STAHS
PREP SENIOR SIXTH

Bursaries

Admissions Policy Related Document

September 2026

THINK BEYOND

STAHS

PREP SENIOR SIXTH

A PART OF

ST ALBANS EDUCATION GROUP

STAHS P10: Admissions Related Document

BURSARIES

Contents

1. General 3
2. New applicants to the School 3
3. The Bursary application process - existing pupils (change in family circumstances) 4
4. The Case for Assistance 5
5. Confidentiality 6
6. Other Sources of Financial Assistance 6
7. Bursary Award Terms and Conditions 6
8. Number of Bursary Awards 7

1. General

1.1. Bursary Awards are available to pupils applying for Year 7 and Year 12 entry to the Senior School. Bursary Awards are not currently available to pupils applying to join the Prep School. STAHS is committed to providing a transformative secondary education to as many as possible of the young people who meet the School's entry criteria, regardless of their financial circumstances. Making 100% Bursary Awards – covering the full cost of tuition fees – is a priority for the School. The School may also make additional awards over and above the cost of the tuition fees, for example to assist with costs such as travel, uniform, school lunches, educational trips and music lessons.

1.2. Bursary Awards are subject to annual repeat testing of parental means and may be varied upwards or downwards depending on parental circumstances. The value of the award will be influenced by parents'/guardians' circumstances, including their savings, investments and realisable assets, as well as their income and the size of their dependent family.

1.3. Requests for financial support usually fall into two categories:

1.3.1. New applicants to the School, where a place has been offered but parents/guardians are unable to fund the tuition fees.

1.3.2. Existing pupils – where a change in parents'/guardians' circumstances has resulted in short term difficulty meeting tuition fees, parents may request hardship support. This is means assessed and provides financial assistance that is capped at one term's fees.

2. New applicants to the School

2.1. Information provided by the School alerting the parents/guardians of prospective pupils to the possibility of gaining means-tested bursary support towards the payment of School fees is included in:

- Promotional materials
- The School website

2.2. Step 1:

Parents/guardians wishing to be considered for financial support must indicate this on their main online Application Form when applying for a place at STAHS. They will then be sent a link to the School's Bursary Application online platform where they will be invited to register and complete the bursary application form. The Finance team can provide help in completing the application. The completed application form, and all the required accompanying documentation, must be submitted to the School by the published deadline. Late applications are unlikely to be accepted.

2.3. Step 2:

The Finance team will review all applications to establish the likely level of financial support required for the child to attend the School. This review process includes a financial assessment by an external specialist company, who may also visit the home of the family as part of their

assessment. All assessments, visits and interviews will normally be completed between November and March.

2.4. Step 3:

The Admissions Selection Committee makes its decisions on offering places without any information on financial status of the candidates. Only after all offers of places have been decided, the Senior colleague in finance, Senior School Head and Principal meet to discuss each bursary application.

Candidates who are assessed as needing financial support AND who meet the School's entry criteria are considered for support. Bursaries are awarded to candidates based on their ranking by the Admissions Selection Committee; those candidates who rank highest in the cohort following their admissions assessment will be offered Bursary Awards first, and this will continue in descending order of ranking until the Bursary Fund for that cohort is exhausted. Not all candidates who have applied for a Bursary Award will receive funding if the number of applications for Bursary funding is greater than the available funds.

2.5. Step 4:

Following the School's decision on offers of places, and in line with the published schedule, parents/guardians who have made applications for financial support are advised whether their child is to be offered a place, whether they have been awarded a Bursary and if they have, what level of award they will receive.

2.6. Step 5:

Parents/guardians accepting places and Bursary Awards are required to sign a form accepting a place in the School and agreeing to the conditions relating to the award.

The School normally tries to keep at a constant level any award which is made on entry, thereby enabling parents to plan for their child's education, unless subsequent annual reviews reveal that an increased parental contribution can be afforded in which case the award will be reduced accordingly. It is unusual for an award to be increased after a pupil has entered the School unless there has been a significant change in family circumstances.

3. The Bursary application process - existing pupils (change in family circumstances)

3.1. If a place is accepted for a pupil without a Bursary Award on entering the School, the provision of financial assistance is only considered where the parents'/guardians' ability to pay has declined significantly due to wholly unforeseen circumstances. Parents/guardians with a child in the School whose financial circumstances suddenly change should contact the Fees Manager to discuss their situation. This must be a significant new situation which has developed since the child started at the School, such as illness, death or redundancy. Parental divorce or separation is unlikely on its own to be sufficient reason for a

hardship award. Following a discussion with the Fees Manager, parents may be invited to apply for funding via the short-term Hardship Fund. If the application for a Bursary Award is made at the point of transition from Year 6 to Year 7, pupils may be required sit the STAHS Year 7 admissions assessment and awards will be subject to our Bursary Application process (see above) and dependent upon Bursary Fund availability.

4. The Case for Assistance

4.1. The School will consider a number of factors when making a judgement on the need for a Bursary Award. As with all applications for places, we seek to identify pupils who will gain most from and give most to STAHS.

4.2. The decision to make a Bursary Award is entirely at the discretion of the Head.

4.3. Suitability: In assessing a child's suitability, potential as well as attainment in examinations and assessments are considered. Bursary funds are limited and priority will be given to those we judge can benefit most from STAHS curricular and co-curricular provision. Each pupil to whom support is offered must, in the opinion of the Head, be likely to make good academic progress following admission and benefit from participation in the wider, co-curricular activities on offer at the School. Each applicant should meet the School's normal academic requirements. Families with a gross household income below £85,000 pa may be eligible for an award, subject to net assets. This figure is indicative only and the School cannot guarantee that it will apply to particular parents.

4.4. Financial limitations: 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 personal. However, the School has a duty to ensure that all Bursary Awards are well focussed and so, as well as current earnings, other factors which will be considered will include:

a) 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 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 sizeable equity value in houses. Ownership of second properties, other than the residence in which the child resides, is likely to disqualify applicants from being offered a Bursary Award. Assets owned abroad must also be disclosed.

c) In cases of separation, the ability of both parents to support the child's education will be considered. It is expected that parents, although divorced or separated, will cooperate to contribute jointly, in whatever proportion is necessary, to the payment of school fees.

d) Contribution to household costs by others, including members of the wider family, and any adults unrelated to the child, or by outside sources.

e) Where fees are being paid to other schools (or universities) the School's award will take into account all these outgoings. However, the School would expect support to be provided from these schools as well. It is unlikely that the School would provide a Bursary Award if full fees are being paid for a sibling elsewhere.

f) Acknowledging that others might have a different view, the School considers that the following would not be consistent with the receipt of a Bursary Award:

- Frequent or expensive holidays
- Luxury cars
- Second property or land holdings.
- Where self-employment or running one's own business results in a declared income which is lower than the parents could reasonably earn elsewhere, this may be regarded as a personal financial choice. The School therefore reserves the right to base any Bursary Award on reasonable earnings which might be achieved in employment.

5. Confidentiality

5.1. The School respects the confidentiality of Bursary Award applications and awards made to families. Recipients are expected to do likewise. Families who accept an award may be approached by the School to discuss their experiences, to help develop future processes or to support fundraising initiatives.

5.2. Where necessary the School will share appropriate information with an external specialist company which undertakes some of the Bursary Award reviews on behalf of the School. Parents/guardians who are Bursary Award holders are required to advise the School of any change of circumstance which would affect eligibility for financial support. If the School becomes aware that information provided is inaccurate, or out of date, the Bursary Award may be revised or terminated the following term.

6. Other Sources of Financial Assistance

6.1. 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 there 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 Educational Trusts Forum (www.educational-grants.org).

7. Bursary Award Terms and Conditions

7.1. Grant of Bursary Award. A Bursary Award is granted at the sole discretion of St Albans High School for Girls.

7.2. **Obligations of the Pupil.** A pupil who is the subject of a Bursary 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 and must meet the School's attendance requirements.

7.3. **Obligations of the Parents/Guardians.** The parents/guardians are required to support and encourage the pupil, to maintain a constructive relationship with the School and to uphold the aims and good name of the School. The parents are also required to pay the balance of fees and extras by the first day of term.

7.4. **Annual Review.** All means-tested Bursary Awards will be subject to annual review, and parents shall each year be required to complete a financial means questionnaire. Following the Annual Review, the School reserves the right to vary the value of the award and will confirm the new value in writing to the parents. However, any such adjustment of award will not operate so as to increase the fees due in respect of a term which has already commenced.

7.5. **Withdrawal of the Bursary Award.** The Bursary Award may be withdrawn by written notice sent to a parent as a result of the Annual Review under paragraph 4 above or if, in the opinion of the Principal or the Bursar, the pupil or a parent has not complied with the obligations set out in paragraphs 2 and 3 above. Withdrawal of the award will take effect from the start of the following term. If within fourteen (14) days following the withdrawal of a Bursary Award in its entirety a child is withdrawn from the School, no fees in lieu of notice will be payable.

7.6. **Repayment of the Bursary Award.** Parents/Guardians will be required to repay all or part of the Bursary Award (at the sole discretion of St Albans High School for Girls) if it is terminated in the following circumstances:

a) If parents have knowingly or recklessly provided false or inaccurate information about their financial position.

b) If the pupil has been found to have committed a serious breach, or a series of persistent minor breaches, of discipline for which the sanction would normally be expulsion or required removal, up to three terms' benefits may be repayable.

7.7. **Fees in Lieu of Notice.** For the avoidance of doubt, the benefits payable under the Bursary Award do not apply to any term for which the School has required payment of fees in lieu of notice.

7.8. **Conditions of the Bursary Award.** These Bursary Award Terms and Conditions take precedence over any of the School's standard 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 Bursary Award Terms and Conditions shall be interpreted with them.

8. Number of Bursary Awards

8.1. The number of Bursary Awards offered varies from year to year and depends on the funds available in the Bursary Fund.

8.2. Regardless of the Bursary Fund, the annual School Budget includes an allocation to go towards financing bursary awards amounting to the full fees equivalent of approximately 5% of places in the Senior School. This amount is reviewed by governors regularly.