fees less 10% Drama Scholarship	Full fees
Upper School Sibling Fee Assistance	N/A	None	5%	5%
Family Fee Assistance Guarantee	N/A	None	None	15%
Total Fee Assistance	N/A	None	15%	20%

Family E: Three Children, All in Juniors

	Children in Nursery None	Children in KR to Lower Shell			Children in Upper School None
					
Starting Point	N/A	Full fees	Full fees	Full fees	N/A
Upper School Sibling Fee Assistance	N/A	None	None	None	N/A
Family Fee Assistance Guarantee	N/A	None	None	20%	N/A
Total Fee Assistance	N/A	None	None	20%	N/A

Family F: Three Children, Two in Juniors, One in Upper School

	Children in Nursery None	Children in KR to Lower Shell		Children  in Upper School
				
Starting Point	N/A	Full fees	Full fees	Full fees less 30% Art Scholarship
Upper School Sibling Fee Assistance	N/A	None	None	5%
Family Fee Assistance Guarantee	N/A	None	None	None as the pupil is already receiving 20% Fee Assistance or more
Total Fee Assistance	N/A	None	None	35%