



## **The Royal Belfast Academical Institution**

### **Main School**

### **Fees Bursary Scheme**

#### **Introduction**

The Governors of the Royal Belfast Academical Institution (“the Governors”) believe that no boy should be denied an education at the School if he has a place at the School because his parents or guardians cannot afford to pay the fees which the School charges.

And so the Governors have a Scheme which is known as “the Fees Bursary Scheme” to support parents or guardians who find themselves in this position. If the Governors decide to give support, it is called giving “a Bursary”.

The Fees Bursary Scheme is funded in part from the School’s own funds, but also from the generosity of old boys and others who wish to help the Governors and they make donations to the School so that it can provide these bursaries.

#### **Basis of the Scheme**

1. An important point to make is that it is at the discretion, or choice, of the Governors whether they decide to give a Bursary or not. If the Governors decide to support parents or guardians by giving a Bursary, such support will be to reduce the amount of fees which the parents have to pay to the School. This may mean that parents or guardians may not have to pay any fees at all, or may only have to pay a percentage of the fees. If the Governors give a Bursary of 100% of the fees, this means that the parents or guardians will not have to pay the fees. If the Bursary is less than 100%, the parents will only have to pay the difference of the percentage offered and 100%. If a bursary of 80% is offered parents will have to pay 20% of the fees. If the Governors decline to give any assistance, that will be expressed as 0%. The Bursary is only in respect of fees and insurance payments. The School also makes a charge for stationery and a book deposit, and these do have to be paid by all parents and guardians, including those supported under the Fees Bursary Scheme

It is important for parents and guardians to understand that they have no legal right to a Bursary. The Governors can decline to make any award. That said, the Governors will try to give a Bursary if the matters which the Governors take into consideration in deciding to give a bursary (see para 2 below) suggest that it should be given.

Because there is no legal obligation on the Governors to make an award, if the Governors decide not to make an award, there is no appeal against that decision

2. When the Governors are deciding if they should give a Bursary, they will take the following matters into account:

2.1 The income of, or available to, the family, including the amount of State Benefits received (other than any Disability Living Allowance received for a member of the family). "Family" includes all persons living together as a family unit. This means that if there are adult brothers and sisters of the boy, and they contribute to the family income, what they pay will be considered.

It also means that if the parents of the boy live together, the joint income of both parents will be considered. Where the parents of the boy do not live together only the income of the parent who has legal custody of the boy, or, if the boy is over 18, the income of the parent with whom the boy usually resides will be considered, but any contributions which the other parent makes to the maintenance of the family will be regarded as income of the parent who has legal custody of the boy, or with whom the boy lives.

2.2 The number of children in the family who remain dependent on their parents, or the parent who has legal custody of the boy, or with whom the boy lives.

This means that if the parents of the boy live together, the children of the family living with both parents will be counted. Where the parents of the boy do not live together this means the children of the family living with the parent who has legal custody of the boy, or, if the boy is over 18, the parent with whom the boy usually resides will only be counted.

2.3 The amount of capital of the family.

This includes savings, insurance policies which, at the date of the application have a capital, or "surrender" value, stocks and shares, and property, owned in whole or in part by the parent or guardian applying for the Bursary. It also includes what is called "the equity" in the parents' dwelling house, that is the value of the dwelling house less what is owed on any mortgage over it.

If the parents of the boy live together, this means the capital of both parents. Where the parents of the boy do not live together this means the capital of the parent who has legal custody of the boy, or, if the boy is over 18, the parent with whom the boy usually resides.

2.4 Any special circumstance or hardship which affects the boy and/or his parents or guardians and which the parents or guardians think the Governors should know about as they consider the application for financial assistance.

3. The Scheme operates on an annual basis over each academic year, so an application for a bursary has to be made every year. A full application will be required when the parents or guardians first apply for assistance, and again at the start of Key Stage 4, and again at the start of Year 13. In the intervening years, parents and guardians will have to give details of any changes to their circumstances which have happened in the previous 12 months.

Application forms for the Scheme are available from the School Office or from the website. The Scheme operates on an annual basis over each academic year, so an application for a bursary must be made every year.

*As a rough guide, if your annual family income is less than £25k, you are likely to be eligible for a bursary. If your household income is more than £45k, you are unlikely to be eligible for financial support.*