

## **Mimosa School Bursary Policy**

**Approved by Mimosa Board 27 May 2023**

**The bursary program at Mimosa School is designed to offer financial assistance to learners whose guardians are unable to afford tuition, support community members facing financial difficulties, and foster diversity, inclusion, and social transformation. The program is dedicated to fairness, transparency, and safeguarding the dignity and privacy of applicants.**

**The bursary process is advertised widely, and applications are accepted from 1 June to 31 July each year. Eligibility requires financial need and a commitment to the Reggio Emilia approach. The selection process involves a review of applications by a committee, which ensures confidentiality and fairness. Bursaries may cover up to 100% of fees, and short-term funding is available for emergencies. Recipients can reapply annually and are encouraged to keep the committee informed of any changes in financial circumstances.**

### **Aims, Values and Objectives**

- To provide financial assistance to prospective learners whose guardians are unable to meet the cost of tuition and other fees at Mimosa School.
- To support socio-economically disadvantaged members of the Mimosa community and to foster a diverse and inclusive school community.
- To further the broader goals of transformation and redress in the broader society in which Mimosa is situated.
- To implement a transparent, fair, humane and clearly communicated process for awarding bursaries.
- To provide the information, encouragement and material support to those members of the Mimosa community who might benefit from the bursary or short-term funding, but are otherwise prevented from applying.
- To protect the dignity, privacy, and confidentiality of applicants and recipients.
- To engender trust in the wider Mimosa community that bursary funds are appropriately distributed given the values and objectives of Mimosa School.

### **The Application Process**

#### **Awareness**

The bursary will be advertised in the following ways:

- The school prospectus,
- Information packs for prospective parents,
- The school website,

- The school newsletter,
- Teachers will actively inform prospective applicants about the bursary and application process, as well as provide encouragement and support for their applications.
- Applications for the bursary will open to new and repeat applicants from 1 June until 31 July.

### **Bursary value**

The bursary will be worth up to 100% of school registration and monthly fees. The amount of the bursary will be determined by the following factors:

- The amount of funding available,
- The number of applicants,
- The financial need of the applicants.

### **Eligibility**

To be eligible for the bursary, applicants must meet the following criteria:

- Be a prospective learner at Mimosa School,
- Have a demonstrated financial need,
- Understand and endorse the principles of the Reggio Emilia Approach to education,
- All currently employed Mimosa School teachers are automatically entitled to 50% bursaries for learners under their care, and they can also apply for additional support through the bursary application process.

### **Procedure**

The bursary application process is intended to establish a humane, respectful and mutually beneficial relationship between the applicant and the bursary committee. The application process for bursaries will be conducted annually, and will open on 1 June until 31 July for new and repeat applicants.. Applicants must submit the following to the bursary committee to be considered for a bursary (all submissions will be handled with strictest confidentiality):

- A completed application form,
- Evidence of financial need,
- Optional personal statement: A supporting letter describing the context and situation of the family of the applicant that is relevant to their application.
- Applicants are encouraged to share their personal stories and to provide as much information as necessary about their family situation and their goals for attending Mimosa School.

Applicants will be provided with a response by the bursary committee by no later than 30 September.

### **Bursary Committee**

A committee will be appointed by the Mimosa School Board to oversee the bursary program. The committee will be responsible for the following:

- Receiving and processing bursary applications,
- Verifying financial disclosures,
- Applying the means-test,
- Determining the distribution of bursary funds,
- Communicating the results of these decisions to the Mimosa School executive, AGM and the applicants, both successful and unsuccessful.
- Maintaining the privacy and confidentiality of all application materials, as well as all private information they disclose.

### **Selection Process**

The bursary committee will review all applications and select the recipients on the basis of evidence of financial need, as well as in terms of the broader national context of social justice, redress and transformation. The bursary committee is committed to growing the diversity and heterogeneity of the Mimosa School community. The committee will also consider the personal statements submitted by applicants to better understand their situation and contexts. The committee reserves the right to request additional information from applicants, such as tax returns, family budgets or other proof of financial need.

### **Short-term Funding for Financial Emergencies**

The Mimosa School Bursary Committee may also consider requests for short-term funding for financial emergencies. This funding, in the form of reduced fees, is available to applicants who are currently enrolled at Mimosa School and experience a financial emergency that is beyond their control (e.g. a sudden loss of income; a medical emergency; a natural disaster, etc.)

To apply for short-term funding, applicants must submit a letter describing the financial emergency to the Bursary Committee, which will review all applications and make a decision on whether to grant funding on a case-by-case basis. Short-term funding is not subject to means-testing, but is limited to a maximum of two months in duration. Applicants who require more than two months of funding will need to apply for regular bursary funding.

### **Bursary Obligations**

Bursary recipients are expected to maintain their registration and attendance at Mimosa School. Bursaries are only awarded for a period of one year, and recipients in previous years will need to reapply for later years. A bursary may be terminated if a recipient fails to continue to meet the financial need or attendance requirements.

Bursary recipients are expected to inform Mimosa School when their circumstances, means or financial needs change during the term of a bursary granted.

### **Protecting the Privacy and Dignity of Applicants**

- Sensitive and private information is necessarily disclosed in the bursary application so as to allow for a means test, and it is therefore vital that the confidentiality and privacy of applicants be maintained.
- All information collected for the purposes of administering the bursary will be collected, used and stored in a manner that is physically and digitally secured, and only accessible by authorized personnel.
- All application materials will be destroyed after a period of 3 years.

### **A Note to Prospective Applicants**

We understand that applying for financial assistance can be a daunting and stressful process, especially for those who are already facing financial challenges. We want to assure you that Mimosa teachers and the Mimosa School bursary committee are here to help. We will do everything we can to make the process as smooth and stress-free as possible, and to consider your personal context and family circumstances as part of your application. If you have any questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to contact us. We are here to help you every step of the way. Thank you for your interest in the Mimosa School bursary program. We hope to see your application soon!