

ACCESSIBILITY POLICY

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1 Equal opportunities

1.1 Aims

This policy has been drawn up with regard to the [Equality Act 2010](#). The School is fully committed to equal opportunities. The School recognises that direct or indirect discrimination might take place and therefore sees the need for a proactive, positive and effective equal opportunities policy.

Specific aims. The School's aims are as follows:

- To develop an understanding of, and to promote, human equality and equal opportunities.
- To promote good relations between members of different racial, cultural and religious groups and communities.
- To provide equal access to the curriculum.
- To ensure that each pupil makes progress commensurate with her developing abilities.
- To promote an environment that challenges gender and social stereotypes and encourages every girl to make full use of her talents and abilities.
- To acknowledge and welcome the multi-racial character of society and the nature of cultural diversity.
- To combat racism and other forms of discrimination at every level of the School community relating to both students and staff.

1.2 Definition

Equal opportunities. This term means that the School enables all staff and pupils to develop their potential to the full, irrespective of their race, colour, gender, sexual orientation, age, pregnancy, religion or disability in accordance with the School's ethos.

1.3 Strategies

Staff. Strategies are implemented as follows:

- Job application forms and contracts will carry a statement that this School is an equal opportunities employer. The School welcomes applications for all posts from appropriately qualified persons regardless of sex, race, religion, disability or age.
- People with disabilities will be offered facilities at interviews to enable them to demonstrate their suitability for employment.
- Candidates for vacant posts will be assessed against relevant criteria only, i.e. skills, qualifications and experience in selection for recruitment.
- The School will keep information about the sex, ethnic background, disability and age of candidates who apply for posts, as well as actual appointments in accordance with the data retention protocol. This will be discussed with Governors on a regular basis.
- All employees have equal chances of training, career development and promotion.
- All recruits to the School will be offered induction training which will include a reference to the School's equal opportunities policy.
- Staff development opportunities will be monitored and the Governors will be informed regularly of notable staff development achievements and promotions. All staff, and in particular those concerned with selection and promotion, are given training on equality awareness.

- People becoming disabled while in employment will be given reasonable adjustment to retain their jobs, insofar as it is reasonable to do so.

Pupils. Strategies are implemented as follows:

- Pupils have equal access to the curriculum programmes of study throughout each Key Stage, and non-compulsory courses, according to aptitude and ability.
- The School is committed to full educational inclusion.
- All subjects have equality of opportunity at their core.
- School rules clearly and explicitly forbid the verbalisation or vocalisation of discrimination on the grounds of race, culture, religion, gender, sexuality and ability/disability.
- Positive attitudes and awareness development for equality of opportunity is specifically taught through the SMSC programme, while all subjects seek to reinforce this where opportunities arise.
- The Diversity and Inclusion Group, led by the Head Girls allows a forum for discussing experiences of diversity and inclusion within School and strategies for celebrating diversity and enabling all members of the community to feel included.
- Language used in documents will reflect and promote equal opportunities and inclusive language will be used wherever appropriate.

1.4 Monitoring and review

Monitoring. Staff have a duty to report any incidents involving a breach of the policy. All staff have a legal duty not to bully or otherwise harass other staff. Where staff come across incidents involving racist or homophobic bullying, or bullying of any discriminatory nature, of staff or pupils they must report these to a member of the SLT. All such incidents will be taken seriously and dealt with in accordance with the School's discipline or grievance procedures.

The School's Governors are ultimately responsible for ensuring the implementation of the accessibility plan during the period to which it relates and have undertaken to commit resources to the plan as considered appropriate.

Review. The SLT will monitor and review the working of the policy and procedures regularly. The Head takes responsibility for equal opportunities and for delegating responsibilities and tasks to other staff, and for ensuring that the policy is known and understood by staff, pupils and parents. The Head is responsible for monitoring equal opportunities in the curriculum. All staff are responsible for following the policy and reporting incidents of unequal treatment to the appropriate member of staff. This policy will be reviewed regularly and improved and developed as appropriate. This policy has regard to the guidance issued by the Secretary of State.

2 Disability

2.1 Aims

Overview. The School has high expectations of its pupils and strives to ensure that each and every pupil can take part in the whole School curriculum. The School values diversity across its community and appreciates the contribution that pupils with disabilities and / or special educational needs (SEN) can bring to School life. The School seeks to remove barriers to entry to the School for such pupils. It strives to be a fully inclusive, diverse and welcoming school.

Admissions. Admission to St George's depends upon a prospective pupil meeting the criteria required to maintain and, if possible, to improve the educational and general standards for all its pupils commensurate with the ethos to which St George's aspires. The School must also feel reasonably sure that it will be able to educate and develop the prospective pupil to the best of her potential and in line with the general standards achieved by the pupil's peers, so that there is every chance that she will have a complete, happy and successful School career and emerge a confident, well-educated and well-rounded adult with a good prospect of a satisfying life. These criteria must continue to be met throughout the pupil's time at the School. Our policy is to apply these criteria to all pupils and potential pupils regardless of any disability of which we are aware, subject to our obligation to make reasonable adjustments not to put any disabled pupil or potential pupil at a substantial disadvantage compared to any pupil who is not disadvantaged because of her disability.

Legal duty. The School acknowledges its duty towards pupils, staff, parents, Governors and members of the wider community who have a disability. Where pupils or prospective pupils are concerned, St George's acknowledges its non-discrimination and planning duty under the [Special Educational Needs and Disability Act \(SENDA\) 2001](#).

2.2 Definition

Disability. The [Equality Act 2010](#) states that: a person is a disabled person (someone who has the protected characteristic of disability) if they have a physical and / or mental impairment which has what the law calls 'a substantial and long-term negative effect on their ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities'. There is no need for a person to have a medically diagnosed cause for their impairment; what matters is the effect of the impairment not the cause.

Physical impairment. This is defined as follows:

- Conditions that affect the body such as arthritis, hearing or sight impairment (unless this is correctable by glasses or contact lenses), diabetes, asthma, epilepsy, conditions such as HIV infection, cancer and multiple sclerosis, as well as loss of limbs or the use of limbs are covered from the moment of diagnosis.
- Severe disfigurement (such as scarring) is covered even if it has no physical impact on the person with the disfigurement, provided the long-term requirement is met.
- People who are registered as blind or partially sighted, or who are certified as being blind or partially sighted by a consultant ophthalmologist are automatically treated as disabled.

Mental impairment. This is defined as follows:

- Mental impairment includes conditions such as dyslexia and autism as well as learning disabilities such as Down's syndrome and mental health conditions such as depression and schizophrenia.

Other characteristics. A disability may also be identified as follows:

- The length the condition has lasted or will continue: it must be long term, meaning that impairment is likely to last for the rest of the person's life, or has lasted at least 12 months or where the total period for which it lasts is likely to be at least 12 months. If the person no longer has the condition but it is likely to recur, they will be considered to be a disabled person.
- Whether the effect of the impairment is to make it more difficult and / or time-consuming for a

person to carry out an activity compared to someone who does not have the impairment, and this causes more than minor or trivial inconvenience.

- If the activities that are made more difficult are 'normal day-to-day activities' at work or at home.
- Whether the condition has this impact without taking into account the effect of any medication the person is taking or any aids or assistance or adaptations they have, like a wheelchair, walking stick, assistance dog or special software on their computer. The exception to this is the wearing of glasses or contact lenses where it is the effect while the person is wearing glasses or contact lenses, which is taken into account.

2.3 Strategies

Before admission. We advise parents of children with special educational needs to discuss their child's requirements with the Director of Admissions and Marketing and the Head of Learning Support before she sits our entrance examination so that we can make adequate provision for her. Parents should provide a copy of an educational psychologist's report or a medical report to support their request, for example for extra time or other special arrangements. St George's asks parents to complete the relevant SEN or disability section of the registration form in respect of a prospective pupil at the time of application. In assessing any pupil or prospective pupil the School may take such advice and require such assessments as it regards as appropriate. Subject to this, the School will be sensitive to any requests for confidentiality.

After admission. Each pupil with a disability and / or SEN requires special consideration and treatment. If appropriate adjustments need to be put in place, they will be discussed thoroughly with parents and their medical advisers, including adjustments that can reasonably be made to the curricular and co-curricular activities before their daughter becomes a pupil at the School. We recognise that some disabled pupils may also require specialist support from our Learning Support Department, and we would normally discuss this issue with parents before their child enters the School. The Learning Support Department works in partnership with the Helen Arkell Dyslexia Centre who provide specialist teachers to deliver individual lessons to pupils with learning difficulties at St George's.

Behaviour. The School recognises that social, emotional and behavioural barriers to learning can be associated with some disabilities. Mental illness or learning difficulties can cause behavioural issues. The School aims to work together with families to overcome or minimise these as far as is possible.

Diet. Menus can be devised to cater for special dietary requirements.

2.4 Monitoring and review

Monitoring. The School has an active monitoring policy and will do its best to make adjustments to take account of an individual pupil's needs, within the constraints imposed by its historic buildings.

Review. All parents of children with SEN or disabilities have the legal right to seek redress from the [First Tier Tribunal \(Special Educational Needs and Disability\)](#) if they believe that their child has received unfavourable treatment.

3 Accessibility

3.1 Aims

Overview. The School recognises that some pupils and staff may also have physical disabilities. One of the obvious problems which the School has (in common with many other schools) is its layout which covers a wide area situated on a hill and consists of many separate and some historic buildings of several stories and without lifts, which have grown up since the School was founded. Another is the system, again common to many schools, of having fixed classrooms for each subject, based on the valid ground of having all the facilities for one subject in one place. This requires pupils to go from classroom to classroom, often up steps or stairs in buildings without lifts. The boarding facilities pose similar problems to a greater degree. It is not hard to conclude that any person with impaired mobility is going to be put at a disadvantage by these problems, if not prohibited altogether from access to some or all of the educational and other facilities the School offers. Nor can these matters be remedied in any substantial way by reasonable adjustments short of making major alterations to physical features of the School at prohibitive cost. Even the fruition of long-term plans can only go some way to ameliorate the position.

Integration. Pupils with medical disabilities, including hearing or visual impairment, are fully integrated into School life and participate in the whole curriculum including extra-curricular activities (such as School trips). There is a fully inclusive approach to staff recruitment and the School aims to appoint the best person based on their skill set and qualifications and regardless of any disability he / she might have.

3.2 Definition

Accessibility. This policy interprets accessibility as relating to physical impairment; the provisions for mental impairment are laid out in the SEN, AGT and EAL paragraphs which follow.

3.3 Strategies

Physical environment. There are regular reviews and steps taken to improve the physical environment of the School in order to increase the extent to which disabled pupils are able to take advantage of education and associated services offered by the School. The School will make newly constructed buildings fully accessible to disabled people and comply with current legislation. Reasonable effort will be made to improve access to existing parts of the School when major work is undertaken. St George's is not required to provide auxiliary aids and services or to make physical changes to the existing buildings. A pupil with restricted mobility is likely to have difficulties with access in some areas of the site and the steepness of the hill is likely to make it hazardous. A pupil with severely restricted mobility is unlikely to be able to access all of the educational and recreational facilities the School offers.

Specific locations. Cormack Hall enables wheelchair access from top car park to balcony level. Wheelchair access to stage and below is from the Drama Studio. There are toilets suitable for access by those in a wheelchair. Loveday House permits wheelchair access to the ground floor level, as does Knatchbull House; there is a toilet suitable for access by those in a wheelchair in both these buildings. The Pavilion is accessible by wheelchair, as is the nearby toilet. The Luker building is accessible from the ground floor and has a lift. There is a disabled toilet on the ground floor. The Swimming Pool has unstepped access. The changing rooms are able to be accessed by a wheelchair and there are dedicated disabled changing and showering facilities. Other buildings are older and built over several storeys, without lifts. The sports fields are about 300 meters away from the built-up areas and are accessed by means of steep paths. Access by those in wheelchairs would need to be via vehicle to the bottom car park or by the Pavilion.

Markham, Sports Hall, Science and Beharrell have no lifts or ramps. The School has invested in a portable ramp to aid access through the main front door. Its use in other areas will be restricted by the length of the ramp and the gradients considered safe for wheelchair use. There is a permanently designated parking space for visitors with a disability.

Three year plan

In the last three years (2018-2021), the School has completed:

- Contrasting edges on stairs, inside and out (on going as areas are redecorated).
- Contrasting door frames and skirting (on going as areas are redecorated).
- Improving lighting in key areas such as boarding corridors, car parks.
- Installing rails on new staircases.
- Arranging scribes/readers/promoters/computers for girls needing such assistance in examinations, and appropriate training.
- Arranging for enlarged examination papers for girls needing such assistance.
- Providing adrenaline auto-injector training for new teaching and pastoral staff.
- Improving paths to the pitches.
- Installing new IT and software in the Learning Support Department to help pupils access the curriculum. Making Chromebooks available to all pupils and teaching staff (additional IT support is provided in specific circumstances).
- Reviewing and streamlining the fire procedure.
- Improved pedestrian access around Luker.

The future three year plan (1 June 2021 to 31 May 2024) is found as [Appendix 1](#).

3.4 Monitoring and review

Monitoring. We are progressively introducing facilities for wheelchair users and hearing loops as our buildings are upgraded. The School undertakes an annual fire safety risk assessment and updates the School's evacuation plan.

Review. There is a SEND Committee whose purpose is as follows:

- To review annually the School's policies, procedures and facilities as they are likely to affect pupils and prospective pupils who are disabled.
- To make recommendations with a view to improving the accessibility of its education in many aspects to pupils or prospective pupils with disabilities by means of reasonable adjustments and by planning for the future.
- To review the School's accessibility policy documents, update the Accessibility Plan annually, and evaluate the effectiveness of action taken in the previous School year.
- To respond to any legislative changes.
- To agree to all reasonable adjustments and allocate the actions.
- To make a list of all pupils with special conditions and access arrangements, which is circulated to relevant staff annually and updated during the School year as necessary.
- To make reasonable adjustments for new staff or for staff where their circumstances with respect to disability have changed.

4 Pupils with specific educational needs (SEN)

4.1 Aims

Preamble. The Governors and staff are firmly committed to inclusivity and to giving every pupil the best possible start in life. Treating every pupil as an individual is important to us, and pupils with Special Educational Needs (SEN) are welcomed, providing that our Learning Support Department can provide them with the support that they require. We do not however, have the facilities to offer highly individual and intensive treatment.

Specific aims. The School's aims are as follows:

- To take account of the different ways in which pupils learn, using a variety of activities and teaching styles.
- To ensure that each pupil's individual learning profile is recognised and understood by their teachers.
- To foster an atmosphere of understanding and respect, where there is no discrimination against pupils with physical, sensory or learning disabilities.
- To be proactive in identifying pupils with special educational needs in cases where this has not already been picked up prior to entry to the School. This involves encouraging and responding to referrals from teachers. In some cases, difficulties only become evident with the increasing demands of the curriculum as pupils move up the School.

4.2 Definition

Special educational needs. The [Department for Education website](#) states that children with special educational needs all have learning difficulties or disabilities that make it harder for them to learn than most children of the same age. These children may need extra or different help from that given to other children of the same age. Children with special educational needs may need extra help because of a range of needs, such as in thinking and understanding, physical or sensory difficulties, emotional and behavioural difficulties, or difficulties with speech and language or how they relate to and behave with other people. Legally a girl is defined as having special educational needs if she has a learning difficulty which requires special teaching. A learning difficulty means that the girl has significantly greater difficulty in learning than most girls of the same age. Or, it means the girl has a disability which needs different educational facilities from those generally provided by the School for girls of the same age.

Numbers on roll. The School has a clear and up to date register of girls with Special Educational Needs, Learning Support Pupil Profiles (LSPPs) and EHC plans if applicable.

4.3 Strategies

EHC plans. Pupils with EHC plans who are suited to the School's educational offer are welcome. If a pupil with an EHC plan requires their dedicated carer in School, this can be accommodated provided that the carer has an enhanced DBS check arranged by the School and complies with the safeguarding regime in force at the time. The School would require a carer to comply with all recruitment and safeguarding checks. Although a dedicated carer is not a School employee and the pupil's parents would be asked to provide the School with a written undertaking indemnifying it from any legal responsibility or cost connected with the provision of their services to their child.

Learning Support Department. The Learning Support Department will help to prepare an LSPP, for each pupil, outlining strengths and areas of difficulty, as well as recommendations for classroom support and a note of any examination access arrangements. The pupil will contribute to this document by giving her views on their own strengths and areas of difficulty. The Learning Support Department offers specialist one-to-one lessons and help with study skills outside the normal curriculum. We work closely with the child and her parents and to help her to overcome the barriers that her difficulties present. Where the School agrees to provide such additional services as those offered in the Learning Support Department, parents will be charged for this service by the Helen Arkell Dyslexia Centre. The Centre provides details of the cost of lessons directly to parents and this direct liaison is initiated by the Head of Learning Support. Specialist teachers provide a termly report.

Educational psychologists. In cases where it is advised that a pupil is assessed by an Educational psychologist, we will recommend an appropriate professional. Usually these professionals are able to come to the School to conduct assessments. Recommendations from these reports are shared with teachers and special arrangements for examinations are put in place.

Access to the curriculum. It should be noted that pupils with special needs have full access to a broad and balanced curriculum throughout their education at St George's. Teachers differentiate for pupils within lessons. Our staff regularly review their teaching strategies to ensure that any potential barriers to learning and participation are removed. We support our teaching staff with a programme of training designed to raise their awareness of disabilities and to enable them to minimise any potential difficulties for pupils. We promote the importance of using language that does not offend amongst both our staff and our pupils and ensure that, wherever possible, positive examples of disability are portrayed in teaching materials. The School will continue to provide ongoing training for all teachers and pastoral staff in order to support them better in their dealings with pupils with SEN or disabilities. The School will invest in classroom and mobile technology to facilitate better communication with pupils who have SEN or other disabilities.

Access to written information. We provide written information to pupils with disabilities and special educational needs in ways that are user-friendly and fully support the pupils in their learning experience. For example, at St George's, all pupils have a laptop or Chromebook for use both in and out of lessons which can benefit pupils with SEN. The School can arrange for text-books to be provided electronically to facilitate the use of text to speech technology and allow for font size to be enlarged. It can also be arranged for large print documents to be given to those with impaired vision. The School will arrange for documents to be provided to prospective parents who have a disability in a form that meets their needs, if so requested and reasonable to do.

Examinations. Where appropriate, scribes/readers/promoters/laptops/other aid permissible under the regulations will be provided for examinations. The School allows use of a word processor in examinations provided it is appropriate to the candidate's needs, as assessed by the Learning Support Department. A word processor cannot simply be granted to a candidate because she prefers to type rather than write or because she uses a laptop at home. The use of a word processor must reflect the candidate's normal way of working within the School and must be appropriate to her needs. The type of candidates which the School considers would benefit from the use of a word processor in examinations would be, for example, candidates with a sensory impairment, a candidate with a physical disability, a candidate with a medical condition or a candidate with a learning difficulty which has a substantial and adverse effect on her ability to write in a legible fashion.

Other forms of support. In some circumstances, following discussion with parents, the Learning Support Department might also provide a programme of individual specialist teaching to pupils who do not have special educational needs, but would benefit from one-to-one support (for example, during revision periods or when returning from long term absence).

4.4 Monitoring and review

Monitoring. The School's hope is that all parents will feel able to share any concerns about their child with the pastoral staff in order that a healthy partnership for the care of their child can be developed. A member of staff will always ask to see a parent if they feel that an adjustment to the child's curriculum or LSPP might be in the child's best interests, or if there was a specific concern.

Review. The School strives at all times to have in place a continuous cycle of review so that changes in provision are made where necessary. All teaching and pastoral staff attend regular training to broaden their understanding of disability and accessibility, priorities for our pupils with SEN and / or disabilities and priorities for our pupils' parents.

5 Able, gifted and talented pupils (AGT)

5.1 Aims

Preamble. The School aims to encourage the individual development of each pupil, focusing on her strengths and abilities to produce the most appropriate educational profile for her. Great importance is placed not only on academic excellence, but also on moral and spiritual welfare. Each pupil is given increasing freedom and responsibilities as she progresses through the School to enable growth of character and the development of values, inner resources which will prepare her to make the most of life.

5.2 Definition

Able, gifted and talented. We refer to DfE guidelines that state that the top 5 to 10 percent of pupils per school as measured by actual or potential achievement should be identified as AGT. We have adopted general definitions as follows:

- Able pupils are those who regularly attain marks in the top 5–10% of their cohort for tests and examinations (or in baseline data).
- Gifted pupils are those students who possess an ability (not necessarily evidenced by marks) in a specific subject that is significantly greater than most of their peers.
- Talented pupils are those who show exceptional ability in a specific field of art, music, drama or sport.

Identification. No single method of identification can be entirely accurate since every AGT student is an individual. Therefore, as much information is obtained about individual pupils as possible. The methods employed will vary slightly by department, but should include the following:

- Specific identification criteria developed by each department.
- An enrichment project specifically designed to target identification of AGT pupils.
- Monitoring of internal and external assessment and testing records.

5.3 Strategies

Enrichment. This refers to clubs, outings and trips, co-curricular projects and special events designed to stretch and stimulate the AGT pupils, often beyond the bounds of the curriculum. These do not need to be exclusively for AGT pupils and wherever possible should be differentiated to allow wider participation. The SGA Stretch group meets regularly to take part in quizzes, puzzles and debates with AGT pupils from across the school. In the Sixth Form extra qualifications such as the EPQ and Young Enterprise are on offer to all girls.

In February, the school hosts "SGA Stretch" week. This is a week of talks and activities provided by departments and outside experts to stretch pupils beyond the curriculum.

In addition, the academic and co-curricular scholars meet regularly with the relevant Deputy Head (Academic or Co-Curricular and Connections) and other staff to engage in extra discussion opportunities.

Differentiation. Every pupil is entitled to lessons and prep that are differentiated to her needs. This applies to AGT girls as it would for any other special educational needs. The most important aspect of provision is to strengthen AGT pupils' understanding of standard curriculum topics and to extend their ability to apply that knowledge, by presenting them with more challenging problems. Schemes of work should show what AGT provision is made and individual lesson plans should refer explicitly to differentiation for class and prep.

5.4 Monitoring and review

Monitoring. Every Head of Department maintains a list of the defining features of an AGT pupil. Their progress is discussed in department meetings and a school-wide overview of practice and provision is maintained by the Deputy Head (Academic) and the SGASTretch (AGT) Coordinator.

Review. During the annual update of department handbooks, the Head of Department ensures that lesson plans or schemes of work are updated to reflect provision for AGT pupils.

6 Pupils with English as an Additional Language (EAL)

6.1 Aims

Overview. In order to cope with the academic and social demands of St George's School, pupils must be fluent English speakers. Pupils for whom English is not their first language often attend St George's School with the aim of gaining access to higher education institutions. With this in mind, it is recognised that the acquisition and development of the language is of prime importance in order for the pupil to reach her full potential.

6.2 Definition

English as an additional language. This is defined as a pupil whose mother tongue is not English.

6.3 Strategies

EAL lessons. We recommend that some pupils whose first language at home is not English, receive individual tuition in English as an Additional Language (EAL). This is a paid extra.

First to Third Years. Every pupil entering the First to Third Years is expected to possess a level of

competence in English which enables her to access the full curriculum and ultimately enables her to take GCSE English Language and Literature.

Fourth Year. For pupils entering the Fourth Year, while it is recognised that different kinds of literacies are essential for 'real' communication, time is an important factor. With barely two years to prepare for GCSE, it is exceptionally difficult for a pupil to gain this level of competence holistically. EAL lessons are strongly encouraged and in many cases, required. It is occasionally felt that, where appropriate, alternative internal / external examinations should be considered. At the same time it is recognised that a pupil may benefit from a slightly reduced timetable in order to be able to concentrate on the subjects she finds less demanding of her linguistic skills.

Lower Sixth. EAL lessons are strongly encouraged and in many cases, required. A pupil entering the Lower Sixth who wishes to gain access to an English university is given the opportunity for extra language support lessons in order to prepare for an internal / external examination acceptable by universities such as IELTS.

6.4 Monitoring and review

Monitoring. The majority of overseas pupils are boarders. As a result, any day to day matters regarding their welfare are dealt with through their guardians. In some cases, where a pupil has been placed through an agency, educational matters may be dealt with through that agency. Where communication with the pupil's family is difficult due to limited language skills, the School will try to use a translator or interpreter, as applicable. Communication between support staff and teachers takes place regularly. The Head of EAL liaises on a regular basis with relevant Head of Year, tutors and subject teachers regarding individual pupils. A file on each pupil is kept locked in the EAL office.

Review. EAL pupils are fully integrated into the life of the School. Their progress is evaluated by the Head of EAL at the end of each Key Stage.

7 Bursaries

7.1 Aims

Overview. The School is constituted as a charity and is committed to broadening access by offering eligible parents means-tested financial support in the form of bursaries for up to 100 percent of fees payable. The School respects the confidentiality of bursary awards made to families and recipients are expected to do likewise.

7.2 Definition

Bursaries. The School offers financial support for new applicants to the School, where a place has been offered but parents / guardians are unable to fund the full fees; or for existing pupils where a change in parents / guardians' circumstances has resulted in difficulty in meeting fees and may otherwise result in the pupil being withdrawn part way through a stage of her education.

The School policy is that bursaries are only available to parents usually resident in the UK.

Scholarships. The School also offers Academic, Art, Drama, Performing Arts, Sport, Swimming and

Music scholarships (10 per cent) and Exhibitions (5 percent) which are awarded on merit. Parents of prospective pupils wishing to apply for a scholarship should contact the Director of Admissions and Marketing. Parents may also apply for a bursary to top up any award.

7.3 Strategies

It is the School's intention to ensure that families are advised if their application for a bursary has been successful or not at the same time as any offer of a place is made. The School would emphasise that it may be the case that a place is offered but no bursary is awarded or is at a lower level than requested. It is then a matter for the family to decide if funds are available to enable the place to be accepted.

Applications. The steps for application are as follows:

- First, parents or guardians seeking a bursary are required to complete an application form, which seeks to establish parents' financial circumstances. The form, which requests details of income and capital, must be submitted in confidence to the Bursary Administration Limited. Assessment may require supplementary evidence and even a home visit. Regrettably, some find the process intrusive, but its rigour ensures fair distribution of charitable funds. **The deadline for receipt of bursary applications from external applicants is by mid-October before the year of entry.** Late applicants may be considered but this will depend on the availability of School funds and applications already approved. Applications may be accepted at any time during the year for girls already at the School, where there is a change of family circumstances, or sudden and unforeseen need leading to financial difficulty. Such awards are subject to the availability of funding and cannot be guaranteed.
- Second, the Bursar provides information to the Bursary Committee in order to support their assessment of applications and to inform the appropriate award of bursaries. These are agreed in committee and final decisions are subject to Governors' approval.
- Third, parents or guardians are advised of the outcome of the assessment. The aim is for this information to be made available at the same time as parents are informed of any offer of a place. All offers of bursaries are subject to the pupil successfully gaining a place through the normal admissions process.
- Finally, parents are formally offered a place at the School and are required to sign a letter of acceptance, including an agreement to any conditions relating to the bursary. This is then returned to the School together with the relevant deposit.

Criteria. The School assesses whether support might be available, and if so, the extent of such support. This will essentially be determined by parents' financial circumstances and the level of funding available. Other influencing factors as follows:

- Boarding: bursaries are usually awarded against the day fee, but the School will consider requests for boarding bursaries.
- Expenses: whether fees are being paid to other schools (or universities).
- Conduct: good behavior and continuing good performance of the beneficiary.
- Eligibility: every applicant must meet the School's admission criteria. The parents must be resident in the UK and be UK taxpayers.
- Capital: the School would expect significant capital savings and investments to be used for the payment of school fees, as would equity values in houses.

- **Potential:** 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 other dependents, or the requirements of their partner's work.
- **Family:** the contribution made by an absent parent, or by other members of the wider family; contributions by any adults unrelated to the child or by outside sources; whether the pupil has siblings at the School; if a parent or guardian is critically ill or is unable to secure permanent employment due to poor health or incapacity; if a parental separation might result in the pupil having to be withdrawn from the School, adding to the stress of coping with the separation.

Alternative support. 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 to assist children who are already attending a fee-paying school and due to a change of circumstances may be unable to remain in that school. St George's encourages parents / guardians to apply for support where it is felt a good case can be made for assistance. A list of sources of support can be found on the [Educational Trust](#) website.

7.4 Monitoring and review

Monitoring. The panel of Governors, assisted by the Head and Bursar, will reassess the bursary based on the financial need, progress of the girl and support of the parents. If circumstances require, they may increase the award; however, they may also reduce or withdraw an award not only where a girl's progress, attitude or behaviour has been unsatisfactory but also taking into account other factors, for example the late payment of the fees.

Review. Bursary awards are subject to ongoing review. Bursaries are not automatically carried through to Sixth Form. The pupil must meet the minimum academic requirement and must have made a consistently good contribution to the School's extra-curricular programme.