

TAUNTON SCHOOL

SCHOLARSHIP AND BURSARY POLICY

General

Taunton School is committed to broadening access to the school by offering financial support with the payment of fees to parents who are otherwise unable to afford them.

Scholarships

Taunton Prep

We offer Academic, Sport and Performing Arts scholarships to candidates for entry into Year 7 and subject to suitable progress and behaviour, these may, subject to regular performance review, continue through to the end of the 6th Form. It is possible for pupils who have a broad all-round ability to enter into a combination of the categories above in order to achieve an All-Rounder Scholarship.

Scholarships may be honorary or carry a fee remission of up to 40%. If a scholarship has been awarded, parents in genuine financial need can also apply for a means-tested bursary.

The Headmaster may also offer a small number of Headmaster's Awards of up to 50% in cases of exceptional ability in a specific area.

Taunton School

We offer Academic, Sport, Art, Music, Design Technology and ICT scholarships to candidates for entry into Year 9 and Year 12 for new pupils and existing pupils. In addition, we recognise all-round ability and welcome applications from candidates who demonstrate high ability in Art, Drama, Music or Sport combined with strong academic ability.

The Headmaster may also offer a small number of Headmaster's Awards of up to 50% in all year groups in cases of exceptional ability.

Bursaries

Bursaries are available as part of the Admissions process for new pupils to the School who are recognised as being able to make a contribution to the life of the school, and to existing pupils in cases of financial hardship. Means-tested bursaries can be assessed for up to 100% of fees in extreme cases, although it is more likely that they will be calculated as a top-up to support a parent's payment of fees. They are subject to annual review early in the academic year up to Year 11. The application process involves the completion and submission of a statement of financial circumstances [here] which must be supported by the relevant documentation. Applications must be made well in advance of a pupil's entry into the School.

Taunton School is committed to providing bursaries to allow those who otherwise would not be able to attend the School to do so. It is working hard to increase its capacity to award bursaries but resources are finite. The School does everything in its power to direct such funds as are available to

the greatest number of pupils who need most support. We ask parents to respect the spirit of that relationship and apply in the utmost good faith. Before asking for bursary support, parents are expected to have explored all alternative sources of funding and for many that may involve support from the wider family.

Hardship Awards

Parents of current pupils may apply for a Hardship Award if there is a significant change in their financial circumstances (for example a redundancy or critical illness) which could not have been foreseen at the time of entry. When considering such applications, account will also be taken of a report on the pupil's contribution to the life of the School.

Application Process

Details of the bursary and scholarship application process are available from the Admissions Office and are on the website.

- Step One. When a parent applies for a place for their child at Taunton School and asks for more information about assistance with fees, the Admissions Team will give them the opportunity of putting their child forward for a Scholarship (if relevant for the child, year of entry and timing in the school year). All scholarship application forms ask parents to confirm whether or not they require financial assistance. If they do, they are offered the opportunity to complete a means-test to establish their eligibility for a Means-Tested Bursary.
 - If a Scholarship is not appropriate or possible at the date of application, the Admissions Team will still offer parents the opportunity to complete a means-test to establish their eligibility for a Means-Tested Bursary, independent of any Scholarship Award. Parents are required to follow the normal registration and admissions procedures.
 - The Bursary application form seeks to establish the financial circumstances of the household. The form, which requests details of income and capital, may be found under whole school policies on the website, must be accompanied by full documentary evidence. The completed forms, together with the necessary documentary evidence, are to be returned to the Admissions Office.
- Step Two. The School Accountant will assess all bursary applications in order to establish the likely level of support which will be required in order to allow the child to attend the School. This may involve the COO or her 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 School Accountant prepares a recommendation in accordance with the Taunton School Scale of Awards, which the Headmaster considers and a recommendation is then reached. Awards will be made giving due consideration to the school's financial position at that point in time.
- Step Four. The parents are advised by the Admissions Team whether their child is to be offered a place at the School and whether or not they will be made a Bursarial Award offer. The child may be offered either a Scholarship Award or a Bursarial Award or both or none.

- Step Five. Parents are then required to sign a letter accepting the place at the school and an acknowledgement agreeing to any conditions relating to the award.

The Case for Assistance.

The Headmaster and COO 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 Scholarship examination results or other assessments, but potential will also be considered. 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 Headmaster, be likely to make sound progress following admission and possess the potential to do so, 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 and admissions procedures before any award is made.
- Financial Limitations. The size of bursary is not influenced by the level of the 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 bursarial awards are well focussed and so, as well as current earnings, other factors which will be considered in determining the necessary level of grant which 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 (for example a military spouse who is required to move house often).
 - 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 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.
 - A large amount of equity held within property.
- Other Factors. It is recognised that, in addition to 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.

Confidentiality and Conditions of Award

The School respects the confidentiality of bursary awards made to families and recipients are expected to do likewise. It will usually be made clear in the bursary award confirmation letter that the amount of the award remains confidential and should not be discussed outside immediate family either by parents or pupils. Breach of confidentiality by a parent may result in the withdrawal of a bursary award.

All scholarship and bursary awards are subject to the School's Conditions of Awards which are appended to this policy.

Scholarship, Award or bursary: Conditions of Award

- 1 **Grant of the award:** An award is granted at the sole discretion of Taunton School.
- 2 **Obligations of the Pupil:** The Pupil who is the subject of an award is required to work hard, to contribute positively to the life of the School, to be a credit to the School and to set a good example to other pupils. The Pupil must adhere to the School's required standards of conduct and progress. These are the **Purposes of the Award**.
- 3 **Obligations of the Parents:** The Parents are required to:
 - 3.1 support and encourage the Pupil to achieve the Purposes of the Award; and
 - 3.2 treat members of the School community reasonably and to uphold the aims and the good name of the School; and
 - 3.3 comply with the School's *Terms and Conditions*.
- 4 **Means tested awards:** All means tested awards will be subject to periodic review and the Parents shall, on request, be required to complete a financial means questionnaire. After any annual review, the School reserves the right to vary the value of the award with immediate effect and will confirm the new value in writing to the Parents should there be a change in financial circumstances.

5 **Continuation of the award:** Continuation of the award is dependent upon the following conditions being fulfilled:

5.1 in the case of a means tested award, the Parents satisfying the School's financial requirements each year; and / or

5.2 in respect of all awards:

5.2.1 the financial resources allocated by the School to support the award being sufficient to maintain the award; and

5.2.2 it being in the financial interests of the School to maintain the award.

6 **Confidentiality:** The value and terms and conditions of the award shall remain confidential to the Parents and the Pupil and the School.

7 **Termination of the award:** The award may be terminated on the following grounds:

7.1 **termination on financial grounds:** the School may terminate the award on one Term's notice in writing if, in the opinion of the Headmaster acting in good faith:

7.1.1 the Parents have not satisfied the School's financial requirements under clause 4 and clause 5.1; or

7.1.2 the School is no longer able to continue the award under clause 5.2.

The termination shall take effect from the date set out in the written notice and any appeal should follow the school's complaints procedure

7.2 **termination on the grounds of conduct:** the School may terminate the award by written notice sent to the Parents with immediate effect if, in the opinion of the Headmaster acting in good faith, one or more of the following conditions has been fulfilled:

7.2.1 the Pupil has not complied with the obligations set out in clause 2 and in the further opinion of the Headmaster there has been no significant improvement following consultation with the Parents and / or the Pupil and the issue of a written warning; or

7.2.2 the Parents have not complied with the obligations set out in clause 3; or

7.2.3 the Parents of the Pupil do not keep the value and terms and conditions of the award confidential in accordance with clause 6; or

7.2.4 the Parents withdraw the Pupil from the School without providing proper Notice;

It should be noted that an award can be terminated at the absolute discretion of the Headmaster.

7.3 **repayment of the award:** the Parents will be required to repay all or part of the benefits received under the award if it is terminated in any of the following circumstances:

7.3.1 under clause 7.1.1 if the Parents have knowingly or recklessly provided false or inaccurate information about their financial position, all benefits received

from the date on which the false or inaccurate information was supplied ~~will~~ be repayable. Taunton School will seek all legal options to achieve full repayment of any award in the event that a parent is shown to have not given full financial information; or

7.3.2 under clause 7.2.1 if the Pupil has been found to have committed a serious breach or series of persistent minor breaches of discipline for which the sanction would normally be Expulsion or required Removal, up to three Terms' benefits (if received) may be repayable.

8 **Cancellation and Withdrawal:** For the avoidance of doubt, the benefit receivable under an award will not apply to the Parents' liability to pay the first Term's Fees if less than a Term's Written Notice of Cancellation is given, or to any Term for which the School requires payment of Fees in lieu of Notice following Withdrawal without proper Notice.

Conditions of Award: These Conditions of Award take precedence over any of the School's *Terms and Conditions* which are inconsistent with them but in all other respects the School's *Terms and Conditions* as amended from time to time shall apply and these Conditions of Award shall be interpreted in accordance with them.