

# Bristol Grammar School

## School Assisted Places Scheme (SAPS) – Policy

### Introduction

The Governors of Bristol Grammar School wish to ensure that pupils who qualify for a place at the School are not prevented from taking up their place for financial reasons. The School's Assisted Places Scheme (SAPS) has been established to provide, as far as possible, assistance towards School fees for those parents who qualify. The Bursary support will be assessed on a number of criteria including the total gross family income. Awards will be on a sliding scale such that parents in receipt of assessable income in excess of £60,000 may not qualify for assistance (this threshold may be adjusted depending on individual family circumstances and the number of children in the family requesting support).

A family's financial investments and other assets may also be taken into consideration when assessing an award.

### Confidentiality

**All information submitted in the attached Form SAP1 will be treated in confidence along with any supporting documentation. The School also requests that all Bursary Awards remain confidential between the parents, the pupil and the School.**

### September Entrants

All parents who indicated on the School's application form that they wished to be considered for financial assistance, are asked to submit an application for fee assistance (form SAP1). **This form should be submitted, preferably before Christmas 2018 but no later than Thursday 3 January 2019.** If the form SAP1 is not submitted by this date, it will be assumed that fee assistance is not required.

The information provided on the form SAP1 is used to make an initial provisional assessment of fee assistance. We would ask parents to carefully complete the application form and to provide as accurate an estimate as possible at this stage to enable us to make a realistic assessment and initial Bursary Award. If an offer of a place is made, parents will be notified of this initial Bursary Award with the offer.

The initial assessment of fee assistance will be based on the estimate of income for the tax year preceding the academic year for which assistance is being requested. It should be noted that this is a provisional assessment; the final assessment will be based on actual income for the tax year in question and confirmed in July. Should income for the tax year prove to have been underestimated, then the confirmed level of assistance will be adjusted and a revised Bursary offer will be made. It is therefore in parents' interests to make as accurate an estimate of income as possible on the form SAP1.

### Current Pupils

Bursary assistance continues for as long as a pupil remains at the School. However, the level of assistance given is reviewed on an annual basis. Accordingly, in April of each year, parents of current pupils in the Scheme are asked to submit a form SAP1, detailing their income for the appropriate year. If assessable income exceeds the upper limit, no assistance will be awarded for the relevant academic year. Assistance will however be available in subsequent years, should the parents' assessable income fall below this level in the future. Parents will be informed by mid-July of the fees payable in respect of the forthcoming academic year.

**Please note: the level of assistance will be adjusted with variations in income, however, the School cannot guarantee that the level of assistance will increase to compensate for any significant fall in income.**

BGS reserves the right to exercise discretion in making or amending an award under this scheme and to make any enquiries it considers necessary in assessing an application for assistance. Any decisions reached by the School are final and are not subject to appeal.

### **Guidance Notes for Completion of Form SAP1**

*(Please contact the School on 0117 933 9880 if further guidance is required).*

1. Parents are advised that if false information is knowingly provided or if relevant information is omitted or withheld in any section of the Form SAP1, the School may disqualify any or all of the parents' children from the BGS SAP Scheme and may seek to recover from the parents assistance previously awarded.
2. Income declarations must be made and signed by the parent(s) in accordance with Note 4. If the income of only one parent is declared, the reason for this should be given (eg divorced, legally separated, deceased) and relevant documentation to substantiate this should be submitted if this has not previously been done. The School will also require documentation to confirm there is no support or contribution from the other parent. Only in very exceptional circumstances can fee assistance be awarded where parents separate after accepting a full fee place.
3. Under normal circumstances, parents will be assessed on income in the tax year prior to the academic year for which an assessment is being made. There is however, provision for an assessment to be made on the basis of income in the prevailing tax year in cases where significant and unforeseen changes in family circumstances occur (see Note 19). Please call for guidance if required.

### **Definition of "Parents" for the Purpose of Income Declaration**

4. The person(s) whose income details should be declared are as follows:
  - a. The natural father and mother of the pupil where they live together, whether or not they are married to each other, and the pupil resides with them both in the same household; or
  - b. The parent of the pupil with whom the pupil resides **and** the partner (if any) of that parent where the partner resides with that parent and the pupil in the same household; or
  - c. The pupil's guardian appointed in accordance with section 5 of the Children Act 1989 (or any earlier enactment) **and** the partner (if any) of that guardian where the partner resides with that guardian and the pupil in the same household; or
  - d. The person with whom the pupil resides in accordance with either a subsisting residence order made under section 8 of the Children Act 1989, or any subsisting court order (other than a residence order) which specifies who is to have actual custody or care and control of the pupil; or
  - e. Where a pupil either has no parents as defined above or the School is satisfied that no such parents can be found, and he is either looked after by a local authority or provided with accommodation within the meaning of section 105(1) of the Children Act 1989, the pupil shall be treated as one whose parents have no income for the purposes of the scheme; or
  - f. Where none of the above applies, the parent is the person with whom the pupil resides in accordance with any informal care or fostering arrangement **and** that person's partner (if any) where the partner resides with that person and the pupil in the same household.

For simplicity, any male parent, step-parent, guardian or partner as defined above will be referred to as "father" and any female parent, step-parent, guardian or partner as "mother".

## Court Orders and Separation Agreements for School Fees

5. A Court Order specifying who is to pay School fees and in what proportions is a private arrangement between the parties to that order ie the parents. The School is not bound by the terms of the Court Order and only has an agreement with the parent or parents who have signed the Acceptance Form. If both parents sign the Acceptance Form, both will remain jointly and severally liable for the whole of the fees payable. Divorced or separated parents can apply for a Bursary and if successful, the percentage awarded will be reflected in each termly invoice. It is then for the parents to agree between themselves as to how they discharge the balance of the fees payable based on their respective obligations under a Court Order.

Where a court order or separation agreement exists, parents applying for assistance with tuition fees which are not covered by that order or agreement should enclose a copy of the appropriate document.

## Insurance Policies for School Fees

6. Where a parent has an insurance policy which is **specifically** for the payment of school fees, the amount payable under the policy for the academic year for which the application is being made should be declared.

If the insurance policy covers the school fees in full then the pupil is not eligible for fee assistance.

The types of policy concerned are those which stipulate that the company shall pay the school fees, in whole or in part, to the School in respect of the pupil. This does not apply to other types of savings plans, the benefits from which should be included in the calculation of relevant income

## Income

7. Estimated income arising in the tax year preceding the academic year of entry must be declared on form SAP1. The declarations must include all income arising in the relevant tax year for those who meet the definition of 'parents' given in Note 4, at the time of application.

It is acknowledged that self employed parents may not have details of actual income for the relevant tax year before the start of the academic year. In such cases estimates may be given provided that the latest available actual income details are submitted as soon as possible afterwards.

In the case of self employed persons, assessable income for any tax year is taken as that assessed by HM Revenue and Customs for the same tax year. This will generally be income arising in the accounting year ended in the tax year concerned.

8. Gross income (ie before deduction of tax) from all sources must be declared including income arising outside the UK. Deductions must not be made in respect of allowances for tax purposes, for example personal allowances, pension contributions or donations to charities.

9. Declarations of earned income should include:

- a. Gross salaries and wages, including earnings from part-time employment, bonuses, commission, statutory sick pay and statutory maternity/paternity pay;
- b. Amounts received as profit related pay or by virtue of a salary surrender scheme;
- c. Gross taxable income from self employment or a partnership as declared on the self-assessment return submitted to HM Revenue and Customs for the tax year in question;
- d. Taxable benefits in kind, for example company cars, private medical insurance, free or subsidised accommodation, at the amount agreed for tax purposes.

10. Parents should ensure that income declared is before the deduction of pension contributions. If salary details are taken from the employer's form P60, please note that some P60's only show gross taxable income ie after deduction of pension contributions.

11. All social security benefits must be declared. The following are taken into account in the calculation of relevant income:

- Private Pension
- State Pension
- Bereavement Allowance
- Incapacity Benefit
- Disability Living Allowance
- Carers Allowance
- Jobseekers Allowance
- Income Support
- Child Tax Credit
- Working Tax Credit
- Child Benefit
- Maternity/Paternity Pay

12. Income from the letting or sub-letting of property should be declared. The figures required are the gross income and less interest paid on any mortgage or loan against the property, the difference being the income for the purpose of assessment.

13. Most building society interest, bank interest and other interest is taxed at source at the basic rate. Gross interest received during the tax year should be declared, ie the tax deducted must be included. Income from tax free saving schemes such as TOISA's, ISA's and PEP's should be declared

14. All other investment income eg dividends, annuities should be declared. If tax was deducted at source, parents should include the amount of tax deducted or tax credit notified. In the case of income received from an insurance policy, only taxable amounts are taken into account. However non-taxable receipts should be declared.

15. Parents entitled to maintenance payments or separation allowances under a court order or separation agreement or arrangements made by the Child Support Agency should enter the amount required to be paid in the relevant tax year. This is irrespective of the amount actually received. They should also enter the amount of any tax recovered on the payment. Where parents make such payments under a court order or separation agreement or through the Child Support Agency the gross amount paid during the year should be entered as a deduction. In cases where parents both receive and pay sums for maintenance, two separate entries should be made.

16. Parents should declare all gross income (including interest on savings accounts), received by children who are wholly or mainly dependent on them, excluding only sums earned from part-time employment (including vacation jobs) and sums received as scholarships or student awards. Income received under deeds of covenant taken out prior to 15 March 1988 should be included.

### **Verification of Income**

Parents must provide copies of documentary evidence to support all figures entered in the SAP1. Failure to provide this may result in the withdrawal of fee assistance.

17. The following documentary evidence is required as verification of income and must be provided when requested by the School.

- a. If parents are in employment a copy of the P60 supplied by their employers at the end of the tax year, and a copy of their final pay advice for the tax year should be provided. If total pension contributions for the year are not shown on the P60 or pay advice (ie they show only gross taxable income, after deduction of pension contributions rather than total gross income)

employer verification of pension contributions must be provided. In addition and if applicable, parents should submit a copy of their self-assessment return for the tax year concerned and, if shareholders in a private limited company, a copy of the company's latest accounts and details of their shareholdings.

- b. If a parent is self employed, a copy of the self-assessment return, supporting accounts and HM Revenue & Customs statement confirming final taxable income should be provided. It is acknowledged that some or all of this information may not be available at the time the form FB2 is due to be submitted. In such cases, parents must submit as much information as is available at the time and confirm when the remaining information will be available. Submission of the remaining information must be dealt with as a matter of urgency. In addition, in the absence of any of the above information for the tax year concerned, the equivalent information for the previous tax year must be submitted by the required deadline. Awards made on a provisional basis will not be continued into the next school year unless all income has been verified. If the self-assessment return is submitted on line, written confirmation of taxable income is not subsequently issued by HM Revenue & Customs. In such cases, a print of the return and the e-mail generated by HM Revenue & Customs to confirm receipt of the return should be submitted.
- c. Copies of annual self-assessment tax returns or forms P11D should be submitted as verification of benefits in kind from employment.
- d. Profit -related pay and income received by virtue of a salary surrender scheme should be verified by means of written confirmation from the employer.
- e. Copies of the appropriate documentation should be submitted to verify all other forms of income, together with a copy of the relevant self-assessment return if applicable.

If any of the above documents are not available at the time they are requested, they should be submitted separately as soon as available. Photocopies rather than original documents should be submitted, as the school cannot be held liable for the loss of any documents. All photocopies must be completely legible and any documents submitted other than with the relevant form must be clearly labelled with the pupil's name and form.

### **Change of Circumstances ("Current Year" Assessments)**

18. The School may provisionally assess eligibility for fee assistance on the basis of an estimate of income in the tax year which coincides with the academic year for which assistance is requested, where income in that year will be so much less than the previous year that financial hardship will result. In such circumstances, parents should provide full details of the change in circumstances and an estimate of the lower income expected. A current year assessment will be provisional, subject to confirmation of actual income. This information must be submitted at the end of the tax year in question.
19. When an unforeseen change in family circumstances occurs after the submission of the form SAP1 eg if a parent falls ill for a long period or is made redundant, parents should advise the School as soon as possible if it appears that a current year assessment may be appropriate. A change to marital status is not considered a valid reason for the School to consider a current year assessment.

Once a current year assessment has been made, all subsequent assessments of relevant income will normally be made on the same basis.

### **Other Income**

20. Where parents are wholly or mainly dependent on other benefits, or on other sources of income which have not been listed elsewhere on the form, they should be declared in the SAP1. All benefits received **must** be listed on the form.

