



EXETER SCHOOL - GUIDANCE ON MEANS-TESTED BURSARIES

1) General

Exeter School aims to be as accessible as possible to boys and girls who would benefit from its academic, cultural, sporting and wide extra-curricular provision. The Governors of the School recognise that many of its parents have to make personal sacrifices to secure their children's education. Fees are set at levels which represent excellent value for money, particularly in light of the opportunities offered by the School, and some means tested awards are available.

The funds available for bursaries and Free Places are limited. When considering any award, the School is careful to ensure a balance between those parents paying full fees, many of whom make considerable personal sacrifices to fund their child's education, and those benefiting from any support. Any support is awarded at the absolute discretion of the Governors, and the Bursar is responsible for the management and coordination of the process on their behalf. The award of any bursary will be subject to the availability of funding and cannot be guaranteed.

2) Bursaries

Bursaries are means-tested awards made on an annual basis. They are available to external candidates who meet the School's academic entry requirement and whose parents could not afford to send their child to Exeter School without financial assistance. Bursaries are subject to regular testing of parental means, including assets and liabilities, and may be varied upwards or downwards, depending on parental circumstances. As a general guide, gross parental income will need to be below £70,000 p.a. to allow consideration for a bursary and support is unlikely where net assets exceed £300,000.

Requests for financial support fall into two categories:

- New applicants to the School, where a place has been offered but parents/guardians are unable to fund the school fees.
- Existing pupils where a change in parents/guardians' circumstances has resulted in difficulty in meeting the school fees and may result in the child being withdrawn part way through a stage of education (hardship awards).

3) Support to one family

As a general rule, the Governors do not believe it is appropriate to provide total support to one family of more than the equivalent of 100% of fees for one child.

4) Support in the Junior School

Because of the limited amount of funds available and because of the generally high quality of local primary education, the Governors generally look to prioritise support for pupils joining the Senior School. While support may be available to pupils in the Junior School, this will normally only be in very exceptional cases.

5) Free places

Exeter School offers a number of free places in the Senior School and Sixth Form, as a result of donations and legacies from former pupils, in addition to ongoing grants from a local charity.

- The Foundation bursaries, funded from alumni legacies and gifts, will offer free places for pupils entering the School at 11+ (Year 7).
- The St John's Hospital Educational Foundation Grant will offer one or two full bursaries for Sixth Form entry.

The generosity of our alumni and others with connections to the School is central to our being able to provide the large amount of support we can give to bright children from families in modest circumstances, families who would otherwise be unable to take advantage of our splendid facilities and the first-class education.

6) Application process

Parents/guardians seeking a bursary are required to complete a detailed application form which seeks to establish the financial circumstances of the household. The form, which requests details of income, expenditure, assets and liabilities, **must** be accompanied by both full documentary evidence and a covering letter setting out the reasons for the application. The completed application must be submitted to the Bursar no later than 31 December for support to start the following September. Early applications are encouraged although applications received after this date may be considered but only in exceptional circumstances. Please note that all forms must be signed in the presence of a Commissioner for Oaths, Solicitor or Notary Public.

On receipt of the covering letter, the completed and witnessed form and all supporting documentation, a home visit will be arranged either by the School or by the School's independent agent, bursary Administration Limited (see their website for more details: <https://www.schoolbursaryguide.com/>).

A report will then be prepared summarising the application and this will be reviewed by the Bursar, in consultation the Governors as appropriate. The parents/guardians are then advised whether they are eligible for a bursary or Free Place and how much support they might receive. Parents/guardians will be required to sign an agreement accepting the place at the School and an acknowledgement agreeing to any conditions relating to the bursary.

7) Existing pupils - change in family circumstances

There may be occasions where a sudden change in the circumstances of the family of a current pupil may require the parents to request financial support. The process for determining the suitability for any support will be as set out above. Where support is given, it may be in the form of revised payment terms rather than a reduction in fees.

8) The case for assistance.

The School will consider a number of factors when making the judgement as to the justification for any support. The amount of any bursary is not influenced by 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 its overall budget. It is recognised that judgements about what sacrifices a family should make to pay school fees will be subjective. However, the School has a duty to ensure that all bursaries are well focussed and so, as well as current earnings, other factors will be considered in determining the necessary level of any award. These will include:

- The ability to improve the financial position or earning power of the family. 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.
- Reducing cash outgoings. Note that the School believes that significant mortgage capital over-repayments or pension contributions are likely to be incompatible with the provision of financial assistance towards school fees.
- 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.
- Ensuring that where siblings are at other fee paying schools these other schools are at least matching any level of support the parents are expecting from Exeter School.
- Where a sibling is being supported at university, the maximum use is being made by the family of grants and loans as well as part time employment by the sibling.
- Acknowledging that while 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.

It is recognised that, in addition to academic ability and financial constraints, there may be other circumstances which should be considered.

8) Notification of changes in circumstance

A condition of any bursarial support is that parents must inform the School immediately should their financial circumstances improve such that they may no longer require the same level of support.

Additionally, the School requires that no reductions are made to any existing debts or mortgages without prior discussion with the school. This does not include regular monthly capital repayments that were declared on the Statement of Financial Circumstances at the time of application.

9) Review of existing support

All bursary awards are subject to regular testing of parental means and may be varied upwards or downwards depending on parental circumstances. Current bursary holders will be contacted if a review is deemed necessary. Parents must be aware that the school reserves the right to vary the criteria used to assess bursaries at any time and at its absolute discretion.

For those previously in receipt of bursaries, the Governors, through the Bursar, have the discretion to reduce or withdraw a bursary 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 or other breach of the School's Terms and Conditions.

10) Confidentiality

A condition of any support is that the terms and quantum of this support remain absolutely confidential.

11) Other sources of bursary assistance

In addition to support from the School, 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. Exeter 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 is available from The Educational Trusts Forum (www.educational-grants.org).

For parents resident in Devon, please also see Viscount Amory's Charitable Trust, details of which can be found here <http://www.vact.org.uk/>

12) Payment of School fees

Please note that failure to pay the School fees when due may lead to the withdrawal of any financial support.



Exeter School is a company limited by guarantee and registered in England, registered number 04470478 and a registered charity, registered number 1093080. The registered office is at Victoria Park Road, Exeter, Devon, EX2 4NS