The Children's House

Bursary & Hardship Fund Policy

This policy should be reviewed annually and as required by legislation.		
Action	**Reviewer**	**Date**
Review	EG	Sept 2026
Approved by COM	BDB	Sept 2026
Date for next internal review		Sept 2027

The Children's House

Bursary and Hardship Fund Policy

Introduction

The Children's House (TCH) is an independent, non-selective and co-educational Nursery and Preparatory school, educating children from 2 ½ - 11 years of age and situated across two sites in Islington. The Early Years Site, based at 77 Elmore Street, is for children from aged 2 ½ -5, and the Prep School at King Henry's Walk, currently caters for children from Years 1 to 6.

Objectives

The Children's House is a registered charity that is committed to providing public benefit. The School is aware of its obligations under the Charities Act 2006 and seeks to adhere to the public benefit principles identified by the Charity Commission by offering bursary awards to parents who could not normally pay for an education at The Children's House and supporting parents undergoing financial difficulties through the Hardship Fund.

This policy provides guidance on the provision of financial aid through bursaries and the Hardship Fund for parents with children either in, or considering applying to, TCH Early Years or the Prep School. It will be reviewed to take into consideration the latest guidance from the Charity Commission.

Bursaries

Through the provision of bursaries, the School seeks to promote greater access, consistent with the Charity Commission's goals of increased public benefit from the independent school sector. Preference will be given to local children whose educational or developmental needs will, in the opinion of the Headteacher, be particularly advanced through having a place at TCH.

All bursary applications are means tested by a third party who conduct independent means test assessments. Bursaries may be equivalent to between 10% and 90% of fees. In some circumstances up to 100% fee remission will be granted.

Where applications meet the requirements, bursaries are usually awarded on an annual basis. Due to the size of and the limited financial resources of the School, not every eligible application for a bursary will be successful.

All bursary applications are treated in the strictest confidence. The applicants' names will only be known to the Headteacher, Admissions, selected members of the Senior Leadership and Admin Teams, and the Council of Management (Governing body and Trustees of the School). Pupils will not be made aware that they benefit from a bursary unless informed by their parents.

The Hardship Fund

The Children's House

The Hardship Fund provides financial assistance to parents whose financial situation is adversely affected whilst their child is already at the School. The Hardship Fund is designed to assist parents on a short-term basis who, with little or no notice, might otherwise be unable to continue to send their child to the School for financial reasons. This fund is specifically designed to support with emergencies that have unrisen from unexpected and unforeseen circumstances.

The fund is intended to act as a safety net for those in financial difficulty rather than a main source of income. Because the fund is limited, financial support may be offered in a variety of different ways and applications may not always be successful.

Awards are discretionary, and subject to yearly review by the School. The School reserves the right to request full transparency from parents requesting financial support and all information will be treated in the strictest confidence.

Eligibility and Procedure

All parents and prospective parents of pupils at the School are eligible to apply for a bursary or for financial support through the Hardship Fund.

The first point of contact when seeking information and advice on how to apply should be made through Admissions .

Nursery Bursaries

1. Parents seeking a nursery bursary place should register their child(ren) in the usual way with the School. Once the Headteacher decides that it may be appropriate to offer a child a nursery bursary place at the School, the Admissions staff will initiate the means testing procedure. It is important that all the requested information is provided in full otherwise the process can be delayed until complete disclosure is obtained.

2. Once an application is received by it will be assessed initially for completeness before being submitted to an external third-party adjudicator. The School currently works in cooperation with The Bursary Administration Limited to provide independent objective assessment. The process of assessment may include a home visit to verify the accuracy of the information and circumstances provided in the questionnaire. Failure to agree a home visit or to divulge fully all details will lead to the withholding or withdrawal of an award.

3. Parents will be invited for an interview with the Headteacher, after which Nursery bursaries will be offered in writing by the Headteacher. This letter will outline any conditions of the award and will normally be for an academic year. Confirmation is on receipt of a signed acceptance of the offer.

4. All bursaries are subject to an annual means-test review but should any of the information disclosed in response to the questionnaire become inaccurate during the course of the year, the School must be informed without delay. Failure to divulge

requested information or a change in circumstances to the School could lead to a bursary being withdrawn or withheld.

5. A nursery bursary will normally be renewed for any subsequent school terms at the nursery, where the recipient is of nursery school age. This is contingent upon receipt of an updated application indicating there has been no material change in financial circumstances and the conditions of the original offer of a bursary continue to be met.

The School reserves the right to request a review of the parents' financial position at any point.

Prep School Bursaries

Parents of pupils from Reception to Year 6 are eligible to apply for bursaries for occasional places into the Prep School, following the application and assessment process outlined above.

1. Parents seeking a bursary place should register their child(ren) in the usual way with admissions, explaining that they are seeking consideration for a bursary and book a tour with the Senior Leadership Team.
2. Once they have attended a tour with the Senior Leadership team the admissions team will initiate the means testing procedure. It is important that all the requested information is provided in full otherwise the process can be delayed until complete disclosure is obtained.
3. Once the bursary has been approved by our third-party adjudicator, the pupil will be invited for a trial session with the class. This will include an academic assessment to ensure that the School is the right fit.
4. All pupils awarded bursaries will be expected to contribute positively to School life, and to set a good example to other pupils.
5. All means tested awards will be subject to annual review, after which the School reserves the right to vary the value of the award with immediate effect. The new value will be confirmed in writing to Parents.

Obligations of the Parents

The Parents are required to comply with the conditions of the Parent Contract (Acceptance Form) and to support and encourage the pupil to work hard and to uphold the objectives and the good name of the School.

Continuation of the Award

Continuation of the award is dependent upon the following conditions being fulfilled:

- In the case of a means tested award, the Parents satisfying the School's financial requirements each year;

- The financial resources allocated by the School to support the award being sufficient to maintain the award;
- It being in the financial interests of the School to maintain the award;
- the Pupil complying with the obligations of the award (see point 4, above)

The School is committed to providing the widest possible access to its educational services for children regardless of the financial circumstances of their families. Bursaries above 50% will also include access to the School's before (breakfast club) and after school care clubs, free of charge. Enrichment clubs will continue to be charged at the normal rate. Holidays camps will be charged at 50% of the daily or weekly rate.

These guidelines have been adopted by the Council of Management to ensure fairness, transparency and consistency. If a parent or prospective parent feels that he or she has not been dealt with in this manner or should they wish to appeal their application, they can write to the Trustee responsible for Bursaries at the address below clearly the reason for their appeal. The Trustee will review the entire application process with the Board and the Board's decision will be communicated in writing as soon as reasonably practicable.

Bursary Trustee c/o School Administrator, The Children's House 77 Elmore Street London N1 3AQ.

These Guidelines were reviewed, amended and agreed by the Council of Management in Sept 2026 and will be amended in line with suggested amendments from the Charities Commission.

Agreed by Brodie Bibby, of the Council of Management