

## Marymount International School

### Bursary Policy

The Governors of Marymount International School are committed to ensuring all girls who are offered a place are able to access a Marymount education aligned with the RSHM Mission 'that all may have life'.

To further this mission, we offer means-tested financial support to eligible parents/guardians to assist with school fees. This support is referred to as a bursary and may be awarded in the form of a reduction of up to 100% of fees payable, depending on the financial, compassionate, or other circumstances of applicants.

We believe in inclusivity, and our commitment to this principle is reflected in our Bursary Program. We offer a limited number of bursaries at each entry point. Families interested in a bursary are encouraged to inform the Admissions Office of their intent to apply. They may commence the bursary application process simultaneously with their application assessments and interviews.

#### **Funding Structure**

Our Bursary awards are discretionary and subject to the financial resources of the school. We are dedicated to making financial support available to deserving students, and in addition to the School's resources, the Marymount Annual Appeal actively raises funds specifically allocated for bursaries. These awards can be spread across a number of applicants of different status, with a preference for Roman Catholic Day and Boarding students.

#### **Bursary thresholds**

In evaluating the level of support requested, the School considers both the accessible household income and the net wealth of the family. An allowance per child will be factored into the assessable income for any dependent children in the family, excluding the applicant.

#### **Bursary cover**

A bursary will encompass all or a portion of the school fees. Additionally, it may extend to cover supplementary expenses such as the acceptance fee, educational trips, school or public transportation, and IT devices.

#### **Students progressing through the School**

To ensure that families receive ongoing support throughout their child's journey at Marymount, bursaries are subject to annual means-testing of parental means. The level of support may be adjusted annually, either increasing or decreasing, based on the parents' circumstances.

Furthermore, all bursaries will undergo a comprehensive review before a student enters the IB Diploma program. At this stage, the school may provide guidance if it becomes necessary to adjust or discontinue bursary support, allowing parents ample time to make the necessary arrangements for their child's education.

#### **Application Process (new families)**

##### **Step 1**

When registering your application for enrolment, we encourage you to apply for financial assistance simultaneously. Once you've submitted your enrolment application, our Business Office will promptly reach out to you and provide a link to access the bursary portal. Through this portal, you can conveniently complete the bursary application form online. Please keep in mind that we can only consider bursary applications from those who have expressed their interest in a bursary during the enrolment application process and have submitted the completed bursary application by the specified deadline.

##### **Step 2**

Every application undergoes assessment\*. This initial assessment provides valuable information to the Admissions team, assisting them in prioritizing applications based on an indicative level of support.

\*It may be necessary for further information, and this could take place in the form with further evidence or a home visit from Bursary Administration Limited (BAL). BAL is an external research company.

### **Step 3**

Parents/guardians will receive notification regarding their child's acceptance at the school from the Admissions Department. Simultaneously, the Bursar will communicate the details of the bursary offer. The bursary offer package will also include an acknowledgment, wherein parents/guardians can agree to the terms and conditions associated with the bursary.

**Step 4.** The individual(s) may choose to accept the offers extended to them.

### **Application Process (existing families in receipt of a bursary)**

The Business Office will reach out to all existing families each year, requesting them to submit a new application.

### **Application Process (existing families with a change of circumstances)**

Under normal circumstances, the School allocates funds annually to address sudden, unforeseen needs or to accommodate applications necessitating bursary assistance outside the regular calendar cycle for bursary submissions. These allocations are made within budgetary constraints. Parents/guardians with a child at the school whose financial circumstances experience a sudden change may apply for a bursary using the online system. Such bursaries are subject to availability and budgetary considerations.

### **Governance**

At each termly meeting of the Finance Committee and the Spiritual Life Committee, an anonymised update of the applications received/in progress and a financial report to track awards to the funding allocations will be presented.

### **Confidentiality**

The school respects the confidentiality of bursaries made to families and recipients are expected to do likewise. All relevant Data Protection protocols are adhered to.

## **Terms and Conditions**

1.1 Bursaries are subject to an annual assessment of parental means. The level of support may be adjusted annually, either increasing or decreasing, or even withdrawn, based on the outcome of the financial review.

1.2 Bursary beneficiaries and their families may be asked to provide feedback on the impact that attending the school has had on their child during their time at the school, to support bursary fundraising.

2. The School will take into account various factors when determining the eligibility for support and the level of assistance to be provided.

2.1 Student Suitability: Bursary funds are limited and the School exercises discretion when granting bursaries. For each student offered support, it is essential, in the Headmistress's opinion, that they are likely to achieve sound academic progress after admission, have the potential to enhance the quality of their work, and benefit from participating in the school's diverse extracurricular activities. All new applicants should meet the School's standard academic requirements, with previous school reports being taken into consideration.

2.2 Financial Considerations: The amount of the bursary award is determined solely by the extent of need and is not influenced by the child's academic ability. Each case is assessed on its own merits, and awards are made accordingly, within the confines of the school's overall budget. It is understood that judgments regarding the sacrifices a family should make to afford school fees are personal. However, the school has a responsibility to ensure that all bursaries are well-targeted. Therefore, in addition to current earnings, other factors that may be considered in determining the necessary percentage of the bursary can include:

- The potential for improving the family's financial position or earning capacity.
- Opportunities to access existing capital. Significant savings and investments are expected to contribute to school fees, as are the equity values of families with multiple properties.
- When new bursary applicants are already paying fees to other schools or childcare providers, the school will factor this into the determination of the appropriate level of the award. The reasonableness and sustainability of these arrangements will be part of the annual review process.
- While recognizing that perspectives may vary, the School holds that the following circumstances may not align with the receipt of a bursary:

- Frequent or extravagant holidays
- Acquisition of new or luxury cars, including those on hire purchase
- Substantial investments in home improvements

2.3 Other Factors: The school acknowledges that, in addition to meeting academic and financial requirements, there may be other circumstances relevant to the school's comprehensive assessment. These circumstances may include:

- Whether the child has siblings attending the school (although a bursary awarded to one child does not guarantee an award to a sibling).
- The child's social needs and relevant circumstances.
- Instances where a parent is critically or terminally ill or unable to secure permanent employment due to health issues or incapacity.
- Situations where separation has occurred or is likely to result in the child's withdrawal from the school, potentially adding to the stress of parental separation. In such cases, the school will still consider the financial circumstances of both parents.
- Any prior bursary support received from a previous school. It is important to note that previous bursary support from another school does not indicate or guarantee eligibility for bursary support at Marymount.

3. An application will be considered incomplete if it lacks financial details from both parents. In cases of separated or divorced parents, they have the option to submit separate applications for each household if they prefer. However, the school will exceptionally consider an application from a single parent in very limited circumstances. In such cases, the applying parent must provide evidence demonstrating the absence or unavailability of the other parent.

#### 4. Annual Review and continuing duty of disclosure

4.1 All bursaries are subject to annual review of parental means, with the possibility of adjustments based on changing circumstances. Current bursary recipients will receive re-assessment forms during the spring term of each year. In cases where parents have failed to fulfil their financial obligations to the school, such as late fee payments, the school, and when necessary, the Governing Body, may exercise discretion in recommending a reduction or withdrawal of the bursary award. Bursary support will not continue if applicants fail to complete and submit the required bursary application forms with supporting documentation by the specified deadline.

4.2 Bursary recipients have an ongoing duty of disclosure. In addition to the annual review, bursary holders are required to promptly inform the school of any improvements in their financial circumstances, regardless of when such changes occur, even if outside the annual review period. Notification of a change in circumstances will initiate a reassessment of parental means. Failure to disclose a change in circumstances may result in the reduction or withdrawal of the bursary, and parents may be obligated to repay some or all of the bursary funds. It is essential for parents to fully comprehend the terms and conditions of the bursary before accepting a place at the school with a bursary.

4.3 A change in circumstance would include the following:

- receipt of an inheritance
- increase in accessible household income
- other children in the family, who have previously been educated at fee-paying schools, reaching a natural break in their education.

#### 5. Withdrawal and/or repayment of bursary

5.1 The school reserves the right to withdraw the bursary at any time, including before the student's enrolment at the school, if the applicant provides incomplete information, omits relevant information during the assessment, or attempts to conceal or mislead the school in its evaluation. This includes instances such as the failure to disclose offshore funds or assets, withholding specific bank account statements, or engaging in asset transfers during the bursary assessment period.

5.2 In addition to the withdrawal of the bursary, parents may be required to repay bursary funds obtained based on false, misleading or incomplete information.

5.3 The bursary may also be withdrawn with immediate effect if the balance of the account remains unpaid 28 days after a written reminder has been sent to the parents.

5.4 If a bursary is withdrawn, parents may be required to pay any additional sum required to meet the full acceptance deposit.

## **6. Confidentiality**

6.1 Unlike scholarships, recipients of bursaries are not advertised. The school respects the confidentiality of bursaries made to families and prospective recipients are expected to do likewise. There are some circumstances where a donor or group of donors who has supported an individual bursary may make their gift on the agreement that the school updates them (the donor[s]) on the recipient's progress at the school. In these circumstances, the school will make you aware of this condition and ask for your consent before awarding such a bursary to your child.

## **7. Other Sources of Bursary Assistance**

In addition to the school's bursary fund, there are several educational and charitable trusts that offer aid for tuition fees. In most instances, these trusts aim to support students who are presently enrolled in fee-paying schools but may face challenges continuing due to changing circumstances. The school strongly encourages families to consider applying for this external support when they believe there is a compelling case for assistance.

## **8. Decisions regarding bursary support**

The school receives numerous applications for entrance and hardship bursaries each year. Each application is thoroughly assessed based on its individual merits, and the school's objective is to assist as many deserving applicants as possible. However, due to budgetary constraints, it may not be feasible to approve every application, and the school may not be able to provide detailed justifications for each decision. Please note that the school's decisions on bursary awards are final.

**Approved**            **November 2023**

**Next Review**      **November 2026**