



# FOREST SCHOOL

## Scholarships, Bursaries & Assisted Places

In line with Forest School's charitable aims, the School is working towards increasing the number of pupils who can access a Forest education, regardless of parental income. We wish to maintain the wonderful diversity of the Forest community and enable more pupils, who would not otherwise be able to attend Forest, to enjoy all the opportunities for learning and personal development that Forest provides for young people.

Bursaries (means-tested awards to help parents pay the school fees) are currently linked to Scholarships (awarded on merit) and allow pupils to take up a potentially fully funded place with a combination of Scholarship and Bursary awards. We now want to use more of the money available to fund separate means-tested Bursaries, available to anyone offered a place at Forest, not just to Scholars.

For entry in 2020, we introduced a new type of means-tested Bursary called an "Assisted Place" which enabled four pupils to join Forest in Y7 on fully funded places. For entry into September 2022, we will have seven Assisted Places available to pupils at 11+. These will be offered as free places (i.e., 100% fee remission) and will be awarded to pupils who meet the financial criteria for 100% fee remission and demonstrate the most potential to benefit from an academically challenging all round school like Forest.

At 16+ 2022 entry we will be introducing one Assisted Place. This award is means-tested and awarded at the discretion of the School to a candidate who performs strongly in the 16+ entrance examination and subsequent interviews, meets the eligibility criteria and shows commitment to study, attendance and co-curricular contributions. This award is given entirely at the discretion of the School and the parental income information included in the Bursary application process will be considered. Therefore, parents do not need to specifically apply for this award.

In the short term, the existing Bursary and Scholarship schemes will run alongside the Assisted Places as outlined. However, in the longer term the ultimate goal is to reduce the number of non-means-tested fee subsidies and to move to a scheme where Scholarships across the school would be offered on an honorary basis, recognising the academic achievements of able children, and thus ensuring that substantial fee discounts are targeted at those pupils with the greatest financial need. As a step towards this, we are reducing scholarship awards to a maximum of 20% from September 2022. This, and the reduction made last year from 50% to 25%, has enabled us to double the number of Assisted Places we can offer.

We understand that some families may have unusual financial circumstances which means that, although their annual income is low and on paper, they are eligible for assistance, they are still able to enjoy a very comfortable lifestyle which may include owning buy to let properties, living in large properties (which may be family owned), employment through a family business or benefiting from sophisticated financial planning.

It is recognised that judgements about what sacrifices a family should make to pay school fees will be personal. However, the School has a duty to ensure that its limited charitable resources are only directed towards the most deserving cases, and for this reason an 11+ Assisted Place is not intended to support families who, with reasonable financial and personal sacrifices, could have otherwise afforded paying the full fee.

The explicit aim (and moral purpose) of the Assisted Places Scheme is to support able pupils, who could not otherwise be able to afford to attend Forest School.

### **Scholarships and Bursaries (for entry September 2022)**

Scholarships are awarded to pupils that demonstrate excellence during a competitive assessment process. Scholarships are currently awarded for sport, music and academic excellence at 11+, 13+ (2022 only) and 16+. Drama and Art scholarships are available at 16+. The maximum scholarship awarded to any one pupil is 20% remission of the full School fee whether in one area of excellence or a combination of one or more areas of excellence. However, most scholarships will be awarded as a smaller percentage, usually 5% or 10%.

Alongside our Scholarship Programme, Forest School offers Bursaries. Bursaries are awards that are added to a Scholarship award. Bursaries are means-tested, which means that they are awarded according to household income. A Bursary can provide up to 100% fee reduction. This allows able pupils who have been offered a Scholarship award for excellence, but who otherwise may not have been able to take up a place, to come to Forest. To apply for a Bursary, parents need to complete an application form in advance of the entrance examination. Bursaries are only given in conjunction with a Scholarship.

Parents are asked to refer to the income bands on the School website to determine eligibility for bursarial assistance.

### **11+ Assisted Places (for entry September 2022)**

In addition to the Bursary money offered in conjunction with a Scholarship as outlined above, we also offer separately seven 11+ Assisted Places (100% fee remission i.e., a free place at Forest). 11+ Assisted Places will be awarded on the basis of the pupil's suitability for the outstanding all round educational provision offered by Forest School and their family income, as assessed by the School using the published means-tested financial bands and processes outlined in the Forest School's Assisted Place Policy.

Families who want to be considered for an 11+ Assisted Place will be required to complete an online financial statement form by midday, **Friday 12 November 2021**. The online form will be available on the Forest School website from Wednesday 1 September 2021. This will establish eligibility before being required to follow the full application process. Applicants who have met the financial criteria will be contacted by email w/c Monday 15 November and invited to complete the Senior School Registration form by midday, Friday 26 November. The registration fee for these candidates will be waived. Following the interview and examination, approximately 20 candidates will be invited for assessments w/c 17 January 2022.

The expectation is families with a total household income of £35,000 or below are more likely to be awarded an Assisted Place.

Please note the School will not proceed with an application from anyone giving misleading, inaccurate or incomplete information.

The School uses Bursary Assessment Associates to review and assess all means-tested applications. This may include a home visit which will, of necessity be arranged at short notice. Bursary Assessment Associates will contact families directly by email or telephone to arrange a visit, so it is important that accurate contact information is provided when completing Bursary applications.

Families who are awarded an Assisted Place will have to submit a Statement of Financial Circumstances, together with supporting documentation, before the start of each academic year. The School reserves the right to remove or reduce the Assisted Place Award should financial circumstances improve. Assisted Places can only be offered as places with full 100% fee remission and the decision of the School is final.

*Candidates who have been awarded an 11+ Assisted Place will also receive financial assistance with additional expenses such as travel, uniform and equipment.*