

Bradford Grammar School BGS Fee Assistance Policy (Assisted Places Award)

This policy applies to the whole School and is published to parents, pupils and staff. Updated 01 September 2017



General principles

Bradford Grammar School (BGS) provides financial support to academically talented children from lower income households through its means tested fee assistance (Assisted Places Award) programme. In an average year the School will spend approximately £850,000 supporting over 100 pupils with means tested assistance. Assistance is provided to new pupils entering Bradford Grammar School at Year 7 and Year 12 (Lower Sixth). Approximately 10 x Year 7 pupils receive assistance and 5 x Year 12 pupils.

The School's resources are finite and a large part of the BGS funds for fee assistance come from donors and other charities who give monies specifically to help pupils from lower income families. Therefore, the School has to apply strict academic and financial criteria when making an Award. This means that demand can often outstrip the funding available. Typically there can be up to 7 or 8 applicants for each Assisted Place offered at Year 7 and 5 applicants for each at Year 12.

Once an Assisted Places Award has been made a student will be expected to maintain sufficient academic progress in line with or exceeding academic target grades as advised by University of Durham CEM analysis, an exemplary disciplinary record and make a positive contribution to school life. There will be a detailed review of academic performance at the end of Year 8 and any concerns that the School might have about sustaining the Award going forward will be communicated at this time in writing. Progress will then be monitored in the following year and a final decision about the continuation of the Assisted Places Award will be made at the end of Year 9. There will then be a further review of academic performance towards the end of Year 11 and again any concerns will be communicated in writing. A final decision will then be taken on GCSE results day. GCSE results of predominantly 9/8/7 (A*/ A) grades will usually ensure the award will continue into the Sixth Form although the school reserves the right to set (assisted place) pupils individual attainment targets.

The School will conduct an annual financial review of parents' finances each spring for the following academic year. If a family's financial circumstances materially improve then the School reserves the right to reconsider the size of the award and it may be that the Assisted Places Award could reduce.

Please note that it is very unlikely that the School will make an award to cover 100% of the School fee. In addition there are no awards available for Junior School pupils or for those transferring from Year 6 to Year 7 (i.e. graduating to Senior School from Clock House).

Eligible Pupils

- External candidates joining BGS Senior School at Year 7 and Year 12
- Assistance is not available for overseas students
- Pupils must be in the correct English national curriculum year for their age

An Assisted Places Award will only be made if the following two criteria are met:

- The applicant must be of exceptional academic ability as demonstrated by their performance in the Assisted Places Additional Assessment and Entrance Examination at Year 7 or GCSE grades at Year 12 (usually by attaining more than 6 x GCSE grades 8/9 (or A*))
- The applicant's family meets the financial conditions as set out in this policy

Year 7 applicants must perform exceptionally well in the Assisted Places Additional Assessment (6 or 7 December 2017) and the Entrance Examination (week commencing 22 January 2018).

Specimen questions for the Entrance Examination are available upon request. We do not give out details of the Assisted Places Additional Assessment.

Financial Criteria

Those children who are successful in the Assisted Places Additional Assessment in December will receive a letter informing them that they may be in line for an award. Enclosed with this letter will be the Assisted Places Award Financial Assessment form which has to be completed and returned in its entirety by Monday 8 January 2018. Any incomplete financial assessment forms or forms received after 8 January will not be considered. These selected candidates will then go forward to sit the Entrance Exam during the week commencing 22 January. Assisted Places Awards will not be allocated until the scores of the Assisted Places Additional Assessment and Year 7 Entrance Exam have been added together. The total of these two tests will determine which children will be offered an Award and our decision at that time will be final.

Please note there is no appeals procedure as it is the responsibility of all families to provide true and accurate information throughout the process. Any false or inaccurate information could result in the withdrawal or reduction of an award.

All families who receive an Assisted Places Award Financial Assessment form will be requested to provide accurate information and submit various personal financial documentation in support of the figures provided (for example, tax returns, P60's and salary slips; mortgage and bank statements, letters confirming tax credits etc.). Families will then be contacted by the School's independent financial representatives and an appointment made for a home visit when a more detailed discussion will take place. Following the home visit a report will be submitted to the School's Assisted Places Awards Panel who will make a decision on which families will be offered an Award and its percentage value.

Please note the School will not contact you if any documentation is omitted. It is the responsibility of the applicant's parents to provide all financial information and supporting evidence by the deadline dates set.

All household income, assets and liabilities will be considered. As an indication, households with gross income in excess of £65,000 pa will not qualify. Awards will be made on a sliding scale according to the family's financial circumstances at the time of the application. The School very rarely makes Awards of 100% and would expect families to make some financial contribution towards the fees.

In gross household income we will include savings interest, dividends from investments, rent from other properties, child benefit and tax credits, pensions and any perceived contributions from extended family members to household expenses. Any non-taxed income will be 'grossed' up to a pre-tax income equivalent so as not to prejudice working families who are on low incomes.

We will also take into account other factors as well as gross income. For example the Award percentage based on gross income alone would be reduced where:

- There is significant equity in the family home – generally by 10% for every £10,000 worth of equity.
- There is opportunity to release capital in savings, investments, or second properties.
- There are two parents and only one parent works (unless prevented from doing so through incapacity, the need to care for dependents or through the requirements of their partner's work commitments).
- In cases of separation, an expected reasonable contribution from the absent parent
- Where we believe that the family has a lifestyle that could be sacrificed to fund school fees – for example by taking multiple or expensive holidays, owning luxury cars or other possessions, by investing in significant home improvements or by paying school fees for another child/other children at an independent school(s).
- Where support from other family members might be forthcoming.

Financial reviews will be conducted annually and parents will be expected to complete an Assisted Places Award Financial Assessment form each spring. Improvements in financial circumstances could result in a lower award in subsequent years.

Finally, all parents are expected to keep their fee and extras accounts up to date. Failure to do this could result in the loss of the award in subsequent years.

Year 7 BGS Assisted Places applications – How to Apply

All online applications to sit the Assisted Places Additional Assessment must be submitted by Wednesday 22 November 2017. Any applications for financial support received after this date will not be considered.

Applicants will take an Assisted Places Additional Assessment on Wednesday 6 or Thursday 7 December 2017 (please note that there are no specimen questions available for this assessment). Those candidates who finish in the top section of this initial assessment will be informed by letter and will automatically go forward to sit the Year 7 Entrance Exam to be held during the week commencing 22 January 2018. Included with this letter will be the Assisted Places Award Financial Assessment form. This form must be completed in its entirety and returned with **ALL** supporting documentation by Monday 8 January 2018 at the very latest. Please note that any forms or supporting documentation received after this date will not be considered.

Those children who did not qualify following the December assessment will be informed and given the option of sitting the Year 7 Entrance Examination for a full fee place.

After the combined scores of the Assisted Places Additional Assessment and Entrance Examination are known the list of potential candidates will be narrowed down again and successful families will be contacted by the School's independent financial representatives who will arrange a home visit to discuss the financial application. This is likely to be in the weeks commencing 29 January and 5 February 2018. We must emphasise that a home visit does not guarantee the offer of an award.

Offers of a Year 7 BGS Assisted Place Award will be mailed out during the week of 5 February 2018 and the closing date for the receipt of acceptances is Friday 10 March 2018. Any proposed Award will be full and final and not open to further negotiation.

Important dates for Year 7 entry 2018/2019

Online application form	Closing date 22 November 2017
Assisted Places Additional Assessment	Wednesday 6 December or Thursday 7 December 2017
Completion and return of the Financial Assessment form (if applicable)	Monday 8 January 2018 (applications received after 8 January will not be considered)
Entrance Examination	Week commencing 22 January 2018
Home visit (if applicable)	Week commencing 29 January and 5 February 2018
Notification of awards	5 February 2018

Please contact the Admissions Registrar (01274 553702/admissions@bradfordgrammar.com) if you need any further details or clarification of any of the points mentioned in this policy.

Your enquiry may then be re-directed to our BGS Assisted Places Team.

Application for Year 12 BGS Assisted Places Awards

Awards are given on a means-tested basis, each case being reviewed annually. The award depends on parental circumstances, demand at the time of entrance and the academic ability of the candidate (candidates looking for an Assisted Places Award will need gain a minimum of 6 GCSE passes at grade 8 or 9 (A*/A) to put forward an application to the Assisted Places Awards Panel). Decisions regarding who will receive an Award will be made following receipt of all applicants' results. Competition for awards is fierce and the School will inevitably have to disappoint many students. Applications will be considered following publication of GCSE results on Thursday 23 August 2018.

To begin the process, an online registration form must be completed, following which applicants will be forwarded an application form and further details. Interviews for all candidates will take place on Wednesday 29 November 2017.

Those students wishing to apply for financial assistance will be forwarded an Assisted Places Financial Assessment form in January 2018. This form will need to be completed and returned with all supporting documentation by Friday 15 June 2018 at the latest. Late applications will not be considered.

On GCSE results day (Thursday 23 August 2018) candidates should bring a copy of their Statement of Results to the School and speak to the Admissions Registrar. Successful candidates' parents will be contacted by the School's independent financial representatives who will arrange a home visit to discuss the financial application (this visit may take place before Results Day). We must emphasise that a home visit does not necessarily guarantee the offer of an award.

Awards are decided by the Assisted Places Awards Panel based upon the outcome of the financial questionnaire and home visit. Offers are then communicated in writing by the School's finance department.

Financial reviews will be conducted annually and parents will be expected to complete a form each spring. Improvements in financial circumstances could result in a lower award in subsequent years.

Finally, all parents are expected to keep their fee and extras accounts up to date. Failure to do this could result in the loss of the award in subsequent years.

Please note there is no appeals procedure as it is the responsibility of all families to provide true and accurate information throughout the process. Any false or inaccurate information could result in the withdrawal or reduction of an award.

Please contact the Admissions Registrar (01274 553702 or admissions@bradfordgrammar.com) if you need any further details or clarification of any of the points raised in this policy.

Your enquiry may then be re-directed to the BGS Assisted Places team.

Assisted Places Award terms and conditions

Parents will be bound by the terms and conditions of the Award that will be sent out with the offer.

Awards may be withdrawn or reduced if there are breaches of these terms and conditions; or if it is subsequently believed the facts disclosed in the application were not true or correct; or if in the opinion of the Headmaster the pupil's progress, attitude, attendance or behaviour no longer merits continuation of the award.

All awards are subject to an annual financial review to ensure that funds are allocated to families in greatest need. Each spring parents will be asked to complete a new financial assessment in order to means test the award for the following academic year. The

The School reserves the right to ask for another home visit to verify information provided if necessary. This review process may lead to the reduction of an award if the Assisted Places Awards Panel decides that the family can afford to pay more.

The School reserves the right to review an award at any time if any relevant information comes to light. In this situation the School reserves the right to recover any awards inappropriately awarded.

Confidentiality

The School will retain personal financial information about the applicant until such a time that the application is either successful or rejected.

After that time all personal information will be returned to the applicant's parents and the form retained for a period of up to 12 months.

For all ongoing parents in receipt of financial assistance the School will retain the original forms and personal financial information until such a time that the award either ceases or the pupil leaves the school. It will however return all copy documentation sent to support the figures on the form (for example, mortgage statements, bank statements, salary slips, tax returns, benefits and tax credit letters) after that year's award has been decided.

Please contact the Admissions Registrar (01274 553702 or admissions@bradfordgrammar.com) if you need any further details or clarification of any of the points mentioned in this policy.

Your enquiry may then be re-directed to our Assisted Places Team.