

## **Buttle UK Boarding Support FAQ's**

### **How much can you help with the cost of boarding fees?**

For cases that we support, Buttle UK can help with up to **50%** of the boarding fee and we require the school to help with the other 50%.

### **Who can apply for help with boarding?**

We can help children and young people growing up in financial hardship and aged **11-18**, who are affected by at least one or several of the following:

- Disadvantaged by limited parenting capacity and at risk of family breakdown
- Who live in single parent / carer family or where there are two parents but one or both is severely incapacitated by illness or disability
- Severe social, emotional or health problems within the family

A crisis can be any situation in a family home which means that a young person cannot stay at home full-time and needs to access a boarding place to provide a safe space for them. The issues at home will need to be evidenced from professionals that are working with the family.

### **How do I prove what is happening at home?**

You will be asked to describe the situation in your application and provide supporting documentation from professionals working with you or your family. The evidence must clearly state what is happening and why boarding is needed.

### **What is a partner school?**

A partner school is a boarding school that has agreed to work with us to help build a package of support for a child or young person we are supporting. The schools we partner with will usually have experience in helping vulnerable young people that need boarding places.

### **Who chooses the boarding school?**

We will only find places with schools that are our partner schools and we usually aim to place students within an hour and a half of their home. Within those parameters, the decision about which school to attend, is ultimately with the family and young person. If you already have a bursary offer but the school is not one of our partners, we can talk to the school to see whether they will become a partner school.

### **What is an average day at a boarding school like?**

Young people are woken up by one of the House staff team. They will get up, wash and dress, and have breakfast in the boarding house or a dining room. Facilities are usually shared so young people will be encouraged to have good time keeping. School typically starts at 8:30am.

Some pupils will see their personal tutor before lessons start. On some days there will be an assembly for the whole school or for year groups. Pupils will often have a buddy to help them be in

the right place at the right time. Many schools have peer mentoring in place. This means pupil volunteers who are trained to help younger pupils settle in and talk about problems like homesickness.

Lunchtime is around 1-2pm. This may be in a dining room or back in the boarding house. Schools cater for a wide range of dietary requirements and offer different options. Afternoon lessons start around 2pm and finish around 4pm.

When the school day ends there will be sports, societies, and clubs either before or after the evening meal. All pupils are encouraged to take part in activities. After the evening meal, there will be a period of quiet time in the house for prep, or homework, and then, additional social activities may be arranged within the house. There are inter-house competitions that take place between the boarding houses at school and pupils are encouraged to take part and represent their house in something they have a passion or talent for. Bedtimes start at around 9.30pm.

### **What is a boarding house and how does it work?**

A boarding house is the accommodation that a child will live in whilst at boarding school. Boarding houses come in different sizes and layouts and vary from school to school. When talking with a school, it is worth asking for plenty of information about the boarding houses before making a choice. Your child will be cared for and encouraged within their boarding house to take part in all aspects of school and social life.

The young people in the house are supported by a house parent, sometimes known as housemaster or housemistress. They are often a member of the teaching staff and live (in part of the house) with their own family. The houses also have a 'house matron', whose job it is to look after the young people in the house. These people are here to make sure life at school and in the boarding house is as much like home as possible but boarding with other young people can have its own challenges. Most schools offer taster days and boarding weekends so a young person can see if they like boarding.

### **The school I have applied to won't give a bursary to my child, what do I do?**

We need schools to offer bursaries as Buttle UK cannot fund a place on our own. Bursaries also help us to see that the school wants to help you. If you can't get a bursary, we might be able to see if there are partner schools of ours that have places, but, the school must be right for the young person and the young person must be right for the school.

### **How long do you help for?**

We review the circumstances of all families each year to make sure that we are helping the right families in the right way. If we are able to help, we try to support the place until the end of GCSEs. We rarely support a young person through sixth form at Boarding school but can consider individual circumstances. We will sign post you to other charities who support sixth form fees.

**Do you have an income threshold?**

We support families where there is financial disadvantage, but we do not have a fixed income threshold as every family is different. Families we support usually have incomes made up of child, ill-health and income related state benefits and do not have the ability to afford boarding fees. Please note that we cannot help families where low income is the only issue.

**When can I apply for help for boarding fees?**

We open the application process for new cases in January of each year for an autumn start in the same year.

**Who needs to write the application?**

The parent or carer of the young person needs to make the application and we also welcome contact and introductions to potential applicants from local authorities and schools.

**Can I apply to Buttle UK even if the young person has started school?**

Yes, you can, but you need to be able to explain:

- why the young person has started at the school
- how the fees have been afforded so far
- how the school has tried to help
- and why this is the right school.

We cannot help with fee arrears.