



HOMEFIELD PREPARATORY SCHOOL

Means-Tested Bursary Policy

2026

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May 2026	May 2027	2026.01

Means-Tested Bursary Policy

General

Bursary awards are means tested and relate to fees affordability. They are open, by application, to existing parents/guardians or to those whose boys have passed our entrance assessment.

Bursaries

The Governors of Homefield Preparatory School are committed to broadening access to the school by offering limited means-tested financial support with the payment of school fees to eligible parents/guardians. Such support is known as a bursary and are normally only considered for boys in Year 3 upwards.

Bursary awards are subject to testing of parental means each year and the level of the award may be varied depending on circumstances. Awards are made on the basis of a number of different factors and will depend on individual parents'/guardians' financial 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:

1. New applicants to the School, where their parents/guardians are unable to afford the full fees;
2. 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parents'/guardians' circumstances has resulted in difficulty in meeting tuition fees and may result in the child being withdrawn part way through a stage of education.

Bursaries are awarded at the discretion of the Governors.

1. 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 school fees is included in the school prospectus and on the school website.

The Application Process

Bursaries may be made available to parents/guardians of children entering Years 3 to 6 of Homefield Preparatory School but only in exceptional circumstances would a bursary be awarded to pupils below Year 3. They are awarded after consideration by the Head and Bursar, who are responsible for the management and coordination of the process, and this is reported to Trustees.

Step one. Parents/guardians seeking a bursary are required to register for a place at Homefield Preparatory School and their son will be academically assessed. If the student reaches our selective assessment criterion the extent of the bursary can then be assessed.

Step two. Parents/guardians must complete a bursary application form, which seeks to establish the financial circumstances of the household. The form, which can be obtained from the Bursar, requests details of income and capital, and must be accompanied by full documentary evidence. The completed forms, together with the necessary documentary evidence, are to be submitted to the Bursar no later than the **30th March** in any year for bursaries to start the **following September**. All applications are assessed in order to establish the likely level of support which will be required in order to allow the child to attend the school. Homefield Preparatory School currently uses Bursary Administration Ltd (BAL) to support the financial assessment of bursary applications. BAL is registered as a Data Controller with the Information Commissioner's Office. Parents will be expected to provide a full financial disclosure to BAL, who will also arrange an online visit as part of the assessment process to ensure the information has been correctly interpreted and the basis of the financial assessment has been fair. To view their website please visit www.schoolbursaryguide.com. The School may vary its procedures, from time to time, with regard to any such external validation and will inform any applicants of this.

Step three. The Head and Bursar will consider the external report based on the financial assessment alongside our academic assessment for selective entry requirement. There may be in addition pastoral or supporting information, for consideration, offered or known to the School. The Head and Bursar will then propose a bursary award which is then considered by the Governors.

Step four. Parents/guardians are advised of their suitability for an award. This process will be completed by **31st April**. Parents/guardians are then required to sign the Terms and Conditions accepting the place at the school and an acknowledgement agreeing to any conditions relating to the bursary.

The Case for Assistance

The Governors will consider a number of factors when making the judgement as to the justification for support and the extent of such support. Each case is assessed on its own merits and awards are made accordingly, subject to the School's ability to fund any awards.

- **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. Currently the School uses CAT assessments with quantifiable metrics. 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 work and benefit from participation in the wider, extra-curricular activities on offer at the school. References from the candidate's current school will form part of the process.
- **Financial limitations.** The amount of the bursary award is not influenced by the level of 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 what is viable within the 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:

- 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 houses.
- In cases of separation, the contribution made by both parents.
- 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 level of support will take into account all these outgoings. The support offered to additional children in the household by their school will also be taken into consideration.
- Acknowledging that others might have a different view, the school considers that indications of affordability such as the following may not be consistent with the receipt of a bursary:
 - frequent or costly holidays;
 - new or costly cars;
 - investment in significant home improvements;
 - significant tutoring costs;
 - 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 may be considered including:
 - Where the social needs of the child are relevant.
 - Where a parent/guardian is terminally ill or is unable to secure permanent employment due to poor health.

2. Existing Pupils - Change in Family Circumstances

Within overall budget funding, the school recognises there are 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. Such awards are subject to the availability of funding and cannot be guaranteed or may be limited to completion of a school year. Parents/guardians with a child at the school whose financial circumstances suddenly change may apply for a hardship award explaining their situation and requesting assistance, but only after a fee deferral or payment plan has been explored and put in place. Hardship funding is considered a last resort, to avoid the pupil having to leave the school. Parents will be expected to be pro-active to demonstrate that there is a case for a hardship funding in line with 'the case for assistance' above. BAL will be used to support the financial assessment of applications.

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. Current bursary or hardship funding holders will be issued with repeat means-testing forms at the beginning of March each year for return by the end of the month. For those previously in receipt of bursaries, the Head and Bursar, in consultation with the Governors, have the discretion to reduce or withdraw 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.

Applications

Applications for Bursaries should be addressed to:

The Bursar,
Homefield Preparatory School,
Western Road,
Sutton,
Surrey, SM1 2TE.

Email: bursar@homefieldprep.school
Telephone: 020 8642 0965 x231

Other Sources of Bursary Assistance

In addition to the school's bursary fund, 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. Homefield Preparatory 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 Educational Trusts Forum
Website: www.educational-grants.org
The Royal National Children's Foundation
Website: www.rncf.org.uk

Both bursary and scholarship awards are reported to the Trustees annually, who take steps to overview efficiency of process and probity throughout. We report overall spend in our published Annual Report to the Charity Commission.