READING SCHOOL

Boarding Emergency Hardship Policy

Background

The Department for Education requires that the School earns an 8% rate of return on its boarding activities. This return has to be invested back into the provision of boarding, which may include financing boarding emergency hardship support.

The purpose of this document is to set out the School's Policy towards boarding emergency hardship support and the procedures it will follow in awarding such funding. The school believes that this Policy is consistent with, and demonstrates that it is acting within, its charitable objectives.

Policy

The School will provide emergency support in cases of financial hardship, subject to being able to fund such support from its "Emergency Hardship Fund". The scheme is discretionary as it is based on limited funding. Consequently, not all applications can be successful. A lack of funding may be a valid reason for rejecting an application.

The Emergency Hardship Fund will be set in the Autumn term once the Financial Statements for the previous financial year have been approved. The amount of the Fund will be decided by the Headmaster having taken advice from the Finance Director and having regard to existing commitments, the balance brought forward in the designated Boarding Fund in the Financial Statements and future potential capital expenditure requirements. Any unspent fund will be carried forward to the following year.

The scheme will be made available and publicised to parents/guardians of existing and prospective students.

The criteria for eligibility will be approved by the Finance Committee. The current criteria are set out in the eligibility section below.

Parents/Guardians will be required to provide clear evidence of need and details of their financial situation. They will also be asked to sign an application (see appendix) which sets out their financial situation, and includes disclosure of their household income. They will be asked to apply annually as this support is short term in nature and targeted at those students who are approaching public examinations and therefore where it would not be in the student's best interest to move school.

Support will be provided in the form of a reduction in fees up to a maximum of 10% per term, for three terms. An application may be made in more than one year.

Eligibility

Emergency hardship funding may be awarded for students in Year 11 and Year 13 at the time of application. The award of funding for one period does not guarantee future awards will be made.

Financial criteria

The scheme is discretionary and is intended to provide support when there has been a temporary change in financial circumstances. Parents/guardians will therefore be required to provide details of household income before and after the event, examples of which might be redundancy, change of employment, collapse of a business, death of a fee payer, serious illness or incapacity, other unforeseen circumstances.

Students will be required to make satisfactory general and academic progress throughout the period of support.

Procedure

Applications for support for the current financial year may be made at any time.

Applications will be considered by the Headmaster and Finance Director when received and applicants will be informed in writing of the decision within 10 school days of receipt.

Where an offer of support is made it will set out the level of support offered and the period it will apply to. Funding may be backdated to include the current and previous term fees if applicable.

Appeals against decisions can be made to the Chair of Governors, via the Clerk to the Governors who will follow the School's complaints procedure.

Monitoring arrangements

The Finance Director is responsible for the implementation and regular review of this policy. This policy will be reviewed and approved by the Governing Body annually, or as part of the Financial Procedures Manual.

Policy approved by: Finance Committee
Date: 2nd March 2026
To be reviewed: March 2028

Appendix

Reading School
Application for Boarding Emergency Hardship Fund

Applicant details:

Date of application:	
Name of parent/guardian:	
Name of student:	
School year:	
Please set out the reason for your application, including the event giving rise to a temporary change in financial circumstances:	
Annual household income before event:	
Annual household income after event:	
Amount of funding requested (max. 10% of fees):	
Number of terms funding requested (max 3):	
Declaration: I confirm that the information provided in this application is correct. I accept that the award of funding is discretionary and that a lack of funding is a valid reason for not awarding funding.	
Signature:	
Print name:	
Date:	