



# Bursary Policy & Hardship Support

## Introduction

Cheam School (the “School”) is committed to supporting existing families and broadening access to the School by offering bursarial support in several different ways. These comprise:

- Temporary hardship support
- Bursary support
- Life-changing bursaries via the Cheam Foundation

All awards are subject to approval by the School’s Bursary Awards Committee (BAC) which includes the Director of Finance & Operations (DFO), the Headmaster, and non-parent Governors who are members of the School’s Finance & Operations Committee.

In any particular year, available resources for bursarial support are limited and awards are not guaranteed. Support may be withdrawn where a pupil’s attitude or behaviour is unsatisfactory, or where parents do not honour specific conditions of the award or the Parent-School contract more generally.

This policy sets out bursarial support options in more detail and describes the application process.

## The Cheam Foundation

The Cheam Foundation is a separate legal entity to the School, governed by its own Board of Trustees. Its charitable object, as approved by the Charities Commission, is to provide funding, assistance and support to the School which most usually takes the form of bursarial support in the form of a discount on all or part of the tuition and other School fees payable, life-changing bursaries &/or fundraising for certain capital projects which legitimately further the educational aims of the School. Neither the trustees nor the director of the Cheam Foundation are involved in any way in the grant of any awards.

## Hardship support

We recognise that parents of existing pupils can occasionally experience a change in circumstances which can make it difficult to meet ongoing school fee commitments. The School’s aim is to help parents avoid such circumstances interrupting the education of their children. The School will always consider offering support during these difficult times, either by agreeing deferred or other payment terms, &/or providing hardship support. Such support can only be temporary in nature. Applications for hardship support should be made by contacting the DFO directly. Families will be required to complete a confidential means-testing assessment and provide evidence in support of their application.

The DFO will review the application and provide a recommendation to the Headmaster. Subject to their endorsement, any support will be subject to BAC approval. Hardship support is subject to repeat testing of parental means each year and may be varied upwards or downwards depending on circumstances.

## **Bursary support**

The School also invites applications for bursary support. These may either be offered to widen participation from the local community and last for several years, or could be offered to assist existing parents over a discrete period of time or an ongoing basis as part of a specific financial support package. Commencing in Q1 2025 and for a limited transition period the latter is expected to include support where needed in meeting the imposition of VAT on fees. Central to both types of offer is the principle that available funds are allocated fairly and equitably based on need, and not on a first-come-first-served basis. As such, the School operates a termly awards process where an application window is opened and closed, and all cases considered by the BAC.

The School uses a secure, dedicated online platform to manage confidential applications for bursary support. Parents wishing to apply should, in the first instance, email [bursarysupport@cheamschool.co.uk](mailto:bursarysupport@cheamschool.co.uk). Further information will then be provided, including the dates of application windows.

All bursary applications involve detailed means testing which may be subject to independent verification by a third-party specialist firm. Unless part of a specific time-bound support package, awards would normally endure for the whole of a child's education; although repeat means-testing will occur, significant changes in the level of award are unlikely to occur unless there has been a material change in financial circumstances.

Typically, bursary assistance ranges from 5-50% of fees (excluding extras), although higher awards are possible in exceptional circumstances. Cases requiring significantly more support are likely to be referred to the Cheam Foundation for consideration as a life-changing bursary.

## **Life-changing bursaries**

Life-changing bursaries of up to 100% may be awarded by the School, from funds raised by the Cheam Foundation, to children who have a desire to learn in any form and who, for financial reasons, would not otherwise consider the School as an option. These bursaries are intended to offer a talented child to develop their full potential and are for children entering the School in Year 7 or above.

For life-changing bursaries, there is no Registration Fee or Confirmation Deposit to pay. Funds from the Cheam Foundation will cover the cost of school fees and, as applicable, essential extras.

If you think your child may qualify for support under this category, you should register your interest with the School Registrar. The application process will involve:

- Preliminary discussions
- School visit by parents and child including a meeting with the Headmaster
- Registration (form completion; no fee) together with a covering letter/email detailing the reasons why the child would benefit from a Cheam education
- Submission of most recent school reports and any relevant third-party reports (e.g. educational psychologist, occupational therapy, speech and language, specialist teacher, medical etc.)
- Confidential means testing assessment, which may be independently verified by a specialist firm that includes a home visit

Eligible pupils will then be invited to the School for a familiarisation day. Successful candidates will be formally notified by the School and required to sign an acceptance letter agreeing to any specified conditions. The School Registrar will then confirm a place (no confirmation deposit is payable).

## **Policy Review**

This policy will be periodically reviewed and updated to ensure its effectiveness and relevance.

### Policy Owners

Staff: Director of Finance & Operations  
Director of Communications, Marketing, Admissions and Events

### Latest Reviews

Staff Policy Owners: October 2024  
Compliance: October 2024