



Silsden Primary School

Finance Management and Administration Policy

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Overview

The role of the Governing Body is as defined in “School Governors: A Guide to the Law”.

In accordance with the Guide to Financial Procedures (“the Guide”) and the Financial Regulations for maintained Schools (“the Regulations”) issued by Education Bradford (copies of which are retained in the School office) the financial objectives of the school are as follows:

- To establish proper financial management arrangements and accounting procedures and maintain a sound system of internal controls, including safeguards against fraud
- To ensure the delegated budget is used for the purposes intended
- To ensure that relevant financial returns are made as required under the terms of the Scheme for Financing School
- To ensure value for money is obtained through economy, efficiency and effectiveness
- School uses its best endeavours to secure the most effective provision for pupils with SEN in spending the delegated budget share and devolved SEN funding.

Section 1: Budgets

1.1. Budget construction

The Head is responsible for the detailed preparation of an annual school budget which addresses the strategic aims and targets established by the Governing Body. In constructing the budget, the Head must take account of priorities identified in the School Development / Improvement Plan, incorporating specific costs as detailed in the plan. In producing the budget, the Head should consult with other members of staff and Governor committees, as appropriate to ascertain detailed requirements and cost pressures for the coming year.

The Resources Committee together with the Head should meet in the Spring term to consider a broad budget strategy. In order to determine appropriate expenditure levels, the committee should consider the overall level of income expected from local authority budget, grants and school generated income, together with any anticipated balance to be carried forward into the following financial year.

The detailed formulation of the budget then takes place following receipt of the final local authority budget allocation (Section 251), usually issued in March. The full Governing Body must subsequently approve the full year’s budget together with the 3 year Budget Plan, and minute this approval. The approved Governors Budget Plan spreadsheet templates must then be submitted to the Schools Finance Team, along with a signed statement by the Chair of Governors, by the a deadline specified by the school funding team. School works very closely with SFT on all areas of the budget.

HCSS software is used to assist with Budget planning, pupil number projections, forecasting staffing costs and budget projections for three year budgets.

Total budgeted expenditure should not exceed the total anticipated in-year income plus or minus any balance brought forward from the previous year. The delegated budget should be spent for the purposes intended. If it appears that a deficit position cannot be avoided, the Head and Chair of Governors must inform the Schools Finance Team immediately as the local authority must approve a Deficit Repayment Agreement (DRA) involving an appropriate recovery plan.

In constructing the detailed budget, factors for consideration include:-

- current and previous year's expenditure levels on individual budget headings
- overall level of income expected from local authority budget
- changing School Improvement/Development Plan priorities
- curriculum spend designated to subject managers
- staff pay awards and increments, and known changes
- anticipated price inflation
- Changes in the supply of services and contracts (traded services, utilities etc.).
- any anticipated changes in pupil numbers
- the resulting impact on staffing structures

1.2. Budgetary control and monitoring

The Head is responsible for regular, detailed control of the school budget and this role will require appropriate monthly reports from the school's accounting system. The Head may assign budgetary control of individual budget headings to other members of staff, however the Head remains ultimately accountable to the Governing Body for these budget headings. Financial reports to the Head and other budget holders, where applicable, should include the following information for each agreed budget heading:-

- total budget for year
- total expenditure and commitments to date
- projected variance

Payroll expenditure data, as notified by local authority payroll prints, must be entered promptly on to the school's accounting system each month by the school's Finance Officer.

Other, non-pay de-delegated expenditure, as notified by monthly on-line reports for central schools, must be reconciled promptly to the school's accounting system by the School Business Manager or Finance Officer.

Delegation of spending powers – As detailed in the Resources Committee TOR 24/25

- Head Teacher to authorise day-to-day expenditure and to have delegated powers to spend up to £10,000 at any one time, on non-recurring items without prior reference to the Committee.
- Any spend over £10,000 on single non-recurring items must be referred to this Committee and approved in writing by Chair of Resources Committee or Chair of Governors.
- Chair of Governors (or in their absence Vice-Chair of Governors or Chair of Resources Committee) and Head Teacher to authorise emergency expenditure.

It may be appropriate to action adjustments to the original budget (virements) during the year, for example as a result of additional income, new costs or changing national priorities etc. The Head should therefore be empowered to respond to changes to address variances by effecting virements between individual budget headings.

- Head Teacher has delegated powers of funds transfer through the use of virements between budget headings of £10,000, prior to requiring counter signature by the Chair of Governors or Chair of Resources Committee.

Any such virements will be recorded and reported to the next meeting of the Governing Body.

Where no such specific item exists in the budget he/she shall not enter into any financial commitment without the consent of the governing body or in the case of an urgent matter, the Chair of Governors.

Virements, once approved, must be promptly recorded in the school's accounting system to keep the approved budget up to date.

The Head/SBL should present detailed budget monitoring statements to the Resources Committee on at least a termly basis. This Quarterly Budget Monitor document should be issued to the Resources Committee delegates prior to their meeting. The Resources Committee should then review and challenge these statements as necessary, with the Head/SBL providing explanations for any significant variances identified and plans agreed for any further action required. The school FMS system is set to ensure that cost centres do not overspend and this is monitored monthly by the Business Leader/Finance Officer

The Chair of the Resources Committee should then report termly to the full Governing Body, identifying any significant budgetary issues and any remedial action taken or needed, and any policy decisions needed.

When the accounts for each financial year are closed, a final statement of the end of year position and carry forward figure must be presented to the next meeting of both the Resources Committee and Full Governing Body.

Where possible duties are segregated between individuals as follows:

Expenditure

Requests for purchases	Authorised by Headteacher ("Head") / budget holder
Preparing orders	School Business Leader (SBL)/ Finance Manager("FM")
Authorising orders	Head / SBL/ Budget Holder
Receiving goods	Goods may be signed for by the Head, Deputy Head, Office Staff, Teacher, or Premises Manager. The goods should be checked against the delivery note, if there is one. Goods should be checked as soon as possible if signature is required on an electronic handset. Any discrepancy against the order should be noted.
Processing invoices	Finance Manger and Finance Admin
Processing cheques / BACS	Finance Manger and Finance Admin
Authorising BACS	Head - Mr Karl Russell SBL – Mrs Sally-Anne Boyes

Deputy Head – Alison O'Hara
Finance Manager – Mrs Kylie Medley

The invoice must be checked against the order and the payment authorisation box signed, before the cheque is signed/ BACs is authorised.

Please note, the FM will not authorise BACs payments / sign cheques in the usual course of business and will only be used as contingency

Income

In the ordinary course of business, SPS is a cashless school. However, when there is no alternative means, we will accept cash, as a one off.

An internal system exists for the receipt of money:

Invoices issued	SBL/FM
Received & manual slip entry	FM/FAdmin
Receipted (as appropriate)	FM/FAdmin
Banking	FM/FAdmin
Reconciliation of Arbor and Magic Booking	FM / FAdmin
Recorded on FMS	FM/FAdmin
Reconciliation on FMS	FM /FAdmin

Section 2: Payroll

Payroll of all staff is administrated by LA central payroll to ensure:

- Deductions for tax, NI and Superannuation are made in accordance with current legislation and paid over by the due dates
- Staff receive their pay on the due contractual dates

The Head and SBL and Finance Manager deal with day to day matters in accordance with LA guidelines within the Pay Policy, and if necessary, with reference to HR Department.

(Bradford Schools Online and PACT HR pages offer further general information and guidance.)

2.1. Starters/variations/leavers

All new/changes to personnel are process through PACT HR Support Online. These are:

- setting up new employees on the payroll (starters)
- effecting variations to pay / changes in contract

- taking existing employees off the payroll (leavers)

This secure site is accessed by the SBL and Finance Manager (Password protected, authorised access) and authorised with a signature by the Head.

2.2. Claim Forms

Additional hours must be approved in advance by a member of SMT. Any submitted claim forms must be signed by the authorising member of SMT before being reviewed and submitted by the SBL/FM. A summary paper copy is authorised by the Head.

Attendance/Sickness records are maintained for all staff. These are also input into Arbor.

Monthly variations are authorised by the Head and administered through the Postbox facility within Bradford Schools Online by the SBL / Finance Manager.

2.3. Checking of payroll data

Payroll data received monthly from LA must be scrutinised by:

- The FM to ensure all employees are recognised, pay appears reasonable and to check in detail the accuracy of salary and expense payments.

2.4. Pay-related expenses

All pay-related expenses must be processed through the payroll system. If any doubt exists about whether an item should be processed via the payroll system, the HR Department at the LA should be contacted for advice.

2.5. Supply teachers

The Governing Body will decide, based on advice from the Head, whether supply insurance cover shall be taken out, and the extent of the cover. The Governing Body approve the annual supply cover insurance after reviewing several quotes and examining these. This is usually undertaken by the SBL.

Section 3: Assets

3.1 Inventory

The SBL is responsible for maintaining an up to date inventory of school equipment and furniture and for adding any new items when they are received into school.

An inventory is maintained for all non-consumable assets worth over £250 and covers all areas of the school, items with an insurable value over £100 and other attractive and portable items.

Electrical items such as computers, TVs, videos are itemised on the inventory. Where possible they are security marked with Watermark and this is attended to by our IT Technician. Electrical equipment is not generally taken off the school site unless a "Loans" book is filled in.

The Governing Body oversee the disposal of surplus stocks and equipment if appropriate and a disposal record is kept. Where items of no value are disposed of to school staff a nominal

charge is made to avoid any possibility of allegations, however unfounded, being made of misuse of school property. Such items are recorded and available to the Governing Body.

The inventory is checked annually against actual assets, and the check evidenced by the checker signing and dating the inventory. Any discrepancies shall be investigated immediately, and if necessary the Governors, Police and the authority's auditors shall be informed.

3.2 Off-site register

Any inventory items taken off-site by members of staff for official purposes must be recorded in a register (Loans book). The date borrowed, and the signature of the borrower, must be recorded. On the return of the item the date of return will be recorded.

Section 4: Income

Income is reported to the Governing Body within the budget reports and coded to the correct financial code.

Any cash received in school is dealt with immediately, locked in the safe until banked. Receipts issued on request.

The safe is kept locked and the keys removed. Key holder – Finance Manager.

4.1 Credit income

Where payment for goods/services provided by the school is made after the provision takes place.e.g. hire of hall to 3rd parties, Sprouts payments, additional Nursery payments, etc.

An official invoice must be raised by the SBL/FM in all cases and sent to the debtor as soon as possible after the provision of the goods/service, and no later than one week after the provision or 1 week after the original invoice is received.

A file of copy invoices will be maintained by the SBL/FM; The copies of unpaid invoices will act as a control record for the sending of reminders and the chasing of unpaid debts. Once paid, the copy invoice is filed in the relevant month.

Reminders will be sent after the following periods if the debt remains outstanding:-

1st reminder 28 days
2nd reminder 56 days

If after 84 days the debt remains unpaid, consideration will be given by the Head and/or Governors to writing the debt off in accordance with the following limits:-

- up to £50 - Head may authorise write-off
- up to £100 - Chair of Governors may authorise write-off
- £100 and over - full Governing Body may authorise write-off.

In each case, the possibility of taking legal action to recover the debt must be considered by Head, Chair, and Governors as appropriate.

As well as sending formal reminders, efforts must be made by the school to contact the debtor in order to secure recovery of the debt. If payment has not been received after 28 days of raising the invoice, no further goods or services must be provided until the outstanding debt is settled.

When an invoice is paid, details of the payment must be written on the copy invoice, and filed in the corresponding month's file. An official receipt should be issued to the debtor and the receipt number written on the copy invoice; a duplicate copy of the receipt must be retained at school.

School meals

Parents can order a meal via Arbor and defer payment. Debts are managed within the Admin Team and reviewed on a weekly basis. Outstanding balances above £10 are actioned with Arbor messages on a stage 1,2 and 3 escalation. Where a debt reaches stage 3, the child is placed on a "Stop" School meal. Debts should not exceed £25 at any one time.

Where payment has not been cleared by the time the child leaves Year 6, the debt will be handled as detailed above.

4.3 Banking

Silsden Primary School Account is held at Lloyds Bank, Hustlergate Branch, Bradford.

All income received (cash or cheque) must be banked promptly and intact. No payments may be made out of income collected. A record to evidence the banking must be kept (e.g. stamped paying-in slip).

All cash chequebooks and paying-in- books are locked away.

4.4 Charging policy

The full Governing Body has an agreed Charging and Remissions policy, for the supply of goods and services, which has been formulated in line with LA guidelines and has been checked by LA Legal Services and includes :-

- lettings charges
- visits within school hours
- visits outside school hours

The charging policy will be reviewed annually by the Governing Body. Charges levied by the school will be in line with this policy.

4.5 Donations

Donations from any sources must be acknowledged by the issue of an official receipt to the payer. All donations must be banked promptly and intact.

4.6 Cash received from pupils.

Silsden Primary School encourages payments to school for trips / extended school activities and meals to be made online. This has drastically reduced the amount of cash that is handled in school

Silsden Primary School is enrolled into Arbor where parents can pay online for school meals, extended school activities and trips etc. For before and after school provision and holiday club, parents pay via Magic Booking. These are our primary forms of income collection from parents.

Payment for school milk is all online through CoolMilk scheme. Parents register and pay online. No cash is brought into school to pay for milk.

On occasions that cash received into school is collected in the classroom and brought to the office. Receipts are issued on request.

Section 5: Purchasing

5.1 Ordering

School procedures for purchasing should ensure that purchases are as required and are for bone-fide purposes.

Official orders must not be used to procure goods for private purposes and official order stationery must be held in a secure location.

The Head is responsible and authorises all ordering. All orders are approved by the Head/SBL or budget holder and managed by the FA.

Orders should be processed by the school SBL or FM. All orders, delivery notes, invoices and receipts and LA monthly tabulations are kept in order and up to date by the FM.

Purchase invoices entered into FMS. An authorisation slip is attached to the invoice and the various checks made in accordance with the slip and authorised by two signatories prior to payment. . Wherever possible, written pre-numbered orders are issued for all goods and services (except utilities). If an order has been placed over the telephone an official confirmatory order must be raised.

Paid invoices are stored with payment authorisation slips in the office.

Copies of all official orders placed must be retained on file at the school by the FM together with all out of date documentation, in accordance with the LA recommended retention periods.

School operates FMS6 Accounting package to ensure transactions are accurately recorded, reported and monitored. The support package is bought in from Schools ICT.

Access to accounting records on FMS6 is limited to the SBL,FM and FA.

Leasing – School reports to School Funding Team annually any operating leases on equipment e.g. photocopiers, telephone system, laptops, iPads, Smart boards

5.2 Banking arrangements

Silsden Primary School Account is held at Lloyds Bank, Hustlertgate Branch, Bradford.

The Head is authorised by the Governing Body to issue cheques for day-to-day expenditure. Two authorised signatures are required on cheques. There are 4 authorised signatories to the account (K Russell, A O'Hara, S A Boyes and K Medley). All signatories have full powers for online banking. This is required in order that BACS payments can be made for invoices.

Cheques for signature / BACS authorisations are accompanied by the appropriate invoice and authorisation slip. Cheques are crossed "A/C Payee Only". Cheques are never pre-signed and all printed cheques are recorded on FMS and are kept locked away. School does not go overdrawn or negotiate overdraft facilities.

Bank statements are received monthly and these are reconciled with the ledger and on FMS by the FM. The Head or SBL sign the monthly bank reconciliation reports prepared by the FM to confirm they are correct which is then forwarded to the School Funding Team together with the VAT claim and unreconciled transactions listing.

5.3 School Credit Card

Background

- a. Under the Scheme for Financing Schools, schools are permitted to use both debit and credit cards provided that the balance is cleared each month.
- b. Credit cards can offer a more controlled method of purchasing since a purchasing limit will be placed on the credit card account, and credit cards also include purchase insurance. Arranging for payment of the balance by direct debit would ensure that no interest is incurred.
- c. **The Governing Body**, guided by the Head, will determine whether it is appropriate for school to operate a credit or debit card facility.
- d. Although it would be usual for a school to take out a credit card with its current bankers, other providers can be used. The decision as to which provider to use should be **approved by the Governing Body**.
- e. The method of card provision will vary between card providers, however in most cases schools will have one account but can have more than one card per school. It will be the Head teacher's responsibility to identify which members of staff need a credit or debit card and present a case to the **Governing Body for agreement**. The number of cardholders should be kept to a workable minimum. It may be possible to arrange a temporary credit card e.g. for use by teaching staff operating a summer scheme, or by staff on residential visits where access to normal financial arrangements is not possible. This card would then need to be cancelled at the end of a specified period.
- f. **The Governing Body** will need to determine an upper (borrowing) limit for the credit card account (bearing in mind that this will be a monthly limit, and taking into consideration anticipated usage and cash flow), plus limits for the individual cardholders, and transaction limits.
- g. All decisions of the **Governing Body** relating to the operation of a Credit/Debit Card should be minuted at the Resource Committee meetings.

Opening a Credit Card Account or Debit Card

- a. The application must be completed by two signatories. These will usually be in line with the signatures on the current bank mandate but may need to vary in accordance with the card provider (e.g. they may require Chair of Governor's signature).
- b. In order to ensure an appropriate division of duty the school bursar (or other member of staff responsible for administering the account) should not be one of the signatories on the application form or a cardholder.

Operation/Administration of the Credit Card or Debit Card

- a. Cardholders sign for the receipt of their cards and sign an agreement to use cards appropriately (see Appendix document). If the card is only used occasionally it may be more secure to keep it in a locked drawer, or preferably a safe, and issue it only as it is required.
- b. Debit or Credit cards should not be used except in situations where standard purchasing procedures (i.e. ordering or petty cash) cannot be used.
- c. When the debit or credit card is used a VAT receipt needs to be obtained and passed to the school bursar to enable them to monitor the account. Similarly if an order is placed on the Internet, the order needs to be printed off and filed. If a telephone order is placed, a VAT receipt must be requested and a record made of the transaction until the receipt arrives.
- d. When making internet purchases the e-mail address of the FM should be provided, allowing for early identification of internet purchases to be made.
- e. Cardholders should always give the school as a delivery address, and not their personal address.
- f. Due to the charge incurred the credit card should not be used for cash withdrawals except under exceptional circumstances (e.g. school trips abroad).
- g. Ideally commitments should be raised against the appropriate cost centres for each purchase made with the debit or credit card as they occur (or as soon as the Bursar becomes aware of them). As payment will be a single payment/direct debit to the credit card provider the use of journals within the accounting system will be required to ensure that costs are correctly apportioned and that commitments are subsequently cancelled as the actual cost is incurred.
- h. The entries on credit card statements should be reconciled to the supporting documentation as they are received and any queries recorded and resolved.
This will be undertaken on receipt of the Credit card statements by the Financial School Business Manager and a member of the **Governing Body**, preferably the Resources Committee chair will check the reconciliation on a regular basis – not less than quarterly.
- i. A transaction record is held to facilitate the reconciliation process.
- j. Debit or Credit card purchases should be supported by evidence of delivery, and invoice checks, as with any other purchase.
- k. All purchase documentation relating to debit or credit card purchases should be filed securely in a logical manner (which identifies purchases to cardholders) and retained for six financial years.

- l. Debit or Credit card commitments should be appropriately accounted for at the year end.
- m. If a member of staff leaves the schools employment the card needs to be cut up and returned to the bank. A new additional application will need to be submitted if it is deemed necessary to issue a card to an alternative member of staff.
- n. Approval from the appropriate budget holder and completion of any relevant forms, is required for each purchase in accordance with the school's scheme of delegation and that there is sufficient budget available before making any purchase.
- o. To ensure segregation of duties, any debit card transactions requested by the Head will be countersigned by the School business manager.

The Governing Body has currently approved the following for a credit card:

- The Credit card issuer is Lloyds Bank.
- The monthly limit per card is £3000. The transaction limit is £1000 in any one transaction. The maximum number of transactions is 10 per day for the account.
- The number of cardholders - Credit Card : 2 people – Finance Manager (K Medley) and School Business Leader (S A Boyes)
- Payment of any Credit card balance is made by direct debit to ensure that no interest is incurred.
All cards are to remain on the school premises in a secure, locked store and only removed from the premises when approved by the Head.

Approved transactions

- Cards must not be used for personal purchases.
- Cards must not be used for cash withdrawals
- Approval from the appropriate budget holder must be sought prior to the transaction taking place and in accordance with the school's scheme of delegation and that there is sufficient budget available before making any purchase.
- Debit or Credit cards can only be used where it is not possible to make normal commercial credit arrangements i.e. order – goods received – invoice.
- Debit or Credit cards may be used to make purchases from the internet or from high street suppliers but not for building works or utility bills.
- Payment in advance of receipt for goods and services with the credit card is permitted provided schools can demonstrate that by doing so they obtained best value.
- Full VAT receipts must be obtained for all relevant purchases.
- When making purchases from internet suppliers;
 - A school e-mail address must be provided.
 - Goods and services must be delivered to the school not to a private address (unless prior agreement)
 - Check that you are not being overlooked when using a debit or credit card online. Many secure Websites use password access to authenticate cardholders and passwords must remain confidential;
 - On-line purchases should only be made on a secured web page. A secured page should have a little padlock (that is locked) displayed in the lower right corner of your browser. The web address will start “https” (other Web sites normally start “http”). Cardholders can check the level of security that the site has in place by moving your mouse pointer onto the padlock to see what

number is displayed. If the number is less than 40 the site should not be used for on-line purchases because this does not give a sufficiently secure connection to protect sensitive, financial or personal information;

- You should never give personal details that are commonly used for identity verification (e.g. mother's maiden name) over an insecure internet connection. Even over the telephone, this information should only be given if the company ABSOLUTELY requires it.

Record keeping

1. All receipts and delivery notes should be handed to the FO at the earliest possible opportunity
2. You must keep a transaction log which you should retain in case of queries.
3. You should hand a copy of the transaction log to the FO at the end of each statement period.
4. The FO will be responsible for reconciling the individual transactions with the statement
5. Payment of the credit card statement will be by direct debit from the school's own bank account.
6. Reconciliation of creditcard statement must be presented to the Head or SBM monthly with all relevant transactions

5.4 Quotations/tenders

The Governing Body abides by the Financial Regulations for Locally Managed Schools in all purchasing and tendering and contracting matters, including adhering to the Procurement Act 2023 Appendix 1

The Council's current Schools Contract Standing Orders separates 'below threshold' procurement into 3 categories, in summary:

- a. Low value: values up to £10,000 (excluding VAT). Schools are required to be able to demonstrate Best Value, which may include inviting written quotations from suppliers. Schools are encouraged to use local suppliers. Schools can use catalogues and Framework agreements.
- b. Medium value: values between £10,000 and £75,000 (excluding VAT). Schools must seek at least 4 written quotations. Schools can also tender (must be Open Procedure tender route) and can also use Framework agreements. Schools are encouraged to use local suppliers.
- c. High value: value above £75,000 (excluding VAT). Schools must tender (must be Open Procedure tender route).

An internal system of requisitioning goods exists and all orders are processed by the School Business Leader//Finance Manager and authorised by the Headteacher. For purchases over £10,000 additional quotes will be sought on a case by case basis to ensure best value for quality, cost and delivery of goods and services

Three written quotations must be obtained for any work/orders of more than £10,000. The SBL is responsible for obtaining written quotes for goods between £10,000 and £75,000.

For orders/works estimated above £75,000 the tendering process will follow which will include members of the Governing Board.

The Head and Chair of Governors are authorised by the governing Body to liaise and agree on acceptance of quotations.

Invitations to tender will be undertaken by the Head. All quotes, accepted or not, will be retained.

There may be occasions where the required number of quotes cannot be obtained e.g. either due to lack of suppliers or work of an emergency nature.

We may not always opt for the cheapest quote. Principles of value for money will be considered on individual cases and notes recorded where this has not been followed.

If Contracting arrangements will exceed £75,000 advice should be sought from the LEA in accordance with Section 20 of the Regulations.

5.5 Financial Delegation (Approved by Resources Committee)

The full Governing Body has approved the following financial delegation:

- Authority for Resources Committee to commit to spend and vire monies up to the School's budget limit.
- Head to authorise day-to-day expenditure and to have delegated powers to spend up to £10,000 at any one time, on non-recurring items without any prior reference to the Committee.
- Chair of Governors (or in their absence Vice-Chair of Governors or Chair of Resources Committee) and Head to authorise emergency expenditure with reference to sub-committee.
- Any spend over £10,000 on single non-recurring items must be referred to the Resources Committee and approved in writing by Chair of Resources Committee or Chair of Governors.
- Three written quotations must be obtained for any work/orders of more than £10,000.
- Individual items exceeding £75,000 should be put to formal tender and requires a minimum of three quotations in accordance with the Guide for Financial Regulations SF001p for schools.
- Where major building works are required the Head consults the appropriate LA Clerk of Works and competitive tendering is operated.
- Curriculum orders are to be placed after comparisons between YPO and two other recognised educational suppliers.
- Head from a personnel perspective has delegated powers to;
 - authorise any leave of absence for staff within any scheme adopted by the governing body;
 - appoint temporary supply staff
 - to make all necessary arrangements for the appointment of staff which have been agreed by the committee or governing body;
 - to approve the working of additional hours and overtime;
 - to take necessary urgent action on staffing issues in consultation with the chair of the Resources committee.
 - Resources Committee to ensure that finance for staffing levels are adequate.
 - All staff appointments are dealt in accordance with LEA procedures, Gender and Race Relations Education Act.

The governing body retains its powers to make decisions on:

- consideration and approval of the school's annual budget plan.
- consideration of any received audit reports.
- approving the school staff establishment.

5.6 Receipt of goods

Once items ordered have been received, the Administrators or Premises Manager must ensure that items delivered correspond to details contained in the delivery note. Upon examination of goods the Administrator or caretaker must ensure that both quality and quantity are appropriate. When approved they need to sign and date the delivery note or in the absence of a delivery note, the order request.

5.7 Invoice check and authorisation

Invoices received must be checked to both copy orders and delivery notes to ensure that invoices relate to goods ordered and delivered. Invoices should also be checked for arithmetical correctness. All invoices must be certified for payment by two authorised signatories before being passed for payment – To ensure segregation of duties these must be different to the member of staff processing the invoice.

Invoices passed for payment must be recorded promptly in the school's accounting system by the FO.

In addition, VAT is to be paid and reclaimed and correctly recorded on the computer system. A monthly VAT analysis report is produced by the FMS system which is signed by the FO and forwarded to the SFT within 10 days of the end of the month. All invoices are retained to comply with VAT regulations

Section 6: Insurance

The LA insurance scheme is adopted by the School. This covers pupil accidents, buildings, theft and insurance cover for absences.

Insurance is taken out through Bradford Council.

Records are kept of all claims.

Section 7: Technology

Silsden Primary School adopts the Data Protection Principles which are set out in the Data Protection Act 2018 and the UK GDPR regulations.

Back up procedures on the Administration computer are carried out by Primary Technology.

The Head, SBL and FO have access to computer hardware and software and the relevant passwords. Only LA authorised software is used.

Section 8: Register of Pecuniary and Other Interests

It is a requirement for all schools to maintain such a Register.

- Declarations of interest are signed annually by all governors and any staff with financial responsibility (leadership team, FM, and staff with budget spend responsibilities) in September.
- In addition, each FGB and Governing Committee meeting includes a standing item for any Declaration of Interest on its Agenda and records any interest within its minutes.

8.1 Persons to be included:-

1. All Governors
2. Headteacher
3. All members of Senior Leadership Team.
4. Finance Manager
5. Budget Holders

8.2 Interests to be recorded

The basic principle to be followed is that any interest should be recorded which could be seen to improperly influence any decisions taken, pecuniary or otherwise, regarding the operation of the school.

Examples of such improper influence might be:-

- to purchase goods or materials from a company in which a Governor/senior member of staff has a financial interest without going through the correct procedures re. obtaining competitive prices;
- promoting member of staff who has close personal relationship (spouse, partner, son, daughter etc.) with Governor/senior member of staff, without going through correct procedures re. recruitment and selection.

There can never be a definitive, comprehensive list of the interests which should be recorded, but the following is intended to give some guidance:

- having a financial, or other, interest in an organisation which could feasibly be in a position to supply goods/services to the school e.g.

- building contractors
- plumbing contractors
- electrical contractors
- audio/visual goods suppliers (e.g. T.V.s, video recorders, hi-fi etc.)
- repair/maintenance of equipment (electrical and other)
- suppliers of computer hardware and software
- suppliers of stationery
- suppliers of educational equipment (e.g. P.E. equipment)
- suppliers of furniture, fittings, carpets, curtains etc.
- decorating contractors
- catering contractors
- suppliers of provisions
- suppliers of clothing
- suppliers of building materials

- suppliers of catering equipment
- suppliers of fuel
- suppliers of vehicles
- suppliers of books
- grounds maintenance contractors
- gardening contractors
- suppliers of grounds/garden maintenance equipment
- suppliers of plants, trees, seeds etc.
- suppliers of heating equipment
- suppliers of lighting equipment
- suppliers of musical instruments
- suppliers of insurance
- consultants (e.g. legal, financial, training, property)
- suppliers of security services and supplies
- suppliers of art materials
- suppliers of telecommunications equipment
- suppliers of photographic equipment
- transport contractors (e.g. coaches, taxis etc.)
- holiday/travel operators
- suppliers of supply teaching cover
- suppliers of peripatetic teaching
- suppliers of banking services
- suppliers of workshops etc. (e.g. drama, music)
- the interest in the above 'supplying organisations' may, for example, be:-
- as a director
- as an employee
- as a major shareholder
- as a major investor
- as a major debtor/creditor
- having a close personal relationship (spouse, partner, son, daughter, parent etc.) with a person in the above categories
- being in a position to potentially influence decisions made about the school, e.g. as:-
- member of local council (County Council, District Council, Parish Council)
- officer of Local Education Authority in a senior capacity
- Member of Parliament
- OFSTED Inspector
- officer of local council (District Council, Parish Council) in a senior capacity
- having a close personal relationship (as described above) with any person falling into the above categories
- having a close personal relationship with a Governor or member of staff (employed on a full-time, part-time, permanent, or temporary basis).

FINANCIAL BENCHMARKING

The Head, together with the SBL will prepare for consideration by the Resources Committee financial benchmarking comparisons on an annual basis each Autumn Term. The benchmarking data will be extracted for similar schools from either the local financial benchmarking database for schools within BMDC or the national DfE financial benchmarking database. The conclusions and recommendations resulting from this process will be used to inform the financial planning and resource allocation process.

REVIEW OF CONTRACTS FOR SERVICING

The Resources Committee will review the quality, cost and impact of services purchased from outside providers (including the LA) on an on-going basis and before contracts are renewed. To assist in this process the SBL/FO will prepare a schedule detailing the service contracts, together with values and renewal dates in order that priorities for review can be determined. After each review the Resources Committee will make recommendations to the Governing Body.

9. Monitoring and review

This policy will be reviewed annually by the Resources Committee.

Appendix 1:

Debit and Credit Cards for Schools

Guidance for Cardholders

Issue of cards

1. Before being issued with this card you must return a signed copy of this guidance to the Office.
2. You will be personally responsible for the card and for reporting it lost or stolen.
3. On receipt of the card, you must sign for receipt and undertake to comply with the conditions of use.
4. You must comply with the Bank's instructions on what procedures to follow if their card should be lost or stolen.
5. If you leave the school, you must return your card together with all supporting documentation to the Head or his/her nominee
6. If you fail to comply with this guidance may be required to surrender your card.

Approved transactions

- You will be required to reimburse the school for any transactions which are not approved.
- The monthly limit per card will be £3000 and the transaction limit will be £1000.(maximum number of transactions per day – 10 for the account)
- You must not make cash withdrawals.
- You must not use the card for personal purchases.
- You must ensure that you have approval from the appropriate budget holder in accordance with the school's scheme of delegation and that there is sufficient budget available before making any purchase.
- You must ensure that contract standing orders, procurement rules and regulations are being followed.
- Debit or Credit cards can only be used where it is not possible to make normal commercial credit arrangements i.e. order – goods received – invoice.
- Debit or Credit cards may be used to make purchases from the internet or from high street suppliers but not for building works or utility bills.
- Payment in advance of receipt for goods and services with the credit card is permitted provided schools can demonstrate that by doing so they obtained best value.
- You must ensure that you obtain full VAT receipts for all relevant purchases.
- When making purchases from internet suppliers;
 - You should provide the e-mail address of the Bursar;
 - Goods and services must be delivered to the school not to your private address;
 - You should always check that you are not being overlooked when using a debit or credit card online. Many secure Websites use password access to authenticate cardholders and passwords must remain confidential;
 - On-line purchases should only be made on a secured web page. A secured page should have a little padlock (that is locked) displayed in the lower right corner of your browser. The web address will start “**https**” (other Web sites normally start “http”). Cardholders can check the level of security that the site has in place by moving your mouse pointer onto the padlock to see what number is displayed. If the number is less than 40 the site should not be

used for on-line purchases because this does not give a sufficiently secure connection to protect sensitive, financial or personal information;

- You should never give personal details that are commonly used for identity verification (e.g. mother's maiden name) over an insecure internet connection. Even over the telephone, this information should only be given if the company ABSOLUTELY requires it.

Record keeping

7. All receipts and delivery notes should be handed to the Finance Officer at the earliest possible opportunity
8. You must keep a transaction log which you should retain in case of queries.
9. You should hand a copy of the transaction log to the Finance officer at the end of each statement period.
10. The Finance Officer will be responsible for reconciling the individual transactions with the statement
11. Payment of the credit card statement will be by direct debit from the schools own bank account

Undertaking by the cardholder

School name.....

Card holders name.....

I confirm that I have received

Credit card number.....

For use with bank account number.....

I confirm that I have read and understood the guidance for cardholders and the Bank's Credit Card Terms and conditions and I undertake to comply with these conditions

I hereby authorise the Head teacher /Governing Body to deduct from my salary or any other amounts due to me the value of any unauthorised transactions incurred

I recognise that the Head /Governing Body reserves the right to withdraw the card at any time

Signed..... Date.....

Retain a copy for yourself and return a copy to the School Office

Appendix 1

School Contract Standing Orders and the Procurement Act 2023 – Interim Supplementary Note for Maintained Schools

1. Maintained schools are their own ‘contracting authorities’ for the purposes of the regulations that govern public sector procurement. Via the Council’s Contract Standing Orders and Financial Regulations for Maintained Schools, however, maintained schools in Bradford are required to follow processes that are set by Bradford Council. These processes are a mixture of requirements that are set by national public sector procurement regulations and locally agreed procedures. Where there is any direct conflict, national regulations always have precedence over local arrangements.
2. This is an interim supplementary note, written for maintained schools, to explain the impact of the introduction of the Procurement Act 2023 on the Council’s current Schools Contract Standing Orders (SCSOs). The Procurement Act is implemented from 24 February 2025. All procurement from this date must follow the provisions of the Act. This note is written in advance of a fuller review of Bradford’s SCSOs, which will take a little time to complete, and which may propose local changes e.g. to local procurement thresholds, that are not associated with the Act. This note, however, is intended to summarise for maintained schools what the Act means immediately for their procurement processes and what schools must now do in response.
3. The introduction of the Act, and the changes in guidance, will require schools to review and amend their own Financial Procedures. The subsequent fuller review of the SCSOs may also require changes to these.
4. Key relevant documents and guidance are:
 - a. The Procurement Act can be accessed [here](#)
 - b. The Council’s current Schools Contract Standing Orders (SCSOs) can be accessed [here](#)
 - c. The Council’s current Financial Regulations for Maintained Schools can be accessed [here](#)
 - d. The DfE’s general guidance on the Act in relation to schools can be accessed [here](#) and [here](#)
 - e. The current National Procurement Policy Statement can be found [here](#)
 - f. The DfE Buying for Schools website (which includes guidance and also route for schools to ask for advice from the DfE on procurement compliance) can be found [here](#) and [here](#). This website includes links to specific guidance / free training on the Procurement Act 2023 and the use of frameworks. IT also provides guidance on the Central Digital Platform.

5. The Procurement Act 2023 sets thresholds at which the full provisions of the Act apply. These thresholds, which replace the previous EU-based thresholds, are:
 - a. Works - £5,372,609
 - b. Goods - £214,904
 - c. Services - £214,904
 - d. Light Touch Contracts - £663,540
 - e. Concession Contracts and Utilities Contracts (works)- £5,372,609
 - f. Utilities Contracts (supplies and services) - £429,809.
6. These threshold values are inclusive of VAT (i.e. the goods and services thresholds, prior to VAT, would be £179,087). Most procurement activity that maintained schools will routinely engage in will be below these thresholds. However, where maintained schools procure at and above these thresholds they must now comply fully with all requirements of the Act, as well as with any additional requirements that may be set by the Council's Financial Regulations for Maintained Schools or the Council's Schools Contract Standing Orders (SCSOs). The Act introduces some specific new requirements for procurements at and above thresholds, including to:
 - a. Publish notices at planning, tendering, award and contract commencing stages, using the Central Digital Platform. Schools will need to apply for a login and access and use the Platform directly.
 - b. Requirements relating to contract management and contract performance measurement for contracts of higher value.
 - c. Carry out pre-procurement market engagement and planning.
 - d. Follow only 'Open' tendering processes.
 - e. Use 'Direct Award' only under the most exceptional circumstances, with the requirement to publish transparency notices. Please note that the Council's 'exceptions to competition' provisions within the Council's current CSOs cannot be used for procurements that are at and above the thresholds.
7. Schools are strongly recommended to seek specific procurement (and / or legal, where appropriate) advice where they are procuring at or above thresholds. Schools are responsible for their own compliance with the Act.
8. In addition, whilst retaining a strong focus on achieving Best Value through competitive procurement, the Procurement Act introduces for all procurements of any value general expectations that maintained schools must now have regard to, including:
 - a. A focus on fairness, transparency and promoting competition for all procurements of any value. Exceptions (to competition) / Direct Award procurement processes are only to be used in the most exceptional circumstances.
 - b. Increased emphasis on social value considerations within procurement, where procurement must now provide for the 'most advantageous' rather than simply the

‘most economically advantageous’ outcome. Schools are expected to consider the broader impact of procurement decisions.

- c. Better pre-procurement market engagement, supporting transparency, for all procurements of any value.
 - d. Follow only open tendering processes.
 - e. Better supporting small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) with a duty to consider the removal of barriers to SMEs and a duty to consider ‘lots’ (breaking up a large contract into smaller contracts).
 - f. Enhanced conflict of interests management.
 - g. Increased focus on contract management.
9. All maintained schools, for all procurements of any value, must have regard to these expectations and requirements, as well as for any additional requirements that may be set by the Council’s Financial Regulations for Maintained Schools or the Council’s Schools Contract Standing Orders.
10. Additionally, the Procurement Act, as well as the DfE’s Buying for Schools guidance, seeks to continue to support and encourage the use of Frameworks as a way of enabling compliant and expedient Best Value procurement. The existence and use of Frameworks has expanded in recent years. The Council continues to encourage all schools to closely consider Framework agreements in all their procurements.
11. Additionally, the Procurement Act sets new requirements for ‘below threshold’ contracting. For local authorities, this means contracts between £30,000 and the relevant thresholds that are stated in paragraph 5. However, schools are excluded from all ‘below-threshold’ contracting requirements. This essentially means that, whilst schools must have regard for and follow the general requirements and expectations of the Act (paragraph 8 above), the specific new requirements (paragraph 6 above) do not apply to schools for contracts that are under the value of the relevant thresholds.
12. To clarify, maintained schools are exempt from the following provisions of the Procurement Act 2023 in relation to the award of public contracts:
- a. The provisions relating to below-threshold contracts (Section 84 to 88 of the Act i.e. the whole of Part 6 of the Act does not apply).
 - b. The requirement to publish information on contract payments of more than £30,000 (Section 70).
 - c. Prompt payment measures. Schools are exempt from the requirement to publish a Payment Compliance Notice (Sections 68 and 69).
13. Please also note that, though individual maintained schools in Bradford are their own ‘contracting authorities’ for the purposes of the regulations that govern public sector procurement, their procurements would not exceed a total value of £100m. Therefore, it will

not be necessary for maintained schools to publish a 'Pipeline Notice', which is one of the new requirements of the Act.

14. The overall result for maintained schools is that,

- a. Maintained schools must comply with the full provisions of the Act for all procurements at and above the relevant thresholds, and the provisions of the Act take precedence over any locally determined policies that might conflict (noting, however, that the Council's SCSOs and the Financial Regulations for Maintained Schools may set additional requirements that do not conflict with the Act).
- b. Whilst maintained schools must follow the general expectations and requirements of the Act for procurements below the relevant thresholds, below threshold procurement will be governed by locally determined policies that are set by the Council through the SCSOs and the Financial Regulations for Maintained Schools. These extend to setting local procedures and local thresholds for the determination of 'low', 'medium' and 'high' value procurement.

15. The Council's current Schools Contract Standing Orders separates 'below threshold' procurement into 3 categories, in summary:

- a. Low value: values up to £10,000 (excluding VAT). Schools are required to be able to demonstrate Best Value, which may include inviting written quotations from suppliers. Schools are encouraged to use local suppliers. Schools can use catalogues and Framework agreements.
- b. Medium value: values between £10,000 and £75,000 (excluding VAT). Schools must seek at least 4 written quotations. Schools can also tender (must be Open Procedure tender route) and can also use Framework agreements. Schools are encouraged to use local suppliers.
- c. High value: value above £75,000 (excluding VAT). Schools must tender (must be Open Procedure tender route).

16. Notwithstanding that the Council, as part of the fuller update of the Schools Contract Standing Orders (SCSOs), may wish to review the definitions of low, medium and high value procurement, especially the position of 'medium' value procurement extending to £75,000 (when, for example, the DfE defines medium value as extending to £40,000), and also will wish to ensure that the Council's SCSOs better reflect the opportunities now afforded by Framework agreements, which have significantly expanded since the SCSOs were last updated, schools are given the following guidance in relation to the immediate application of the current SCSOs and the Procurement Act from 24 February 2025.

17. Maintained schools should immediately assess their procurements now according to 4 categories, with the routes to market for each summarised as follows:

- a. Low value: values up to £10,000 (excluding VAT). No immediate significant change on the current SCSOs, but schools must now have regard for the Procurement Act's general expectations and requirements that are summarised in paragraph 8. Schools may use the 'exception to competition' provisions within the current SCSOs but are

expected only to use these in the most exceptional circumstances. Schools must still have regard for Best Value.

- b. Medium value: values between £10,000 and £75,000 (excluding VAT). No immediate significant change on the current SCSOs, but schools must now have regard for the Procurement Act's general expectations and requirements that are summarised in paragraph 8. The expected routes to market will be one of:

- i. 4 written quotations. Schools must complete competitive procurement and have regard for Best Value.
- ii. Option to tender (this must be the Open Procedure tender route following the general requirements of the Procurement Act where advertising occurs for the purpose of inviting tenders).
- iii. Use of an existing compliant Framework agreement e.g. DfE buying for schools, following the general requirements of the Procurement Act.
- iv. Schools may use the 'exception to competition' provisions within the current SCSOs but are expected only to use these in the most exceptional circumstances (use of these provisions for higher value contracts would general be considered abnormal).

- c. High value below relevant threshold: values between £75,000 (excluding VAT) and the relevant threshold (including VAT). No immediate significant change on the current SCSOs, but schools must now have regard for the Procurement Act's general expectations and requirements that are summarised in paragraph 8. The expected routes to market will be one of:

- i. Open Procedure tender (this must be the Open Procedure tender route following the general requirements of the Procurement Act where advertising occurs for the purpose of inviting tenders). Schools are not permitted to just seek 4 written quotations.
- ii. Use of an existing compliant Framework agreement e.g. DfE buying for schools, following the general requirements of the Procurement Act.
- iii. Schools are not expected to use the 'exception to competition' provisions within the SCSOs (use of these provisions for higher value contracts would general be considered abnormal).

- d. High value at and above relevant threshold: values at or above the relevant threshold (inclusive of VAT). The Act produces immediate change, and schools must now comply with the provisions of the Procurement Act in full. The expected routes to market will be one of:

- i. Open Procedure tender (this must be the Open Procedure tender route).
- ii. Use of an existing compliant Framework agreement e.g. DfE buying for schools.
- iii. Use of the Direct Award provision that is contained within the Act. The Council's SCSO's 'exception to competition' provisions cannot be used. The Council would not expect schools to use the Act's Direct Award provision and schools are required to obtain authorisation from the Council before seeking to use this.

Any update to this guidance note will be signalled on [Bradford Schools Online](#). Please continue to monitor this. Details of the Council's fuller SCSOs review will be published in due course.