



September 2021

Dear Applicant

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St Christopher School is committed to broadening access to its educational offering. One of the ways that we are able to do this is by offering some financial assistance to those who would otherwise not be able to afford the fees.

Fee assistance is means tested. Applications will only be considered where the application form has been completed in full and submitted by the deadline together with all supporting documentation. All applications are treated in the strictest confidence.

There are two types of fee assistance at St Christopher School: bursaries for the main school, and a separate fund for Sixth Form, The Robertson Bursary Trust. You can find out more about these on our website.

The Bursary Committee meets in January each year to consider applications for fee assistance, and letters with individual outcomes are sent out at the end of the month. Demand always exceeds the funds that we have available and unfortunately it is not possible to give assistance to all those that apply for it.

I have attached more detailed guidance to the fee assistance process, but if you have any queries about completing the application form then please do contact Martin Scoble, the Bursar, or Kate Allan, the Registrar, depending on the nature of the enquiry.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Emma-Kate Henry". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Emma-Kate Henry  
Head

## **St Christopher School Guidelines on Fee Assistance**

### **Introduction to Fee Assistance**

St Christopher School is committed to broadening access to the school by offering means-tested financial support with the payment of school fees, which is known as fee assistance.

Fee assistance takes the form of a discount of up to 100% on tuition fees for either a day or boarding place at St Christopher School.

Fee assistance is means tested, which means we consider a household's income and commitments, as well as assets and investments. We also consider the suitability of the child for St Christopher School.

Fee assistance is reviewed every year and applicants must submit a new and fully up-to-date application form with supporting evidence by the deadline.

When making fee assistance awards, there is a balance of consideration between existing need and new applications. This may result in the offer of fee assistance but for a lesser amount than the original request. Applicants will have time to consider the offer of assistance and to respond to the school accordingly and by the deadline given.

### **Applications for Fee Assistance**

Applications for fee assistance usually fall into two categories:

- New applicants to the school, where a place has been offered, but where parents or guardians are unable to fund the tuition fees.
- Families already in the school where parents or guardians' financial circumstances have affected their ability to pay the tuition fees and this may result in their child being withdrawn from St Christopher School.

It is usually the case that demand for fee assistance exceeds the funds that we have available and unfortunately it is not possible to give assistance to all those that apply for it.

The focus of successful awards is on children who are in the best position to gain from an education at St Christopher School, and contribute to its community.

Fee assistance may be applied for in any academic year by the deadline, and is not available outside of the annual process, except in exceptional circumstances.

Awards for fee assistance are made at the discretion of the Bursary Committee, which includes the Head and Bursar, who are together responsible for the management of the process. The Bursary Committee also includes the Registrar, who is responsible for the coordination of the application process.

Where parents or guardians with children already in the school wish to discuss fee assistance due to a change in financial circumstance, they should contact the Head's office directly. The Head's office is also responsible for the coordination of annual re-submissions for fee assistance.

#### **Applying for Fee Assistance: New Applicants**

Parents and guardians are asked to follow the following process when applying for fee assistance:

1. Register the child with the Admissions office. Please note that the Registration Fee of £100 will be refunded to applicants where the application for fee assistance is unsuccessful and where their child cannot attend the school as a result. The application process will then take place, as detailed on our website. Where a place at the school is then offered, the school will set a deadline for acceptance, which corresponds with the fee assistance application (see below).
2. Alongside the application process and by the deadline given, submit a completed Fee Assistance Application Form together with all of the supporting evidence requested. The application form seeks to establish the financial circumstances of the household. The application paperwork should be sent to the Admissions office, for the attention of the Registrar.
3. The application for fee assistance is assessed by the Bursary Committee in January each year.
4. When the Bursary Committee has allocated funds and closed the process in January, the school will contact applicants in writing with their decision.
5. If the application has been successful, the applicants are then required to sign a letter accepting the offer and acknowledging the conditions relating to the award for fee assistance.

#### **Applying for Fee Assistance: Change in Family Circumstances**

St Christopher School can consider applications from families where there has been a sudden, unforeseen change in circumstances which

may merit fee assistance outside of the usual application process. The application may be for a short-term or longer-term award. Such awards are subject to the availability of funds and are not guaranteed. In the first instance, parents or guardians should contact the Head's office to discuss their situation.

### **The Case for Fee Assistance**

The Bursary Committee takes into account a number of factors when considering an application for fee assistance, and the extent of the award. The main factor is the child's suitability for the school. Attention is given to the outcome of the child's application, including the most recent school report, school reference, interview, and academic assessment or taster session where applicable, but potential will also be considered.

Priority is given to those most likely to benefit from the educational provision at St Christopher School. Each child who is offered fee assistance must, in the opinion of the Bursary Committee, be likely to make good personal and academic progress following admission to the school, and take part in the wider community at St Chris, for example through extra-curricular activities. Previous character, behaviour and attitude at school will be taken into account.

The level of fee assistance awarded is not influenced by the level of the child's ability, but by the extent of need. Each application is assessed on its own merits and awards made accordingly, subject to the school's ability to fund these within the context of the overall budget available.

### **Expectations for Applications**

St Christopher School accepts that sacrifices made by families in order to pay for school fees are personal. However, in order to ensure that fee assistance is allocated in a focused manner, factors in addition to the earnings of parents or guardians are taken into account. These include:

- The ability to improve the financial position or earning levels of the family. For example, where there are two parents, step-parents or guardians, 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 (approx. 4 years) or other dependents.
- Opportunities to release capital. Significant capital savings and investments would be expected to be used for the payment of school fees, as would equity values in any properties owned by the parents, step-parents or guardians.
- In cases of separation or divorce, the contribution made by the parent who does not have residence.

- Contribution to household costs by other, wider family members, adults unrelated to the child or by outside sources.
- Where fees are being paid to other schools, colleges or universities, the Bursary Committee will take account of these outgoings.
- Where another child in the family is in receipt of fee assistance from St Christopher School or another school, college or university, the Bursary Committee will take account of these outgoings.

Whilst accepting that others may not agree, in line with the ethos of St Christopher School and the aims of the Bursary Committee, we consider that the following would not be consistent with the receipt of fee assistance:

- A lifestyle that is not in line with the aims and objectives of the award of fee assistance, which is to support families who would not in normal circumstances, be able to afford to pay the school fees, either in part or wholly.
- Frequent or expensive holidays.
- New or luxury cars.
- Investment in significant home improvements.
- A second property or land holdings.

### **Other Factors**

St Christopher School acknowledges that in addition to the reasons given in The Case for Fee Assistance, there may be extenuating circumstances, which should be considered by the Bursary Committee. These may include, for example:

- Where a child has siblings already at St Christopher School.
- Where the social or emotional needs of the child are relevant.
- Where a parent or guardian is chronically or terminally ill and therefore unable to secure permanent employment due to poor health.

### **Annual Review**

All awards for fee assistance are subject to the annual re-submission of both an application form and supporting documents by the deadline given. Awards may be varied upwards or downwards depending on parental circumstances. Current award holders will be contacted by the Head's office in the Autumn Winter term each year.

In addition to the above, the Bursary Committee will request from senior staff members a report on each child's character, behaviour and attitude, as well as their academic and personal progress over the previous year.

This will be taken into account when re-considering the application for fee assistance.

For those in receipt of current fee assistance awards, the Bursary Committee has the discretion to reduce or withdraw an award not only where a pupil's progress, attitude or behaviour has not been of the standard expected but also where the parents or guardians have failed to support the school, for example by the late payment of any contribution they are making to the fees.

### **Confidentiality**

The School respects the confidentiality of bursary awards made to families and recipients are expected to do likewise.