



STUDENT BURSARY PROGRAMME POLICY

Introduction and Background

Rockbrook Park School's Educational Vision: Our school provides secondary school boys with a top class education built on the twin pillars of academic excellence and character formation. The founding parents, drawing on Catholic educational principles, wanted a school providing academically challenging education in an environment built on a solid sense of values and a commitment to the service of others together with a deep understanding of the Catholic faith, whereby personal individual attention to each student is combined with a close working relationship between teachers and parents aimed at maximising each student's all-round potential. That vision continues to inspire the school. For more information on Rockbrook Park School, see www.rockbrook.ie.

Rockbrook Student Bursary Programme

Families who identify with the school's vision, values and ethos and would like to send their children to the school but are hindered in this due to financial reasons, can apply for financial support through the **Rockbrook Student Bursary Programme**. The school Trustees established this bursary programme with its own independent **Patrons' Bursary Fund** for this purpose. The financial assistance provided is need-based and intended to supplement a family's own resources. Bursary recipients range from families whose ability to pay school fees is extremely limited to families who may need only a minor subsidy to meet school fees.

Bursary awards are voluntarily refundable on an honour-bound basis. This refund obligation being honour-bound also means there is no legal obligation to refund. It is the bursary recipients who judge themselves as to whether their circumstances have changed sufficiently to make equivalent refunds in whole or in part possible. It is fully recognised that such improved financial circumstances may only arise some years after the benefiting student(s) have passed through the school. All bursary refunds go directly into the Bursary Fund and so help continue this programme for present and future families requiring such financial assistance.

Programme management and administration

The Student Bursary Programme is managed and administered by a **Patrons' Bursary Committee** in accordance with the following:

Programme Aim

Provision of family financial assistance to make attendance possible for qualified students who would not otherwise be able to do so for financial reasons.

Programme Principles

- 1) The programme's policy and procedures are open and transparent.
- 2) Bursaries are awarded or renewed annually on the basis of an annual application evaluation.
- 3) Bursaries are refundable by the beneficiary families on a voluntary honour-bond basis.
- 4) The Bursary Fund is independent of the School budget.

- 5) Bursary application and renewal evaluations and award decisions are the responsibility of the Patrons' Bursary Committee.
- 6) The Patrons' Bursary Committee is so constituted to be reasonably independent and autonomous of the School's management and Board of Management.

Voluntary Honour-bound Bursary Repayment Scheme

Implicit in the award of any bursaries is an expectation that bursary recipients will voluntarily refund the bursaries when their circumstances so enable, even if that is possible only some years after the student has passed through the school. Refunds, in part or in whole, can be made at any time. As indicated above, this voluntary repayment is on an honour-bound basis and is not a legal obligation and that all bursary refunds are lodged to the Patrons' Bursary Fund, thereby helping to fund future student bursaries.

Who can avail of the Bursary Programme

Bursaries are open to all families with sons who are, or about to be, students in the school. Applicant families are encouraged to review the values and philosophy of the school before making an application. It should be noted that while the underlying ethos of the school is Catholic, awards may be made to students of other faiths.

In any year, in line with the programme principles above, the following families can receive bursaries in order of priority:

- 1) Families of boys in the school who are already receiving bursaries;
- 2) Families of boys who are already in the school but whose financial circumstances have changed such that a bursary may be required.
- 3) New Admissions:
 - a. Families of boys who are coming into first year of the secondary school programme;
 - b. Families of boys who are coming into any year other than first year;

For new enrolments, 3a and 3b: these families are expected to go through the normal school admissions procedure and be cognizant and in agreement with the School's mission. Candidate boys are required to have an acceptable level of academic ability to meet the school's challenging academic environment, a likelihood of benefitting from the opportunities that a Rockbrook education provides, and the promise and potential to contribute strongly to the life of the school. The School's Principal or his delegate adjudicates on this and makes a recommendation to the Student Bursary Programme Committee.

Bursary Application, Renewal, Review, Award Decision, Deadlines and Adjudication

- **Rockbrook Bursary Application Forms** may be downloaded from www.rockbrook.ie, or from: The Secretary, Rockbrook Park School, Edmondstown Rd, Rathfarnham, Dublin. 16. Tel: 01-4933204; email: admin@rockbrook.
- **Bursary Application:** To apply for a bursary, an applicant family submits a completed the Student Bursary Programme Application Form and requested supporting documentation in relation to their finances, to the Chairman, Patrons' Bursary Committee, Rockbrook Park School, Edmondstown Rd, Rathfarnham, Dublin 16

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- **Bursary annual renewal:** Bursaries are awarded for one year only, but all bursaries are renewable each year on application. As for their first application, families seeking a bursary renewal must submit a completed Student Bursary Programme Application Form (renewal) and requested supporting documentation in relation to their finances to the Patrons' Bursary Committee.
Decisions are made following a review to renew or alter the bursaries for the following year (increase, decrease, or discontinue, in accordance with changed financial circumstances of recipient families).
- The annual individual bursary renewal is also dependent on the student's satisfactory progress academically and in their personal development in line with the school mentoring program, and their conduct being in line with the school's code of behaviour. The school's Principal assesses and adjudicates on this, sending a recommendation to the Bursary Committee within one week of the bursary application/renewal deadline.
- Only fully completed official Rockbrook Student Bursary Programme application forms are normally considered.
- The Patrons' Bursary Committee will manage the Bursary Fund and will evaluate, and adjudicate on, all new and renewal bursary applications, and communicate their award decisions to the applicant families. The Committee will endeavour to make fair decisions based on the principles and criteria set out in this policy. Subject to the approval of the School's Trustees, the Committee's decision is final. The Committee cannot enter into correspondence or discussion with regard to its decisions. The Committee will exercise due confidentiality in regard to all applications.

Funding the Patrons' Bursary Fund

The two main Patrons' Bursary Fund funding sources are:

- 1) Voluntary donations from school patrons, friends, alumni and other donors;
- 2) Past beneficiaries of the bursaries repaying the equivalent of the bursary funds they received in part or in whole.

The Bursary Committee welcomes all donations and refunds to the Patrons' Bursary Fund. To this end, it will stay in contact with these beneficiary families/ parents¹/ students through the School's Secretariat in the same way it stays in contact with all school families and alumni.

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¹ In this policy, for 'parent(s)' it is understood 'parent(s) or guardian(s).'