



Finance Policy

December 2023

**FINANCE POLICY
QUEENSGATE FOUNDATION PRIMARY SCHOOL**

Policy Review

This policy was adopted from The School Bus and will be reviewed by the Governing Board on an annual basis.

The policy was last reviewed and agreed by the Governing Board on 12th December 2023

It will be reviewed again in December 2024.

Approved



Signature: Head Teacher

Date: 12th December 2023



Signature: Co-Chair of the Governing Board

Date: 12th December 2023

Policy control

Date	Amendments / additions	Reason
Dec 2022	NEW POLICY	
Nov 2023		

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Statement of intent

Queensgate Foundation Primary School, the Governing Board is committed to ensuring sound financial controls are in place and all expenditure is in line with best value principles.

All staff and governors are required to comply with this policy, which sets out the framework within which the school conducts its finances.

All parties concerned are expected to be aware of their responsibilities with regard to sound internal financial controls. The implementation of the following practices and procedures will ensure that funds are efficiently used to enhance pupils' education.

This policy aims to ensure that:

- All procurement arrangements achieve value for money.
- There are sound procedures in place for administering payroll and personnel matters.
- All income is identified, and all collections receipted, recorded and banked promptly.
- The school is adequately insured against exposure to risk.
- The use of petty cash is tightly controlled.
- The school provides training in financial administration to relevant members of staff.

1. Legal framework

This policy has due regard to relevant legislation and statutory guidance including, but not limited to, the following:

- Data Protection Act 2018
- The UK General Data Protection Regulation (UK GDPR)
- DfE (2018) 'Charging for school activities'
- DfE (2022) 'Schemes for financing schools'
- DfE (2021) 'What maintained schools must publish online'

This policy operates in conjunction with the following school policies:

- Pay Policy
- Governors' Allowances Policy
- Charging and Remissions Policy
- Data Protection Policy
- Records Management and Retention Policy
- Whistleblowing Policy

2. Roles and responsibilities

Governing Board

The Governing Board has overall responsibility for the management of the school's delegated finances, including the setting of the school budget, which will be spent according to the LA's scheme for financing schools. Specifically, it will be spent:

- For the purposes of the school (usually for the educational benefit of pupils).
- For the benefit of pupils in other schools.

The Governing Board will make sure its budget is reflective of the school's educational objectives, and that it is linked to the School Development Plan.

The Governing Board is responsible for developing a financial plan which establishes best value principles. This may be done by:

- Using the information gained from school leaders to challenge performance and set new targets.
- Using financial benchmarking to compare expenditure across schools of a similar size, structure and demographic.
- Using performance data to compare attainment across similar schools and against schools nationally.
- Consulting relevant stakeholders on policy developments.
- Ensuring resources and contracts for goods and services are secured in the most economic and efficient way by using fair and transparent quotation and tender processes.
- Working together with other schools to generate efficiencies by jointly purchasing services e.g. Catering, Health and Safety, Payroll and HR, Grounds Maintenance
- Driving up financial efficiencies by committing to appropriately and adequately resourcing CPD for the Governing Board to ensure governors are skilled in holding school leaders to account for the financial performance of the school.

The Governing Board will demonstrate compliance with the value for money requirements of their dedicated schools grant, through the annual submission of the schools financial value standard (SFVS).

The Governing Board will identify and request the financial information needed to ensure spending is in line with projections.

The Governing Board will ensure that pupil premium and the PE and sport premium are being spent on improving participation and attainment for eligible pupils.

The Governing Board should consider information presented by the Headteacher, Bursar and/or SBM with regards to financial matters, including when considering the SFVS.

The Governing Board is responsible for maintaining an up-to-date register of pecuniary interests annually. Each governor and attendee will declare any interests at the beginning of any full Governing Board meeting.

The Governing Board will consider the extent to which it wishes to delegate its financial powers to the headteacher. Any decisions about delegation will be recorded in the Governing Board minutes.

Headteacher

The headteacher is responsible for:

- Implementing the decisions of the Governing Board.
- Working with the Bursar or SBM to put together a three-year budget forecast.
- Advising the Governing Board and providing the required information that assists them with developing the school's financial plan and the annual budget.
- Ensuring that all monies controlled by the school are handled in accordance with LA regulations and sound financial practice.
- Overseeing staff dealing with finances and ensuring that procedures are carried out accurately.
- Making monthly checks of procedures through the monitoring of the budget.

The administration of financial procedures may be delegated to the, SBM or other members of staff, and the details of this delegation will be recorded in the Finance Policy.

Governing Board

The Governing Board will be responsible in the following areas of financial management:

- Agree and monitor a three-year budget plan which is clearly linked to the SDP
- Maintain and review this policy annually
- Keep in-school financial procedures under review
- Assist with the annual budget for approval by the Governing Board
- Tender for contract services
- Monitor the financial position of the school
- Authorise any virement over £5,000
- Review a Teachers' Pay Policy for approval by the Governing Board
- Endorse decisions in respect of service agreements and insurance.
- Monitor the impact of the planned spending of the pupil premium and PE and sports premium, and ensure spending is compliant with the funding guidelines

Bursar and/or SBM

The SBM will:

- Provide reports, as requested, on current school accounts to the finance committee and Governing Board.
- Ensure that orders, invoices and other financial documents are processed according to established procedures.

- Be responsible for checking the accuracy of information and providing regular reports to the headteacher and Governing Board.
- Be responsible for the financial management system and all financial and personnel papers. They will ensure that only authorised staff members have access to personnel files and that arrangements to access their own files are in place – in line with the GDPR and the Data Protection Act (DPA) 2018.
- Be responsible for maintaining a list of all assets on the Every system.
- Maintain a secure list of all bank and building society accounts and the signatories for each.
- Check monthly bank statements and investigate possible errors.
- Advise the headteacher on matters of financial administration or maladministration.

Other members of staff

Teaching staff will be responsible for ensuring that their subject budgets are managed within agreed procedures. Both teaching and support staff are encouraged to alert the headteacher or Governing Board if areas of concern arise in respect of the school's financial affairs.

3. Internal financial controls

To ensure sound financial control, school monies are to be properly monitored in accordance with the requirements of the LA and the principles below:

- The person requiring a product or service will raise an internal order on the Every system.
- The headteacher will check the budget and authorise the raised order.
- The SBM/Ordering manager will process orders.
- Goods will be signed for on delivery by a member of the admin team.
- Goods received will be checked against each order by the person requiring them.
- The Bursar will process the invoice and update the accounts.
- The four authorised signatories for the school are as follows: the headteacher, the deputy headteacher and two assistant headteachers.
- All school cheques will have two signatures. Cheques will not be pre-signed under any circumstances, and only manuscript signatures will be used.
- Provided that the overall budget allocation is not exceeded, the headteacher may authorise unavoidable expenditure (e.g. energy costs) that exceeds budget allocation; however, they will inform the Governing Board at the next available meeting when the variance is in excess of £500.
- The school will not enter into financial agreements with loan agreements or capital implications without the prior approval of the LA or appropriate body.
- Accounting records will be securely stored in accordance with the UK GDPR and the DPA 2018, and only authorised staff will have access to them.
- Monies kept in the school will be secured safely in the school safe and not exceed £300.
- Monies held on behalf of the PTFA following an afternoon/weekend event will be removed from the school safe within 24hours.

Member of staff	Cheques	Orders	Payments	Inventory
Headteacher	Signing	Signing	Authorising	Responsible for asset write-offs below £1,000
Deputy Headteacher	Signing	Signing (absence cover)	Signing	
Assistant Headteacher	Signing	Signing (absence cover)	Signing (absence cover)	
Assistant Headteacher	Signing	Signing (absence cover)	Signing (absence cover)	
Bursar	Preparing		Processing cheque payments	Administration and annual report
SBM		Preparing	Processing online payments	Recording write-off on Every system Closing orders on Every
Ordering Manager		Preparing	Processing online payments	Closing orders on Every

4. Financial planning

Early Autumn term		
Ensuring procedural compliance	Ensuring accountability	Ensuring financial compliance and efficiency
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Elect the chair and the vice chair for the Governing Board • Review and agree the structure and terms of reference for the Governing Board • Agree meeting dates for finance committee meetings • 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review and agree the SDP, including costings and resource allocations 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Monitor Every asset system is up to date • Receive a report from the Bursar and ensure challenge is recorded
Late Autumn term		
Ensuring procedural compliance	Ensuring accountability	Ensuring financial compliance and efficiency
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Receive and consider a pupil premium report and impact statement • Review the impact of allocated resources on school development priorities • Receive the headteacher's report to governors and ensure challenge is recorded 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Receive a report from the Bursar and ensure challenge is recorded • Review the Risk Register • Receive information from the Autumn term census data • Pay panel to review teaching and non-teaching staff salaries, proposed increments and appraisal process • Undertake a school financial health check to evaluate how funding is distributed • Monitor the budget for financial efficiency
Spring term		

Ensuring procedural compliance	Ensuring accountability	Ensuring financial compliance and efficiency
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Receive the headteacher's report to governors and ensure challenge is recorded • Review the impact of allocated resources on school development priorities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure the submission of the SFVS to the LA no later than 31 March 2022 • Receive and agree the draft budget • Receive a report from the SBM and ensure challenge is recorded • Receive information from the Spring term census data • Receive a report on and review service level agreements as appropriate and when due •
Summer term		
Ensuring procedural compliance	Ensuring accountability	Ensuring financial compliance and efficiency
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review number on roll for September 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Receive the headteacher's report and ensure challenge is recorded • Receive the PE and sports premium impact report • Receive the pupil premium impact report • Monitor the impact of allocated resources to school development priorities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Approve budget and submit to the LA on the prescribed date between 1 May and 30 June • Draft the financial scheme of delegation in time for Autumn term • Receive information from the Summer term census data

The annual budget includes a list of guaranteed items, including:

- The value of any contracts awarded by the school.
- Appropriate numbers of teaching staff.
- Non-teaching assistants, including office staff, controllers and other staff at an agreed level.
- Supply cover to an expected level.
- Building requirements as set out in the SDP.
- Insurances as agreed by the governors.
- Energy units based on the previous year's figures and the inflation element.
- Any other commitments.

5. Virements

When virements need to be carried out, they will be minuted appropriately and require the following authorisation:

- Virements up to £10,000 – the headteacher, reported to the Governing Board,
- Virements between 10,000 and £100,000 – the Governing Board.

6. Monitoring

Income and expenditure are regularly monitored against the agreed budget for the year. Specifically, the headteacher and the Bursar will:

- Carry out a monthly internal monitoring procedure.
- Report on finances to the Governing Board at termly meetings.

Annual consistent financial reporting returns are completed and sent to the LA.

Annual SFVS returns are ratified and signed by the Governing Board prior to submission to the LA.

The headteacher and SBM will cooperate with the LA's audit regime.

7. Income

The headteacher and Bursar will reconcile all income and expenditure transactions on a fortnightly basis to ensure that goods and services are being charged and paid for correctly.

All income shall be recorded at the point of receipt in a form approved by the headteacher.

Official receipts will be created for all official income when it is received.

Personal cheques will not be cashed from income.

8. Payroll

The payroll provider at Queensgate Foundation Primary School is Strictly Education.

The headteacher will sign off the monthly payroll reports once they are checked for accuracy by the Bursar.

9. Staffing

The headteacher has responsibility for overseeing personnel matters.

As part of the annual budget, the staffing structure and its affordability will be reviewed and the outcome considered by the Governing Board and minuted.

The headteacher will be responsible for approving the weekly and monthly timesheets and overtime payments by cross-referencing pay policies. An annual review of salaries, in accordance with the STPCD, will also be carried out in line with the Teachers' Pay Policy and the Support Staff Pay Policy. The findings will be submitted to the full Governing Board for approval.

The headteacher will, within every headteacher report to the full Governing Board, report on staff absence and sickness.

Any other staff requirements, such as any reasonable adjustments requested, with detailed costs are to be submitted to the Governing Board at the start of each academic year and when additional staff are employed.

10. Governor payments

Governors will not be paid for their services to the Governing Board (unless the Secretary of State believes this is in the best interests of the school following intervention).

The school will pay an allowance or expenses to its governors and any associate members where a cost is incurred in the performance of their duties, such as travel and childcare, in accordance with the school's Governors' Allowances Policy.

The school will not refund governors or associate members for any loss of earnings incurred through the attendance of meetings.

11. Contracts

A contract refers to a signed agreement for the provision of goods and/or services over a period of time. The procedures with regard to contracts are:

- Any contract in excess of £100,000 will be examined and referred to the full Governing Board at the next meeting.
- With any proposed contract, quotations will be obtained from at least three suppliers.
- All contracts will:
 - Specify the subject matter, price, contract period, contract specification and terms of payment.
 - Contain a clause permitting cancellation when there is a failure to meet contractual terms.
 - Require compliance with any British Standard specification code.
 - Indemnify the school against any claim which may be made in respect of personal injury to any person due to negligence by the school and against any claim for damage due to negligence of the contractor, and the contractor shall provide evidence of insurance against such claims.
- The professional competence of any contractors will be assessed in advance of the contractor being appointed. Areas that will be assessed include health and safety and safeguarding. Assessment will be conducted with due regard to the LA's policies and procedures.

12. Purchasing

All staff will comply with the procedures for purchasing items.

The headteacher authorises all orders and invoices prior to payment.

For orders in excess of £10,000, three written quotations will be obtained and submitted to the finance committee for approval to proceed. These will also be reported to the Governing Board.

Orders above £10,000 will be minuted at the Governing Board meeting to ensure that the school is seen to obtain value for money with regard to its purchases.

13. Leases

The school will not enter into lease/purchase agreements without the prior approval of the Governing Board.

14. Assets

The school will maintain an inventory of its moveable non-capital assets, in line with the requirements of the LA.

The school will keep an asset register of all items over and above £50.00. This inventory will include anything that is portable and attractive, e.g. a camera.

The register will be checked annually by the headteacher, and reported to the Governing Board.

The write-off and disposal of assets with a value below £1,000 may be authorised by the headteacher or SBM. Any items above this value will be referred to the Governing Board for approval.

15. Voluntary and private funds

The school will provide audited records to the Governing Board in respect of the school fund.

16. Insurance

The school will be insured for content and personal liability under the IWC LA policy.

17. Petty cash

For the purpose of this policy, “**monies**” refers to cash, cheque payments and small card transactions.

Petty cash will be held securely and the limit is £300.00. Any monies being held securely for the PTFA following a school event will be retained for 24hours only. The PTFA must then remove monies for banking.

Petty cash transactions will be kept to a minimum and the maximum value for one transaction is £10.00

Petty cash transactions will be counted by two members of staff and stored in the safe in the sick bay adjacent to the office.

The school secretary will provide a written duplicate receipt as an acknowledgement of monies received.

During school events, petty cash will be collected two-hourly basis and stored in the school safe.

Monies will not be kept on site for longer than one day or over a weekend if in excess of £300

Monies, apart from petty cash, will not be kept on site during school holidays under any circumstances.

Online accounting systems will be used to maintain financial security as much as possible.

Any cash received in the office will be recorded – where requested, a signed, duplicate, pre-numbered receipt will be given to the person who delivered the cash and a copy of the receipt is logged.

Post containing monies will be counted by two members of staff and processed by the secretary using online management systems.

All staff members will be required to obtain VAT receipts wherever possible. Personal shopping must not be included on the receipt. Petty cash payments will only be made for items purchased for use in school.

All petty cash purchases must be approved by the Headteacher prior to purchase.

Where obtaining a VAT receipt is not possible, such as when making purchases through coin-operated machines, staff members will still log details of the transaction such as the date and time it was made, the name of the vendor, and a description of the goods or services bought.

18. The school business debit card

The school currently utilises a Lloyds Debit card.

The debit card will be issued and used responsibly by those designated by the Headteacher.

Receipts for transactions will be reconciled by the bursar to support expenditure.

19. Banking

The school will conduct a Cash Handling and Bank Visit Risk Assessment which will be reviewed annually.

The secretary and/or SBM is responsible for banking monies. Monies will be transferred from the school to the bank in a secure bag or envelope.

Staff will not be expected to put themselves in danger when they are banking money – if they are ever in a threatening situation, they keep themselves safe.

Monies will be reconciled with receipts prior to banking.

Any banking discrepancies will be immediately reported to the headteacher or the chair of the Governing Board.

The Bursar or SBM will request a receipt for all monies paid in or withdrawn from their bank account.

Significant quantities of money will be transported to the bank securely, i.e. not on public transport.

20. Charging for school activities

The school **will not** charge for the following (as outlined in detail in our Charging and Remissions Policy):

- Admission applications
- Education provided during school hours, or outside school hours if it is part of the national curriculum
- Instrumental or vocal tuition, except if it is provided at the request of a pupil's parent
- Entry for a prescribed public examination or for resits
- Transporting pupils to or from school premises, where the LA has a statutory obligation to provide the transport
- Transporting pupils to other premises where the Governing Board or LA has arranged for pupils to be educated
- Transporting pupils to meet an examination requirement
- Transport for an educational visit
- Education provided on any visit that takes place during school hours, or outside school hours if it is part of the national curriculum, the syllabus for a prescribed examination or religious education
- Supply teachers to cover for teachers accompanying pupils on visits

The school may charge for the following:

- Materials, books, instruments or equipment where the pupil's parents desire him/her to own them
- Optional extras, e.g. board or lodging for a pupil on a residential visit
- Musical and vocational tuition, where it is provided at the request of a pupil's parent
- Early years provision that meets all the following criteria:
 - It is for pupils who are below compulsory school age

- It is not provided in pursuance of the LA's duty to secure prescribed early years provision free of charge
- It is not otherwise funded by the LA as part of the school's budget share
- Community facilities

As we hold a permit issued under section 19 of the Transport Act 1985, the school will charge for transportation in our minibuses.

Any charges made in relation to our school minibuses may be used to recover some or all of the costs of running the minibus, including loss of value; however, no profit can be made.

The school may invite voluntary contributions for activities from parents. When doing so, the school will make it clear that these contributions are voluntary, and that pupils' participation in the activity is not dependent on whether the parent contributes. However, should there be insufficient funds collected to cover a trip/activity, the school reserves its right to cancel the trip/activity.

21. Pupil premium

The Governing Board will ensure that pupil premium funding is spent on improving attainment for eligible pupils, and will publish online:

- The school's pupil premium grant allocation for the current academic year.
- A summary of the main barriers to educational achievement faced by eligible pupils at the school.
- How the pupil premium allocation will be spent to address those barriers and the reasons for that approach.
- How the effect of the pupil premium will be measured.
- The date of the next review of the school's pupil premium strategy.
- The impact this expenditure has had on the educational attainment of pupils who were allocated the pupil premium.

22. PE and sport premium

The Governing Board will ensure that the PE and sport premium is spent on improving participation and attainment for eligible pupils, and will publish online:

- The school's PE and sport premium allocation for the current academic year.
- A full breakdown of how it has been spent.
- The impact that the school has seen on pupils' PE and sport participation and attainment because of the premium.
- How improvements in PE and sports participation and attainment will be sustained.
- How many pupils within the Year 6 cohort can do each of the following:
 - Swim competently, confidently and proficiently over a distance of at least 25 metres.
 - Use a range of strokes effectively.
 - Perform safe self-rescue in different water-based situations.

23. School forums

The Governing Board and the headteacher will cooperate with the LA with the election of members to the schools forum.

The Governing Board and the headteacher will, where it is within their limits, cooperate with any direction from the schools forum, in relation to the expenditure of the school budget.

24. School premises

The Governing Board will be clear about who owns the land and buildings from which the school operates, including any leaseholds.

The Governing Board will ensure that the school meets the minimum standards for toilet and washing facilities, medical accommodation, health, safety and welfare, acoustics, lighting, water supplies and outdoor space, as outlined in relevant regulations.

25. Financial irregularities

The Governing Board and the headteacher will ensure all staff are informed of the school's policies and procedures related to fraud and theft, the controls in place to prevent fraud and theft, and the implications of breaching those controls. This information will be provided to new staff and governors upon their induction and individuals will be informed of any changes to the school's policies and procedures.

The responsibility for the prevention and detection of fraud rests primarily with governors and the SLT, but all staff will recognise that robust financial management forms a key part of the school's values and culture, and that they should actively support those values and culture by:

- Encouraging senior leaders to recognise and consider their financial management responsibilities.
- Being vigilant to the signs of financial irregularity.
- The staff induction process will cover both petty cash decision tree and procurement decision tree

All members of staff will be aware of the school's Whistleblowing Policy, during the induction process, and will be encouraged to come forward if they have any concerns regarding financial management or financial propriety.

Any member of staff suspecting the occurrence of financial irregularity or fraud will notify the headteacher, who will advise on the appropriate action to be taken or investigate the matter; however, if it is the headteacher that is suspected of malpractice or financial irregularity, then staff must contact the chair of governors instead.

The school will cooperate with LA monitoring of school finances, and will work with them to attempt to resolve any issues before formal action becomes necessary.

26. Retention of records and data protection

Financial records are archived for at least six years, plus the current year, as per the school's Data Protection Policy and Records Management and Retention Policy.

The school's Data Protection Policy also requires that all personnel and payroll files are kept securely in a locked filing cabinet.

27. Monitoring and review

The Governing Board will review this policy on an annual basis in collaboration with the headteacher, who is responsible for communicating any changes to all members of staff.