



Brampton Abbotts CE Primary School



Bridstow CE Primary School



Oak Meadow Federation

FINANCE POLICY SUITE

This policy will be reviewed and updated by the Governing Body at least annually.
All references to 'the school' imply both Brampton Abbotts and Bridstow Primary Schools.

Date signed off by Full Governing Body: 15th October 2024

Signed Daniel Brearey, Headteacher

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'D. Brearey'.

Paul Mason, GB Chair

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Paul Mason'.

Date next review due: October 2025

Introduction

Our vision is rooted in Psalm 1:3: 'You are like a tree, planted by streams of water that never run dry. Your fruit ripens in its time; your leaves never fade or curl. In all you do, you prosper'. Through our Christian ethos we seek to nurture every child to reach their potential by working together in friendship, growing together in honesty and respect, and flourishing together in happiness. To this end, and in order to create a positive learning environment, it is essential that the budget is well-managed and designed to prioritise spend that enables learners to grow and flourish, and that the financial management systems demonstrate responsible stewardship.

With this in mind, this suite of policies aims:

- to reiterate our commitment to openness, transparency and integrity;
- to ensure that the budget provides for optimum staffing levels, sufficient learning resources, good evidence of pupil progress and attainment, and a safe, nurturing learning environment;
- to steward all resources appropriately and achieve value for money;
- to consider exposure to all forms of risk and to mitigate these risks appropriately;
- to adhere to legal and audit requirements and any local authority policies.

This policy suite contains the following chapters:

[Chapter 1](#): Financial controls

[Chapter 2](#): Alternative income sources including lettings

[Chapter 3](#): Charging and remissions

[Chapter 4](#): Disposal of assets

Other key school documents to refer to include the finance procedures, the Estates Management policy suite and the staff terms and conditions documents.

Complaints and whistleblowing

Complaints should follow the procedures as set out in the Complaints Policy on our website. Staff members also have a responsibility to raise any concerns in line with our whistleblowing policy.

Compliance

This policy is set out in line with the [School and Standards Framework Act \(1988\)](#), noting especially the rules in Chapters III & IV on the governing body's responsibilities for school conduct, school premises and budgeting, and all other relevant legislation and statutory guidance (see Appendix 1).

CHAPTER 1: FINANCIAL CONTROLS

1.1 Governing body responsibilities

The governing body has a collective duty to manage the schools' budgets, ensure accurate accounts are kept, determine the staffing structure and pay policy (in line with the [teachers' pay and conditions](#)), consult with the Local Authority, and, as a 'critical friend', support, advise and challenge the headteacher. It does this by:

- confirming (e.g. with a suitable skills audit) at least once every four years that collectively the governing body (including any associate governors) has sufficient financial skills to meet its statutory responsibility and safeguard the public money for which it is responsible;
- participating in relevant training;
- ensuring that accurate, timely and sufficiently detailed information is provided to the Finance & Resources Committee;
- ensuring that resources (including staff) are deployed appropriately in line with the school's priorities, ethos, development and improvement plans, and self-evaluation framework;
- ensuring that the school meets its budgetary targets, avoids financial waste, receives favourable audit assessments, and remains in line with statutory obligations and the Local Authority's requirements and delegated authority;
- considering and approving annually the annual 5-year budget plans;
- considering termly any variations and recommendations from the Finance & Resources Committee;
- reviewing and approving annually the school's charging and remissions policies;
- monitoring adherence to procurement procedures;
- considering and mitigating any risks (including ensuring that adequate insurance is in place where appropriate);
- reviewing termly and updating where necessary the register of its pecuniary interests;
- acting promptly and effectively to address any recommendations arising from the audit.

1.2 Finance & Resources Committee responsibilities

The Finance and Resources (F&R) Committee meets at least termly (and more frequently where required, e.g. to monitor any capital projects) to:

- monitor in-year income and expenditure against the budget, monthly management accounts and revised forecasts, including evaluating the effectiveness of spending decisions;
- agree the staffing structure and pay policy with the headteacher and recommend this to the governing body;
- appraise and award contracts tendered (within financial limits set by the governing body);
- approve the school fund spending policy based on the headteacher's recommendation;
- delegate to the headteacher (within these limits) the limits for procuring goods and service without the committee's additional approval;
- ensure that there are effective systems of internal financial control for all funds;
- review internal and external audit reports;
- forecast (annually) the future numbers on roll and expected income levels, and assist with preparing and reviewing the school's annual budget prior to recommending this to the governing body;
- approve the disposal / write-off of assets;
- ensure that year-end accounts are properly finalised and signed off by the chair of governors;
- administer any additional voluntary funds (within the scheme of delegation).

The F&R Committee reports at least once a term to the full governing body. The governing body may appoint associate governors to the F&R Committee to ensure that it has sufficient skills

and experience, and the F&R Committee will appoint its chairperson from within its membership (including any associate governors).

1.3 Headteacher's responsibilities

The headteacher is responsible for the internal organisation, management and control of the school, and ensures that sound systems, procedures and controls are in place for day-to-day financial management. This includes recruiting non-teaching staff with appropriate financial skills and training other members of staff as appropriate to cover in the event of any staff absence and avoid over-reliance on key individuals. S/he and the staff team are accountable to the governing body for the school's financial performance and are expected to give the governing body enough information to ensure that it is confident that the headteacher's responsibilities are being met.

The headteacher will:

- work with the F&R committee in drawing up and submitting to the governing body the annual budget plan;
- inform the F&R Committee in the first instance of any budget revisions which have been required or requested by the Local Authority or of any other DfE/LA requirements;
- propose plans for spending any voluntary funds.

The headteacher is responsible for ensuring that the funds delegated by the Local Authority are in line with pupil numbers.

The headteacher has the primary responsibility for drawing up the School Development Plan and for proposing a budget which meet the priorities and targets identified by these plans to ensure that pupils grow and flourish in line with our Christian values.

1.4 School administrator's responsibilities

The school administrator is responsible for day-to-day banking, including processing receipts and payments, depositing cash and cheques weekly, managing the various accounts (school fund account, ParentPay/Schoolmoney, Government Procurement Card (GPC) and Imprest) and reconciling these on a monthly basis.

The school administrator will also check the bank mandates annually in the autumn term to ensure that the list of signatories is up-to-date. An up-to-date list of bank accounts and signatories is held in the School Office.

The school administrator is responsible, with the headteacher, for lettings and for recording all bookings, and will also maintain a record of all school contracts, leases and insurance policies.

The school administrator is responsible for backing up financial data, for ensuring that data is removed from any assets disposed of, and for ensuring that payroll is accurate.

1.5 Revenue funding from the Local Authority (LMS budget)

Local Management of Schools (LMS) revenue income from the LA is calculated based on pupil numbers, ages, SEN or other measures of disadvantage, and is allocated according to the School Development Plan.

1.6 Capital budget

The F&R Committee meets a minimum of once termly to discuss planned capital works and review works completed and discuss future projects. Proposals for capital expenditure are referred to the diocese and / or the LA in accordance with instructions laid out in the 'Blue Book'.

Devolved Formula Capital (DFC) allocations are paid annually to the governing body's #1 account and we can access additional capital funding by bidding for School Condition Allocation (SCA) funding.

Capital works involving the structure of the building or which require supervision or project management may require the early involvement of consultants. The governing body may engage consultants recommended by the Diocese to guide us through all capital projects.

1.7 Bank Accounts

The school fund account at each school is for managing the payment of extra-curricular events such as off-site school activities and trips, concerts and drama productions involving pupils. Funds received via the ParentPay/Schoolmoney system are paid directly into the school fund account. The account must have at least three signatories, including the headteacher, deputy headteacher and one other member of staff. All cheques must be handwritten, crossed 'account payee only', and signed by hand by at least two signatories.

The governors' #1 account is for capital expenditure and is the account into which the Devolved Formula Capital (DFC) funding is paid. The governing body's 10% contribution is paid into this account from the #2 account or from the school fund account or another source if the #2 has insufficient funds.

The governors' #2 account serves as a current account. Income from rental and lettings is paid into this account. Receipts available upon request.

The governing body elects a treasurer to manage these accounts, and signatories for both are the treasurer, chair of governors, headteacher and one other person. Management of these accounts is delegated to the F&R Committee.

Payment from any account must be authorised by two signatories, who should sign cheques by hand. Bank accounts may not be overdrawn nor may an overdraft arrangement be sought. No loans may be agreed other than with the Local Authority. Any interest accrued remains in the account for which it accrued.

Funds made available by the Education & Skills Funding Agency (ESFA) may be rolled forward for a maximum of three years (or four years with permission) as per ESFA rules.

The financial year runs from 1st April to 31st March.

1.8 Petty cash

Purchases and reimbursements are managed through each school's Imprest account, for which the balances are agreed with the LA. Details can be found at paragraph 4.7.9 of the [Local Authority's Financial Procedures](#).

The maximum amount of petty cash which can be held by either school is £1,000, and the School Administrator must be accompanied by another member of staff if carrying more than £250 to deposit at the bank.

1.9 Purchasing and tendering

The school will always consider price, quality and fitness for purpose when purchasing goods or services. The school procedure for routine purchasing is to place orders with suppliers providing best value for money in line with the following procurement thresholds. All figures below are exclusive of VAT & relevant fees:

- Two quotations will be sought for goods and services £2,000 - £5,000.
- Three written quotations will be sought for any contract with a value exceeding £5,000.
- Proposed expenditure more than £10,000 will be submitted to the F&R Committee for recommendation to the governing body.

NB. An exception to the above monetary thresholds and quote volumes may be taken where the governing body chooses to use the same contractor for similar works (as previously completed). This is designed to ensure expedience and allow the school to be maintained to a good standard. Regular checks will be made to ensure that any frequently used contractors represent good value and are in line with market rates.

1.10 Fraud prevention

We maintain a robust system of controls to safeguard against fraudulent or improper use of public money and assets. Arrangements are planned both to prevent malpractice and to enable prompt detection should it occur.

The main areas of control are:

- financial management checks, reconciling accounts at the end of each month and keeping an audit trail of documents;
- separation of duties, namely that no single member of staff is responsible for both validating and processing a transaction;
- strictly limited access to systems for authorising and making payments;
- spot checks on systems and transactions by members of the F&R Committee or the school's leadership team, measure the effectiveness of existing controls, help identify new risks, and indicate to staff that fraud prevention is a high priority;
- investigation and logging of every incident of irregularity, including any attempted fraud;
- careful pre-employment checks on staff who will have financial responsibilities, and;
- making staff members' financial responsibilities clear through written job descriptions and procedures.

CHAPTER 2: ALTERNATIVE INCOME SOURCES including LETTINGS**2.1 Lettings**

The governing body seeks to promote the usage of school premises outside normal school hours, on the following priority basis.

- School functions, formal business meetings of the PTFA or governing body, or school fundraising events;
- Lettings by registered organisations offering opportunities and support to local children and their families;
- Other uses which are consistent with our aims and ethos and approved by the governing body, with priority given to activities which benefit the children of the school and the school community.

Use of the premises for school functions will take priority over lettings.

Lettings will not give full-time exclusive use of all or part of the premises or grounds and must not interfere with the primary activities of the school. Any equipment used by the hirer must be removed from the site or stored as agreed with the school such that it does not restrict the use of the facilities by the school or other approved organisations.

The governing body does not have a 'caretaker' who is continuously present on the school premises or grounds during the period of hire, but reserves the right to do so, and delegates this same right to the headteacher should s/he decide that this is in the best interests of the school property. The governing body including the headteacher, and his/her designate, reserves the right of access to the premises during a period of hire, and the governing body expects the headteacher or his/her designate to monitor activities from time to time.

The school is not legally required to make first-aid facilities available, and its first-aid kits or other resources are not available to the hirer. It is the hirer's responsibility to make arrangements to provide first-aid facilities and trained personnel (e.g. in the case of sports lettings).

School equipment may be used by prior arrangement and with the headteacher's approval, and its safe use and return must be under adult supervision. The hirer is responsible for ensuring that school equipment is used safely and appropriately, and is liable for any damage, loss or theft of any school equipment which it has agreed to use.

Anyone hiring the school hall is required to have adequate public liability insurance and to give details of this insurance on the booking confirmation form. We can arrange public insurance for an additional charge of 10% of the booking fee. No lettings will be made without a contract and insurance indemnity, and the hirer will be reminded of its contractual obligations.

The letting of classrooms is not permitted.

No occasional bookings will be accepted, and all new lettings must be approved by the headteacher.

Rates of hire are determined by the F&R Committee and are designed to ensure that the income covers the additional costs of caretaker hours, lighting and heating; the minimum charge is normally £15/hour. The headteacher has the right to, under special circumstances, to apply a short term booking arrangement.

Either party may give no fewer than 14 days' notice to terminate a single event, and no less than half a term's notice to terminate a regular booking. Termination may be immediate in the event of a breach of contract. Please see the reverse of the booking form for terms and conditions.

2.2 Rental income

Rental rates for Spring Gate nursery are agreed by the F&R Committee. Rent is deposited into the Brampton Abbotts Governors' #2 account, and an agreed figure to cover the costs of heating and lighting is paid into Brampton Abbotts' revenue account.

CHAPTER 3: CHARGING & REMISSIONS

3.1 Introduction

We do not charge for any activity undertaken as part of the National Curriculum. There are some charges relating to school trips, residential visits, transport to and from swimming lessons, some after-school clubs, and music tuition (where this is not part of the National Curriculum). With the exception of music lessons which are invoiced directly by peripatetic music teachers, these charges are requested on a voluntary basis. Parents/carers in receipt of state benefits and pupils for whom the school receives Pupil Premium funding are exempt from these charges. Those whose children do not attract Pupil Premium funding and who wish to apply for support may request an application form from the School Administrator. The headteacher may make a discretionary subsidy available to other pupils whose families are unable to fund the full cost.

Where insufficient contributions have been received, we may have to cancel a school trip or a residential visit and seek to cover the curricular aspects of the trip or visit in other ways. Parents/carers have a right to know how each trip is funded, and we will provide this information on request.

Pupils will not be treated differently based on the level of contribution which their parents/carers have paid for their participation in school trips.

3.2 School trips

School trips are organised to enhance pupils' educational experience and enrich the curriculum and are subsidised by the school. This could include museum or theatre visits, musical or sporting events or outdoor adventure activities.

School trips are expected to be self-financing, and any surplus income over expenditure greater than 20% of the cost of a trip will be refunded to parents/carers.

3.3 Residential visits

If we organise a residential visit in school time (or mainly in school time) which relates directly the National Curriculum, no charge is made for the educational element or travel expense, but we do invite a contribution towards the costs of board and lodging.

3.4 Swimming

We organise swimming lessons for all children in Key Stage 2, which take place in school time and are part of the National Curriculum; voluntary contributions are invited towards the cost of transport. We inform parents/carers when these lessons are due to take place and seek their written permission for their children to take part.

3.5 After-school clubs

Some after-school clubs (e.g. additional sports coaching run by qualified coaches who are not members of staff) attract an additional charge towards the additional cost of qualified coaching.

3.6 Music tuition

Peripatetic music teachers who are accredited by Encore (the Herefordshire Music Service) charge parents/carers directly for individual lessons and for instrument hire.

3.7 School meals and milk

Parents whose children are not eligible for free school meals are asked for a contribution towards the cost of lunch.

Milk is provided free of charge to pupils under the age of 5. Pupils in Reception who reach the age of 5 may continue to have milk at a subsidised rate, paid for by parents. School milk is also provided free of charge to those pupils in receipt of benefits-assessed FSM whose parents request it.

CHAPTER 4: DISPOSAL OF ASSETS

4.1 Introduction

This chapter provides protocols for the disposal of school assets and helps to ensure that the disposal of assets is appropriate and minimises risk to the school, including the risk of fraud and misappropriation.

'Asset' applies to any item, piece of equipment or other asset listed as such on the school's general inventory or ICT inventory (where the latter is held separately by an ICT provider) which has a purchase price of over £250 and is expected to last for more than one year.

We maintain an inventory of current assets, and a parallel inventory of ICT assets is held by the ICT provider. This inventory provides space to record identifying details (e.g. serial numbers) and potential disposal timing, methodology and authorisation. The inventory is audited annually.

All disposals will be approved by the headteacher and the inventory updated accordingly (including adding an asset to be disposed of if it is not currently listed on the inventory).

4.2 Reasons for disposal

We recognise that obsolescent and obsolete assets can take up valuable space and incur ongoing maintenance costs which are a false economy. Other reasons for disposing of assets are that they are:

- not capable of running required operational software systems or being upgraded to do so;
- no longer required, due to changed procedures, functions, or usage patterns;
- no longer complying with occupational health and safety standards;
- beyond repair but able to be sold for scrap.

Reasons for disposal must be recorded in the inventory. This assists the audit process and highlights successes and challenges for future reference.

4.3 Options for disposal

Assets identified for disposal can, with the headteacher's authorisation and subject both to the finance procedures and to the market value, age and functionality of the asset, be:

- transferred to a new school site (and shown on the inventories of both old and new schools);
- sold, in which case a minimum price, which must be higher than the cost of disposal, will be agreed by the headteacher and school administrator, and the asset will be:
 - widely advertised as 'sold as seen' in communications with parents/carers and the original supplier;
 - offered to the highest bidder within a specified time-frame;
 - duly recorded as with any other sale, and;
 - credited to the school fund account);
- donated to a community service organisation or school;
- recycled;
- destroyed.

Electrical goods will only be sold if the Portable Appliance Test (PAT) is still valid. Prospective buyers or recipients of any asset to be sold or donated may be given adequate opportunity to inspect the goods prior to purchase / donation, provided that this can be done in a way which does not impinge our safeguarding policy.

All data will be professionally cleared from any ICT equipment before disposal, and a record of this kept.

The chosen option and methodology for disposal will be recorded, to avoid or respond to any subsequent challenge or query.

All disposals will be in accordance with legislative requirements (e.g. for recycling batteries) and in a way which minimises the environmental impact of the disposal.

4.4 Donating or selling items to staff members

If a member of staff offers to purchase an asset, or asks if it can be donated, we will give due regard to transparency to avoid any suspicion of impropriety. Assets will only be donated or sold to staff members if they have been advertised internally for a period of two weeks, and we may conduct a lottery or similar process if there are multiple interested parties.

Appendix 1: Legislation and Statutory Guidance

[School and Standards Framework Act \(1988\)](#)

[Section 21 of the Education Act \(2002\)](#)

[School and Early Years Finance \(England\) Regulations \(2021\);](#)

[Statutory guidance on financing maintained schools \(23 April 2021 update, issue 13\)](#)

[Statutory guidance on capital funding for schools \(2021 update\);](#)

[Statutory guidance on capital funding for voluntary-aided \(VA\) schools \(2014\);](#)

[Guidance for the governing body on meeting its Schools Financial Value Standard obligations \(June 2021 update\);](#)

[Guidance on submitting a land transaction proposal](#) (which replaces the guidance on protecting, transferring and disposing of school land and property, which was withdrawn in February 2021)

[Local Authority's Financial Procedures.](#)

[LMS and Finance Section of Herefordshire Council](#)