



Westbourne
House School

CHICHESTER

ADMISSIONS POLICY

This is the policy of Westbourne House School, which incorporates the Prep School, Pre-Prep, Early Years Foundation Stage as well as provision for boarding

Authority and Circulation

This policy has been authorised by the Governing Body of Westbourne House School and is available to prospective parents and pupils and to all members of the teaching and administration staff.

Policy Statement

This policy, as reflected in its aims below, establishes the criteria for admission to Westbourne House.

Aims

The aims of this policy are:

- To ensure compliance with the School's charitable purposes. Westbourne House School is a mainstream boarding and day school for boys and girls aged 2½ to 13 years with a Christian ethos.
- To identify and admit children who will benefit from an academic education and who will contribute to and benefit from the ethos and activities of our school community.
- Only to admit a child whom we feel will benefit from our school community.

Equal Treatment: We welcome children from many different ethnic groups, backgrounds and creeds. Human rights and freedoms are respected but must be balanced with the lawful needs and rules of our School community and the rights and freedoms of others. All candidates for admission will be treated equally, irrespective of their, or their parents' gender, sexual orientation (gay, lesbian, bi-sexual or transgender), gender re-assignment, race, colour, language, pregnancy, maternity, religion, political or other opinion, national or social origin, association with a national minority, property, birth or other status. We expect all our pupils to attend our chapel services and School assemblies that are fundamental to our Christian ethos.

Disability and Special Educational Needs: The School has limited facilities for the disabled but will do all that is reasonable to comply with its legal and moral responsibilities under the Equality Act 2010 in order to accommodate the needs of applicants who have disabilities for which, with reasonable adjustments, the School can cater adequately.

The School needs to be aware of any known disability or special educational needs which may affect a child's ability to take full advantage of the education provided at the School.

Parents of a child which has any disability or special educational needs should provide the School with full written details at registration, or subsequently before accepting the offer of a place.

The School needs this information so that, in the case of any child with particular needs, we can assess those needs and consult with parents about the adjustments which can reasonably be made to cater adequately for the child's needs both during the admission process and if an offer of a place is made.

Similarly, if special education needs or a disability become apparent after admission, the School will consult with parents about reasonable adjustments that may allow the child to continue at the School.

Practice and Procedure

There is no selection or assessment of children entering the School. Children are invited to spend a day at the School during which time they will take part in normal lessons.

Disclosures: Parents must as soon as possible disclose any particular known or suspected circumstances relating to their child's health, allergies, disabilities or learning difficulties. We may request further information such as a medical certificate or educational psychologist's report and any associated correspondence or details from the pupil's current school (including samples of work) or any family history of dyslexia, as we consider necessary to make a fair assessment.

Candidate's age: Places are offered in the standard year of the child. (If, however, we consider, as a matter of professional judgement, that this would be in the best interests of the pupil and the School, a child may be accelerated or held back in agreement).

Additional factors: The School is often oversubscribed. If we have to decide between two or more candidates who meet our admission requirements after all appropriate allowances and special consideration has been given, we may give preference to:

- A child who already has (or is about to have) a brother/sister in the School or whose parent is a former pupil here.
- A child whose parent is a current member of our staff.
- A child with a particular skill, talent or aptitude.

Scholarships: The School holds a reputation for excellence in academics, music, sport and creative arts, as testified by the long list of scholarships won at major public schools in each of these areas. Through our scholarship scheme we aim to attract and promote talent. Within a vibrant, innovative, supportive and sensitive environment, the School aims to stimulate and encourage children to maximise their potential in mind, body and spirit through a broad and varied curriculum.

- **The Sharman Academic Scholarship:** open to all children entering Year 3 (7+) at Westbourne House. Candidates are expected to demonstrate high academic potential and intellectual curiosity. Awards will initially be offered for Years 3-6, but may be continued on merit to Year 8. Up to three scholarships will be awarded, each with a value of up to 15% of the fees.
- **The Maurice Ellis Music Scholarship:** Music is a central feature of Westbourne life. Facilities are excellent, with a purpose-built Music School and a theatre complex. Our Director of Music and his team direct the numerous choirs, ensembles, bands and orchestras, as well as managing an extensive individual tuition programme. A number of Music Scholarships are available to children entering Years 3 and 4. Awards are made up to 20% of the School fees, in addition to free musical tuition.

To register interest for either/both of the above, parents are requested to make contact with the Admissions Officer: admissions@westbournehouse.org

Means-Tested Bursaries: The Governors of Westbourne House are committed to broadening access to the school by offering to eligible parents/guardians means-tested financial support towards the payment of school fees.

Such support, known as a Bursary, may be awarded in the form of a discount of up to 100% on tuition fees payable, depending on the financial, compassionate or other pertinent circumstances of applicants. Please refer to Appendix 1.

Staffing and Resources

By resolution of the Board of Governors.

Monitoring and review

The School will review and monitor the effectiveness and compliance of this policy (and appendices – if appropriate). This policy will be kept up-to-date and amended to take account of legislative and regulatory changes.

Last Review Date	Next Review Date	Reviewer(s)
January 2019	August 2019	Head Admissions Officer Bursar (for and on behalf of the Governing Body)

Appendix 1 – Means-Tested Bursaries

General

The Governors of Westbourne House are committed to broadening access to the school by offering to eligible parents/guardians means-tested financial support towards the payment of schools fees. Such support, known as a Bursary, may be awarded in the form of a discount of up to 100% on tuition fees payable, depending on the financial, compassionate or other pertinent circumstances of applicants.

Bursary awards are subject to repeat testing of parental means each year and may be varied upwards or downwards, depending on parental circumstances. Awards may be varied upwards or downwards depending on 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 pertinent considerations.

Requests for financial support usually fall into two categories:

- Children who have shown talent and potential in our scholarship process but who need some financial assistance to fund the tuition fees.
- Existing pupils where a 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 stage of education.

New Applicants to the School

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 schools fees is included in:

- The School prospectus
- The School website
- The local press by means of scholarship advertisements

The Application Process

Bursaries may be made available to parents/guardians of children entering Westbourne House. (See the School's Admission's Policy). They are awarded at the discretion of the Governors. The Head and Bursar are responsible for the management and coordination of the process.

- Step One. Parents/guardians seeking a bursary are required to complete an application form which seeks to establish the financial circumstances of the household. The form, which requests details of income and capital, may be found at

Annex A and must be accompanied by full documentary evidence, including bank or building society current account statements for the last two months.

- The completed forms, together with the necessary documentary evidence, are to be submitted to the Bursar, on request, for bursaries to start the following September.
- Step Two. The application form is passed in confidence to Bursary Administration Ltd, an independent company which assists schools in assessing bursary applications. One of their representatives arranges to visit the parents/guardians at their home to discuss and verify the information provided. Following the visit Bursary Administration Ltd sends a report to the Governors giving as objective a report as possible on the family's circumstances and the likely level of support needed.
- Step Three. Based on that report, the Bursar prepares a recommendation which is considered with the Head and a joint recommendation is then reached.
- Step Four. The joint recommendation is presented to the Governors' Finance Committee for approval.
- Step Five. The parents/guardians are advised whether their child is to be offered a place at the School and of the Bursary offer.
- Step Six. Parents/guardians are then required to sign a letter accepting the place at the school and an acknowledgement agreeing to any conditions relating to the bursary.

The Case for Assistance. The Head and Bursar 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 assessment results of each applicant, but potential will 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 Head, 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 offered by the School. In normal circumstances, each applicant should meet the School's normal academic requirements. Previous school reports will be consulted for evidence of good behaviour.

- Financial Limitations. The amount of the bursary award is not influenced by the level of 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 what is viable 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 personal. However, the School has a duty to ensure that all bursary grants are well focussed 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 equity values in property.
 - In cases of separation, the contribution made by the absent parent.
 - Contribution to household costs, including school fees, by other family members, any adults unrelated to the child or by outside sources.
 - Where fees are being paid to other schools (or universities) the School's grant will take into account all these outgoings.
 - 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/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: if suffering from bullying at the present school).
 - Where a parent/guardian is terminally ill or is unable to secure permanent employment owing 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

Within overall budget funding, the School will in normal circumstances set aside each year a Hardship Fund, 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 for a bursary to the Bursar explaining their situation using the standard ISBA form. Such awards are subject to the availability of funding and cannot be guaranteed. Generally applications will be assessed along the same lines as discussed in the paragraph entitled 'The Case for Assistance', but in these cases the Governors will need to prioritise applications and may take into account:

- The family's financial prospects
- The age of the child(ren) and therefore –
- The length of time over which support might be required and
- Whether it might be better for a child to leave the School at a natural break point
- The contribution which the child(ren) and parents make to the life of the School

Annual Review

All bursary awards are subject to repeat testing of parental means each year and may be varied upwards or downwards depending on parental circumstances. The Bursar will send current bursary holders repeat means-testing forms during April of each year for return by the end of the month. For those previously in receipt of bursaries, the Head and Bursar, in making their joint recommendation to the Governors' Finance Committee, have the discretion to recommend to the Governors 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/guardians 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 likewise.

Other Sources of Bursary Assistance

In addition to the School's Bursary and Hardship Funds, there are a number of educational and charitable trusts which provide assistance with tuition fees. A starting point is

Educational Grants Advice
Independent Schools Council
c/o Royal National Children's Foundation
Sandy Lane
Cobham
Surrey
KT11 2ES

Tel: 01932 868622

Email: admin@rnf.org.uk

Parents may also like to look at the website of the Educational Trusts Forum at:

<http://www.educational-grants.org>

Westbourne House encourages parents/guardians to apply for support from one or more of the trusts where it is felt a good case can be made for assistance.