

FAQs, and the FHST Bursary Award Application Procedure

Please note, the specific deadline dates for each stage of the Bursary Award Application procedure can be found on each school's website, or please contact the Admissions Department in the School.

PLEASE NOTE - This Application Procedure is only relevant to making an application for **Bursary Awards**. For other financial awards:

- **Scholarships** – for scholarships on joining the school, please contact the Head of Admissions in the relevant school, or please see
For Sloane Square, [Scholarships at Francis Holland | Sloane Square](#)
For Regent's Park, [Bursaries & Scholarships at Francis Holland Regent's Park - Independent Girls' School](#)
- **Hardship** – current parents facing hardship should contact feesupport@fhst.org.uk

1. **Are we eligible for a free or assisted bursary place?**

The criteria listed below provide a guide of the circumstances in which a household might be eligible for a bursary award:

- A total household gross income of less than £125k - meaning that parents (and/or others in the household who are contributing financially, see below) earning a combined total above this amount are unlikely to be considered. Where parents are separated, we may request for separate financial assessments to determine affordability of school fees.
- Where parents are separated, but there is a second person/partner contributing to household expenses (even if they have no legal parental rights over the child) their financial contribution will be taken into account.
- Both parents are working (or actively seeking employment), unless one is undertaking recognised caring responsibilities, for example caring for children under school-age.
- Ownership of only one residential property with a mortgage or living in rented accommodation
- Low-level of savings and no ability to do a pension draw-down.
- No lavish personal expenditure: no frequent and/or expensive holidays, new or luxury cars or investment in significant home improvements.

2. **How are applications for financial support assessed?**

- The assessment primarily considers gross household income, assets and liabilities.
- Means-testing is conducted in partnership with a third party, Bursary Administration Limited (BAL). Parents are required to fill in an online bursary application form, provide evidence of their household's financial circumstances and a representative from BAL will meet you online. The application process is covered in detail on the form, along with the list of documents required.

- The means-testing process considers the affordability of school fees based on each family/household's financial circumstances. The Trust recognises that judgements about what sacrifices a family should make to pay school fees will be personal.
- However, the following factors will also be considered:
 - 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 and land holdings.
 - In cases of separation, the contribution made by the absent parent:
 - Contribution to household costs by other members of the wider family, by other adults unrelated to the child (and with no legal parental rights), or by outside sources;
 - Where siblings or at other fee paying schools or places of education, it is expected that those organisations are also offering assistance with fees;
 - The ability to improve the financial position or earning power of the family subject to the wider family context;
 - Discretionary support to the wider/other family.

3. Step-by-step Bursary Awards Procedure

- **Step One.** The bursary application process is integrated into the school admissions process, when all registered parents are sent the 11+ or 16+ Examination Entrance Forms to complete. Parents should indicate on this form that they wish to apply for financial assistance.

Parent/s will be provided with access to the online bursary site, where parents/guardians are required to complete a Bursary Application Form which seeks to establish the financial circumstances of the household.

The form requests details of income and other assets and liabilities and must be accompanied by full documentary evidence such as P60s, payslips, HMRC Self-Assessment forms, bank statements for all accounts held, mortgage statements, council tax bills, or recent benefit paperwork. The deadline for completion of the Bursary Application Form is mid-November each year, with entrance exams following in the early new year.

- **Step Two.** Once the School has completed an initial check to ensure the applicant meets the eligibility criteria, the form is then shared with Bursary Administration Ltd (BAL), a third-party company which specialises in assessing bursary applications. They will then contact the parent/guardian to make an online appointment to discuss their application. The meeting normally takes place online in November and December. If parents/guardians do not engage fully and honestly with the BAL initial financial review, this may negatively effect the outcome of the bursary application.
- **Step Three.** Bursary Administration Ltd writes a confidential report to the School with their findings, after they have concluded their assessment. On the basis of this report and other factors in the case for assistance (see above Para 2 'How are Applications for Financial Assistance Assessed')), the Chief Operating Officer will then make a recommendation to the Bursary Committee.

- **Step Four.** Once the Bursary Committee has made their decision, this will be communicated to the parent/applicant in writing. The outcome can be:
 - an offer of a bursary (together with details of the amount/level of funding being offered),
 - in some circumstances, notice of the applicant being placed on a waitlist for bursary support, or
 - a rejection, if the bursary application has been unsuccessful.

Sometimes, a parent may not have been successful in the bursary application, but the pupil may have been successful in the entrance examination and will be offered a place with no financial contribution from the Trust, in case parents can secure funding through another means.

- **Step Five.** A successful bursary applicant is then required to complete an online Bursary Acceptance Form to accept the offer of the bursary award, along with the offer of a place at the school. This form includes the Trust's standard Terms and Conditions, and the bursary-specific Conditions of Award.
- **Step 6.** Recipients of an award will be required to pay a deposit when the offer of a place with a bursary award is accepted. The deposit required for a 100% bursary will be £250; and for other bursaries offered, will reflect the % of fees awarded. Deposits are refundable when a girl leaves the School
- **Step 7.** Annual Review of Circumstance. Parent/s will be asked to take part in an annual review of their financial circumstances. Current bursary holders will be issued with repeat means-testing forms during the Spring term each year. If they have experienced any significant changes to income and circumstances during the current year, this may impact the bursary award for the next academic year. If parents/guardians do not engage fully and honestly with the annual review process, a bursary award may also be withdrawn.

There can also be a reduction or withdrawal of an award, in line with the Francis Holland Schools Terms and Conditions clauses 8.12 – 8.12.4, the Parent Collaboration – Guiding Principles document, and the Exclusions and Removal Policy Appendix1, where:

- a pupil's progress, attitude or behaviour has not been of the usual standard expected, and
- 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.

The school reserves the right to amend its bursary award assessment process/procedure at anytime.