



**The Westminster
School**

Safe, Happy and learning Together

www.thewestminsterschool.co.uk

2024/2025 Finance Procedures & Responsibilities

Building foundations and providing opportunities to create confident, aspirational, and independent members of our community.

Approved by Governing Body on:	13/06/2024
Signed by Chair of Governors:	<i>P. A. Evans</i>
Head Teacher:	O M Flowers
Lead Personnel:	J Biggs
Date of Review:	13/06/2025

Roles and Responsibilities

Governing Body

The Governing Body holds statutory responsibility for the setting and overseeing of the annual school budget, that the school complies with SFVS (Schools Financial Value Standard) procedures and due regard to Health and Safety.

Resources Committee

The Resources Committee receives from the Governing Body the responsibility to determine and monitor expenditure within the budget, specifically authorising virements and expenditure over the amount delegated to the Head Teacher, currently for amounts in excess of £10,000. The amount is reviewed annually by governors. Chairs action maximum transaction limit was set at £50k agreed by Governors at FGB meeting dated 26th May 22.

Head Teacher

The Head Teacher receives from the Governing Body responsibility for the practical day to day administration of the budget and expenditure, and is assisted in this by members of the Leadership Team, the external Finance Advisor (Total Finance) and the Finance Department.

Budget Holders

Budget Holders operate under the delegation of the Head Teacher, and are accountable to the Head Teacher and Governors. They must ensure that they follow financial procedures when making transactions within their allocated budget.

- In line with the SDP, they are responsible for researching, collating, costing and organising their Programmes, Plans and Budget spreadsheets annually in Feb/March for the new financial year. These are given to the Head Teacher and Finance Manager to analyse, amend (if necessary) and approve, and add into the detail of the overall Curriculum spends budget.
- Monitoring the spend of their budget throughout the year to ensure they are on track
- Approving purchase requisition requests for their area of learning in accordance with the detail of the PPB
- Ensures best value for money practice is followed.
- Looking at any potential grants for their area of learning. Completing grant applications
- Liaising with Head and Finance Manager if reforecasting or changing/reviewing resource requirements within their financial year allocation

External Financial Advisor (Budget Officer)

To ensure the completion and submittal of Local Authority (LA) returns as and when required, and at the end of financial year closedown, prepare budget monitoring reports and the monthly bank/payroll reconciliation.

Finance Department

Day to day administration and processing of financial transactions.

Register of Business Interest

All Governors and staff must complete a "Pecuniary Interest Form" on an annual basis, this will be kept on file by the Finance Officer.

Budget Preparation and Setting

The school receives its budget allocation from the Local Authority based on purchased places, and banding of pupils special needs.

During the spring term the external financial advisor will create a draft budget with the assistance of the Head Teacher, Deputy Head Teachers, School Business Manager and Finance Manager, taking into consideration funds available and staffing commitments, etc.

The Budget is prepared in line with the School Development Plan and budget holders are expected to be aware of the bigger picture needs of the school as well as current issues for their particular responsibility.

The draft budget must be presented to the Full Governing Body Meeting for approval before the Budget can be set.

Curriculum budget holders are to prepare a Programme, Plan and Budget (PPB) for each financial year. The curriculum budget will be allocated by the Head Teacher at the beginning of the financial year.

Budget Monitoring and Reports

The external Financial Advisor (Total Finance) will prepare budget monitoring reports every fortnight in school to be discussed on the day of the visit with SLT and Finance. Budget Monitoring Reports, showing the schools current position are uploaded to the Governors Hub at various dates, minimum of six times per year. The most current version is printed and presented to Governors at each of the termly Resources Committee. Should any virements be required in excess of the amount delegated to the Head Teacher, currently £10,000, then this must be presented to the Finance Committee for approval.

The Finance Department will provide Budget Holders with regular updates of financial balance and expenditure as the year progresses which the budget holder must check. Any queries are to be referred to the Finance Manger or School Business Manager.

Income Procedures

The monthly advances received directly into the bank account from the Local Authority are entered onto FMS by the external Financial Advisor (Total Finance).

All income is banked, as no payments are to be made from cash income. All cash is presented to the Finance Manger to be kept secure in the safe, the amount in the safe is not to exceed the insurance cover of £2,000.00.

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The Attendance Secretary administers School meals and collects the money from pupils and staff, via the online portal ParentPay. She is also responsible for debt management. Bad debts are written off at the discretion of the Head Teacher.

ParentPay and Paypoint income reports are printed weekly and checked against individual pupil payment records to ensure they match, then entered onto FMS by the Finance Manager. The weekly amount collected for free school meals is reconciled monthly against the ParentPay banking report and bank statement.

Receipts of physical cash/cheques are entered onto FMS by the Finance Admin, and then processed for banking by the Finance Officer to ensure segregation of duties.

Finance Manager responsibility to raise external sales invoices and debt management.

Westminstore school shop cash income and float is counted and reconciled by Shop Manager at the start and end of each day. Banking, Cash Count, Cash reconciliation and sales report are sent into school daily and cross-checked to reports from Square Terminal for both cash and card sales by Finance Manager. Recorded on internal spreadsheet. For the more detailed process please refer to the Shop Manual.

Purchasing Procedures

Budget Holders should submit a completed and signed "Internal Requisition Form" to the Finance Administrator, found on Forms Central.

Budget holders are expected to follow the principles of Best Value when making purchases for their delegated areas of spend (Challenge, Compare, Consult and Compete as part of the process is important).

Any individual item requested over **£200.00** must show evidence of 3 equivalent competitor prices unless it is a bespoke item. However this rule does not apply to SLT or School Business Managers where the £1,000 local authority limit (as per fair funding scheme) of an item over £1,000 requires 3 quotes applies. Any individual item/service over £10,000 must have 4 formal quotes. In excess of £50,000 we go out to tender, with a minimum of six tenders to be invited as per SMBC Fair Funding Scheme.

Any request for items of a chemical nature (that are not already in the COSHH file, held in School) will require a Medical Safety Data Sheet to be obtained before purchase. The Business Manager/Health & Safety Manager write these and inform Finance once approved, to continue with procuring. The staff member using the chemical/equipment must read the MSDS/Risk assessment before use.

Budget Holders are not to place orders with suppliers directly, but must follow the schools purchasing procedures, this includes items supplied on an evaluation basis. If the supplier chosen is not the cheapest, then a note should be made by the Budget Holder, signed and dated as to why this is considered Best Value.

The Finance Administrator will create an Official Purchase Order provided the Budget Holder has sufficient funds. The requisition is checked to the PPB by the Finance Manager to confirm its been budgeted for and raise any questions as necessary. This is then authorised digitally on FMS (Finance Management System) by the Head Teacher.

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Should the Purchase Order exceed £10,000.00 this must first be presented to the Finance Committee for approval.

Deliveries are checked by Admin Staff, against delivery notes and orders. Any discrepancies/damages must be reported to the supplier as soon as possible. Admin staff will sign and date the delivery note and enter onto FMS. Budget Holders are then notified their item has been received in school, and to collect, or arrange to have Interserve move it for them, via logging a job. The delivery note is to be passed to the Finance Officer to attach to the purchase order.

Invoices are processed and checked against the purchase order and delivery note by the Finance Manager and authorised on FMS by the Head Teacher for payment.

Cheques and BACs payments will be prepared by the Finance Manager and reviewed by the Head. Cheques/BACS are checked/approved by 2 of the authorised signatories (Deputy Head Teacher (BT), Asst Head Teachers (CJ/NB) and School Business Manager (LG)). Daily BACS limit was £100k (2017) now increased to £125k (16.9.22) due to large inflationary increases in costs.

Invoices, Delivery notes and other supporting documentation must be attached to the Purchase Order and filed in Purchase Order Number sequence.

Natwest Purchase Card

The Head accepts responsibility for the purchase card.

The purchase card is intended for use only when the primary method of payment (BACs/Cheque) is not available.

The card remains locked in the safe at all times and should not be used by any other employee.

The purchase card must only be used after the authorisation to purchase has been obtained from the Head Teacher. The order is placed by the Finance Administrator and the monthly statement is reconciled by the Finance Officer/ Business Manager to ensure segregation of duties.

The purchase card has the following spending limits (inclusive of VAT and delivery charges):

- Credit Limit – Maximum £10,000 per annum
- Card Limit – Maximum £2,000 per month
- Single Transaction Limit - £1,000
- Cash withdrawals are blocked

In some cases, the limits may need to be exceeded. If this is the case, permission will be sought from Prakash Patel at SMBC Finance.

The detailed procurement card procedure can be found in the front of the Procurement Card Transactions Log folder held in the finance office.

Lloyds MultiPay Corporate Card

To eradicate the use of petty cash, class teachers and certain budget holders have been given credit cards with monthly limits. All applications are approved by the Head, before distribution. All card holders/info recorded on the card holder register, kept in Finance.

Cards remain the property of the School but must be stored securely by the person named on the card and are not transferable. All card holders understand and sign the “conditions of card use and responsibilities” document.

All paperwork and receipts to be given to the Finance Officer at the end of each month, for review and reconciliation to the monthly combined credit card statement. Monthly limits checked online by the Business Manager. Head checks all paperwork and authorises each individual statement.

If is the case that an individual card needs to have the limit increased/decreased then an official email giving permission, will be sought from the Head, and filed.

The named online administrators are Jackie Biggs (Finance Manager), Eve Flashwood (Finance Admin) and Lance Goodby (School Business Manager). Lance Goodby has had Head approval to hold a card with a monthly maximum limit of £250. This is to be used for facilities management purchases at THE HUB only

If card holders leave or no longer require a card, these are destroyed and Lloyds Bank are notified. Charge card register is updated.

The detailed corporate card procedures can be found in the front of the corporate card folder held in the finance office.

No plastic carrier bags are allowed to be purchased. If they are the card holder must reimburse the school as it is not good use of school funds or great for the environment!

Petty Cash Procedures

An imprest amount of £550.00 is kept for the purchase of small items, which is kept secure in the safe located in the finance office.

Payments in cash up to **£25.00** may be made from petty cash when a cash payment is advantageous, unavoidable or where it is not practical to go through the purchasing procedures. Authorisation should be gained before staff purchase items via this means and ensure funds are available in the relevant cost centre.

Any claim must be supported by a receipt clearly stating items purchased. All items on the receipt must be for school use, and no claim can be accepted without supporting documentation.

All claims will be processed by the Finance Administrator, and authorised by the Head Teacher.

As above, any carrier bags purchased will not be reimbursed.

Payroll - Overtime and Mileage Procedures

Overtime must be agreed in advance by the Head Teacher. Any claim for overtime must be submitted on the appropriate Local Authority form, completed in black ink, signed and dated, handed to the finance officer who will then pass to the Head Teacher for authorisation.

Should a member of staff require the use of their vehicle for school business, they must first complete the Local Authority's "Car Registration Form" and bring her/his Car Insurance Certificate as evidence of Business Use cover to the Finance Officer, who will verify this and pass to the Head Teacher for authorisation. The Staff member should ensure that authorisation from the Head Teacher is received before using their car.

Any claim for mileage must be completed in black ink on the appropriate Local Authority form, signed and dated. This will be checked by the Finance Officer who will then pass to the Head Teacher for authorisation.

Asset Register

Under the direction of the SMBC Fair Funding Scheme, and responsibility of the School Business Manager, a record of all assets with an individual value of **£500.00** or more, (or below this if its felt the item is desirable), will kept on the Equipment Register. Staff are to keep the School Business Manager informed of any equipment moved or disposed of, which can then be entered on the system.

Once a year in March, the School Business Manager and administrators, will carry out a stock check, and complete the Local Authority's "Certificate of Inventory" which must first be signed by the Head Teacher before submitting to the Local Authority, and reported to the Finance Committee.

A "Certificate of Disposal" must be completed for any items recorded on the Equipment Register, should an item exceed £1000.00 the permission of the Local Authority is required before the item can be disposed of.

Equipment supplied by either Agilisys or Interserve will be tagged with a barcode and will be recorded on their inventories, thus the School will only keep an Equipment Register of items transferred from the old site and any items directly purchased by the school. The annual stock check will then be performed by the Business Manager and Administrator.

School Fund

The Finance Officer administers the School Fund. Cheques and BACs payments are to be signed/approved by 2 authorised signatories (Head Teacher, Deputy Head Teacher, Assistant Head Teachers and School Business Manager) at least one being from the Head Teacher or Deputy Head Teacher.

The end of year final accounts are audited by Total Finance, this is to be reported back to the Finance Committee, and the "School Audit Certificate" submitted to the Local Authority.

Absence Cover

This ensures business continuity and contingency planning in the event of staff absence.

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- Purchase Orders, Delivery notes and Petty cash – in the absence of the Finance Administrator, the Finance Officer will process.
- Invoices, credit notes, Cheque/BACs Processing, VAT report and Equipment Register - in the absence of the Finance Officer, the School Business Manager and Finance Administrator will process.
- Income Receipts, Dinner money receipt – in the absence of the secretary, the assistant secretary/receptionist will process.
- Dinner Money collection and administration – in the absence of the attendance secretary the assistant secretary/receptionist will cover.
- Monitoring Reports and Bank Reconciliations – these are currently outsourced to Total Finance. In the absence of Total Finance, the School Business Manager will process.
- Use of the School safe – in the absence of the Finance Officer, the safe can be accessed by the Finance Administrator and School Business Manager.

Retention of Financial Documents etc.

All supporting financial documents should be kept for a minimum of 6 years following the end of the financial year.

Governor and Staff Training

Budget Holders will take part in school training as appropriate to develop skills that will enable them to effectively manage their allocation. The school needs to show in the evidence for SFVS that governors and staff with financial responsibility have received training in financial procedures.

Access Rights

Access rights onto FMS are restricted to ensure that no one person can process a transaction from start to finish, thus protecting the member of staff and maintaining segregation of duties.