Bursary and Hardship Fund Policy and Procedure

Reviewed by: Richard Nobles Trustee, Chair of the Finance sub-committee
Reviewed on: September 2026
Next review: September 2027

About the Bursary Fund

Waldorf Cambridge (the School) is an independent body and charity that raises income through fees and donations in order to provide the best education possible whilst being financially viable. However, the School believes that Steiner Waldorf education should be accessible to as many children and their families as possible. Therefore families who find themselves unable to meet the required school fees for the year can apply to the Community Bursary Fund for financial assistance.

Access to the Bursary Fund is through an evidence-based means test whereby families are required to submit details of their financial circumstances using a standardised application form. Each application for a bursary will be considered on an equal basis, using a standardised calculation and the same process. As such, we are required to ask for confidential information about the finances of all those making an application to the Community Bursary Fund. Please be assured that we will treat this information as confidential, and will use and store it securely, in line with the Data Protection Act.

How the Community Bursary Fund is managed and distributed
The fund will consider all applications fairly before making any awards and endeavours to offer assistance to all those genuinely in need of support. However, the Bursary programme has a finite/limited budget, so this cannot be guaranteed in any particular case. The School reserves the right of absolute discretion in the provision of fee assistance through the Community Bursary Fund. Bursaries are applied for, considered and awarded on a yearly basis. As such, the award of a bursary in one year will not automatically guarantee a bursary award in the following or subsequent years, even if the applicant's circumstances have not changed. Please note: bursary applications are only open to pupils who have been enrolled in the school for two years.

How to apply
The School will announce that applications are open via email to parents (usually in the spring term), and that the policy is available for viewing and downloading on the website. Anyone wishing to apply for a bursary for the following academic year must do so by completing and returning the form with the accompanying evidence requested before the deadline stated on the form and/or

accompanying letter. Bursaries will only be awarded to those genuinely unable to afford the fees in full.
Please note that the application must show all relevant information for all legal guardians of the child/children concerned. If a child's parents/carers live separately, the relevant information must be supplied for all parties. The income and expenditure of all parties will be taken into consideration unless satisfactory evidence of mitigating circumstances is provided to demonstrate why this cannot be the case.

If you have any questions in relation to the bursary application process, please discuss these with the Bursar/School Business Manager in the first instance.

How your application will be considered
Applicants are required to fill out a Bursary Application form, which is available to download from the website or from the School Office. Applications can only be assessed if fully completed and all necessary supporting information has been provided. The Board of Trustees will select a Bursary Committee, which will include at least one non-community/school member where possible. The Bursary Committee will review each application and supporting evidence once received. You may be invited in person to meet with the Bursary Committee, or member(s) of the Bursary Committee, to discuss your application. Please make every effort to be available for this meeting should one be requested. You will receive your fees invoice once the bursary decisions have been reached.
Notification of the decision of the Bursary Committee
If your application is successful, you will receive a letter notifying you of this. This letter constitutes an agreement between yourself and the school, which you will be required to sign and return. You will be bound by the same requirement as other families to make payment of the remaining fees promptly and in full on or before the date they fall due.
If you have not been successful in your bursary application, you will be informed of this in writing, with reasons, as soon as possible. Please note the Hardship Policy that is available for families in unexpected financial difficulties.

Appealing the decision
If you are not satisfied with the Bursary Committee's decision, you may appeal in writing to the Bursar/ School Business Manager stating the reason(s) you feel the decision to be unfair, before the date given in your decision letter. Your application will then be considered by an independent group not previously involved in the application decision. This Committee will ensure that the Bursary Policy has been adhered to and that all evidence has been taken into account. You will be informed in writing both if your appeal has been successful or not. If successful, then you will receive a revised figure. Please note that the decision of the Appeal Committee is final.

Reviewing bursary awards during the year
The Bursary Committee reserves the right to review all applications on a termly basis, at which point you will receive a written request to provide a new statement of income and expenditure, and to disclose any changes in your financial circumstances that may affect your ability to pay fees. As with your initial application, evidence will be requested to support this review and your bursary may be withdrawn if you do not provide this information by the date requested.
Irrespective of whether or not your application is formally reviewed by the Bursary Committee, at any stage, if you are awarded a bursary and your financial situation improves during the school year, you are obliged to declare this to the Bursary Committee (via the Bursar/ School Business

Manager). The Committee will then consider whether to reassess your situation for the remainder of the year, at which point your bursary may be amended or withdrawn (although you will not be asked to repay any awards made up to the point at which your circumstances changed) and a revised invoice issued.

Hardship Policy

The Hardship Policy is in place to offer assistance to families who may be experiencing unexpected and unplanned financial difficulties due to life events such as sickness, death, loss of employment, loss of housing or separation.

Please note that the Hardship Policy does not include any reduction in fees but provides a more flexible approach so that an alternative payment schedule/payment holiday can be agreed on an individual basis. If you feel that you qualify for the above, please contact the Bursar/ School Business Manager directly.

Bursary awards in exceptional circumstances

The School is aware that a family's circumstances may change dramatically during the school year. While funds may be limited once the initial Bursary Fund has been allocated, the Bursary Committee may accept and consider applications during the academic year for families in exceptional circumstances (i.e. an unexpected life change such as redundancy, divorce, the death of a partner, etc). Hardship applications (unlike bursaries) are open to families where pupils have been enrolled in the school for less than two years. Please contact the Bursar if you wish to be considered for an exceptional bursary award.

Applications accepted during the year in either of these situations must be completed using the standard Bursary Application Form and submitted to the Bursar /School Business Manager. As and when exceptional bursary applications are received, the Bursary Committee will meet at its earliest convenience to assess these and will inform applicants of the decision as soon as possible. Exceptional bursary applicants have the same recourse to request an appeal as those applying under the standard procedure, and the decision of the Appeal Committee will be final.

Please remember that all school bursary awards are funded from community donations and fundraising and there is a finite and limited amount of funding available. We urge applicants only to take recourse to the Community Bursary Fund as a last resource.