



Oxford Diocesan Bucks Schools Trust (ODBST)  
*"Empowering our unique schools to excel"*



# OXFORD DIOCESAN BUCKS SCHOOLS TRUST FINANCIAL PROCEDURES MANUAL

**2024/25**

Issued September 2024

## Introduction

### 1.1. Purpose and compliance

The purpose of this manual is to ensure that the schools within Oxford Diocesan Bucks Schools Trust (ODBST) maintain and develop systems of financial control which conform to the requirements both of propriety and of good financial management. It is essential that these systems operate properly to meet the requirements of the funding agreement with the Secretary of State.

ODBST and its schools must comply with the principles of financial control outlined in the guidance published by the Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA) in the Academy Trust Handbook 2024 and any subsequent versions or revisions. This manual expands on that and provides detailed information on accounting procedures to be followed by all ODBST schools. **All staff involved with financial systems and management should be familiar with both documents.**

Compliance with this manual is mandatory and any contravention of procedures should be brought to the attention of the relevant Headteacher and the ODBST Chief Finance Officer (CFO).

### 1.2. Relevant documents

**Academy Trust Handbook 2024 (and subsequent versions)**, The Academy Trust Handbook sets out the financial management, control and reporting requirements that apply to all academy trusts. It describes a financial and governance framework for trusts that focuses on principles rather than detailed guidance and reflects their accountability to Parliament and to the public.

Compliance with the handbook is a condition of each trust's funding agreement.

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/academy-trust-handbook/academy-trust-handbook-2024-to-print>

#### **Academies Accounts Direction**

The Academies Accounts Direction 2023 to 2024 sets out the requirements, and provides guidance, for academy trusts in preparing their annual report and financial statements for accounting periods ending on 31 August 2024. The document also provides relevant guidance for academy trusts' auditors.

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/academies-accounts-direction>

### 1.3. Code of conduct for everyone involved in the management of an academy's finances

Everyone involved in managing an ODBST school's finances is expected to behave honestly, openly and in the best interests of ODBST and its trustees, the school and its governors, staff,

students and parents, and to adhere to the rules laid out in this manual and in the other publications mentioned above. This is underpinned by the following requirements:

**Basic dos and don'ts** (edited) taken from HM Treasury's handbook "Regularity, Propriety and Value for Money" 2004

- Don't bend or break the rules
- Don't deceive or knowingly mislead
- Don't allow a conflict of interest to affect, or appear to affect, decisions
- Don't use public money for the private benefit of yourself or others
- Do comply with the law
- Do put in place and follow clear and up-to-date procedures
- Do seek approval first, and from the right person where required
- Do record the reasons for decisions
- Be honest, impartial and fair.

**Standards expected in all public services**, taken from HM Treasury's "Managing Public Money" 2016:

- (The standards are): honesty, impartiality, openness, accountability, accuracy, fairness, integrity, transparency, objectivity and reliability
- (...and work must be carried out): in the spirit as well as the letter of the law; in the public interest; to high ethical standards; (and should) achieve value for money.

## **Table of Contents** (interactive - Ctrl + left Click)

2.	ORGANISATIONAL STRUCTURE OF ODBST .....	5
3.	BUDGETS .....	9
4.	BUDGET MONITORING AND REPORTING .....	11
5.	PAYROLL PROCESSES .....	12
6.	INCOME .....	15
7.	PURCHASING AND PROCUREMENT OF GOODS AND SERVICES .....	18
8.	BANK ACCOUNT AND CASH FLOW MANAGEMENT .....	20
9.	VAT.....	23
10.	LEASING.....	23
11.	RELATED PARTY TRANSACTIONS.....	24
12.	ALCOHOL.....	25
13.	INSURANCE.....	25
14.	RETENTION OF RECORDS .....	25
15.	FIXED ASSET AND CAPITAL EXPENDITURE.....	26
16.	Statutory Provision on Websites.....	26

## **Bookmarks to Policies**

<b>Policy</b>	<b>Link</b>
Fixed Assets Policy	<a href="#">Fixed Assets</a>
Reserves	<a href="#">Reserves</a>
Loan of Equipment	<a href="#">Loan of equipment</a>
Lettings	<a href="#">Lettings</a>
Gifts & Hospitality	<a href="#">Gifts</a>
Register of Business & Financial interests	<a href="#">Register Interests</a>
Staff Expenses	<a href="#">Staff Expenses</a>
Trustee & Gov Expenses	<a href="#">Trustees Governors Exp</a>
Purchasing & Competitive Tendering	<a href="#">Purchasing</a>
Investment	<a href="#">Investments</a>
Fraud, Bribery & Corruption	<a href="#">Fraud</a>
Charging & Remissions	<a href="#">Charging</a>
Cycle to Work Policy	<a href="#">Cycle to Work</a>

## **Bookmarks to Appendices**

- A Glossary ([Glossary](#))
- B Delegation of Financial Authority Schedules ([DOA](#))
- C Month End Controls Return ([Controls](#))
- D Tender Template ([Tendering](#))

*To return to "Table of Contents" if you are in the document sections press "f5", choose "Bookmarks" and choose "AContents" from the Bookmarks list, press "Go To" button. This can "f5" key can help you navigate to any bookmark in the document, not just back to this page.*

## **2. Organisational structure of ODBST**

### **2.1. Constitution**

ODBST is a company limited by guarantee and an exempt charity. The charitable company's memorandum and articles of association are the primary governing documents of the Academy Trust.

### **2.2. Members**

Members of the Trust have a similar role to shareholders of a company. They subscribe to the memorandum of association, have the power to appoint and remove trustees in certain circumstances and appoint the external auditors. Members must not be employees of the trust, nor occupy staff establishment roles on an unpaid basis.

The Academy Trust Handbook 2024 states that "The academy trust must have at least three members, but should have five or more".

### **2.3. Board of Trustees**

The Board of Trustees of ODBST has overall responsibility for the administration of its schools' and their finances which are delegated according to the Scheme of Delegation. The main responsibilities of the Board are prescribed in the Funding Agreement between ODBST and the Secretary of State and the Academies Financial Handbook for the financial year.

The role of the Board of Trustees in respect of finance is as follows:

- To ensure regularity and propriety in use of the trust's funds, and achieve economy, efficiency, and effectiveness – the three elements of value for money. The trustees must also take ownership of the trust's financial sustainability and its ability to operate as a going concern.
- To appoint a chief executive officer (CEO), who will also act as the named accounting officer for the Trust. The CEO should be employed by the Trust.
- To appoint a chief financial officer (CFO) to whom the trust's detailed financials procedures are delegated. The CFO should be employed by the Trust.
- To appoint a clerk to the board. The clerk is someone other than a Trustee or CEO of the Trust.
- To appoint an audit and risk committee (in smaller Trusts this committee can be combined with other committees), to which the Board delegates financial scrutiny and oversight.
- To approve the annual budget for ODBST and its constituent schools.
- To approve the Annual Accounts Return.
- To receive, consider and act upon information about the financial performance of the Trust at least three times a year.

### **2.4. ODBST Finance Resources Audit Pay and Personnel Committee (FRAPP)**

The FRAPP committee is responsible to the Board of Trustees and has particular financial responsibilities as follows:

- To produce and maintain financial procedures manuals and for the ODBST, and to review them regularly
- To ensure that the control framework includes:
  - that delegated financial authorities are complied with
  - that appropriate segregation of duties is maintained
  - coordination of the planning & budgeting process
  - discipline is applied to financial management
  - plan & oversee capital projects
  - maintain a fixed asset register and safeguard the Trust's assets
  - ensuring regularity, propriety, and value for money
  - ensure a risk register is maintained and reviewed by the board
  - reducing the risk of fraud & theft
  - delivers independent checking of controls, systems, transactions & risks
- To undertake a financial assessment of schools wishing to join ODBST, for consideration by the Board
- To agree balanced budget plans for schools and for ODBST, for consideration by the Board
- To consider and approve budgets, budget changes, asset disposals and other matters as defined by the limits described in the financial scheme of delegation
- To consider management accounts and reports on a regular basis and take such action as is agreed to be necessary
- To consider annual Financial Statements and make recommendations to the Board for approval
- To commission and receive reports from internal and external auditors and to determine what actions are to be taken as a result of their reports
- To review insurance arrangements
- To review financial benchmarking data regularly
- To maintain a register of business interests
- To oversee the business continuity plan
- To review the risk registers annually
- To receive and consider reports from other committees which have financial implications, and to advise as appropriate.

## **2.5. Chief Executive Officer (CEO) / Accounting Officer (AO)**

The CEO has overall executive responsibility for the Trust's activities including financial activities, although some of the financial responsibility is delegated to the Chief Finance Officer.

The CEO has responsibility for approving and reviewing budgets, budget changes, staffing changes, asset disposals and other matters as defined by the financial scheme of delegation.

As Accounting Officer for the Trust, the CEO's responsibilities are defined within the Academies Financial Handbook. In summary, this entails the following:

- The AO is personally responsible to the Secretary of State for the resources under their control and must be able to provide assurance of high standards of probity in the management of public funds

- The AO has personal responsibility for regularity, propriety and value for money, as already defined
- The AO is responsible for the maintenance of proper financial records in accordance with existing accounting standards, and for the management of opportunities and risks
- The AO must advise the Board of Trustees in writing if, at any time, in his or her opinion, any action or policy under consideration by them is incompatible with the terms of the Handbook or FA or if the Board appears to be failing to act where required to do so. Where the Board is minded to proceed, and if after considering the reasons given by the Board, the accounting officer still considers that the proposed action is in breach of the Handbook or FA, he/she must advise the ESFA's accounting officer of the position in writing.

## **2.6. Chief Finance Officer (CFO)**

The CFO is responsible for providing financial advice to the CEO, the Finance Committee and the Board of Trustees, and also has the following duties:

- To manage the finances of ODBST and its schools
- To maintain and monitor effective systems of internal control
- To ensure that proper accounting records are maintained
- To set and monitor the budget for ODBST
- To monitor the setting of budgets for schools and to recommend their approval by the Finance Committee
- To review and authorise budgets, budget changes, staffing changes, asset disposals and other matters as defined by the financial scheme of delegation
- To ensure effective communication with auditors and responsible officers and to inform the finance committee of their reported findings
- In urgent cases, to authorise expenditure on behalf of a school if the Headteacher and their designated substitute for authorising are unavailable. In this case, the CFO will notify the Headteacher by email of the action taken
- To liaise with the various Headteachers of schools, their Local Governing Bodies and their Business Managers/Bursars/Finance Officers (*hereinafter referred to as Finance Officers FOs*) and to promote and maintain open and effective communications with them.

## **2.7. Academy Local Governing Bodies (LGBs) and their committees**

The LGB and its committees, in conjunction with the Headteacher, may take overall responsibility for financial matters within their school in accordance with the school's agreed Scheme of Delegation, and may have the following responsibilities:

- To work with the Finance Officer to construct and review the annual budget plan
- To recommend in-year budget changes and virements, assuming no worsening of forecast outturn, excluding revenue/capital swaps and changes to staffing structure
- To review all purchases in excess of the limit defined in the financial scheme of delegation for authorisation by the Executive Head/Headteacher
- To review all asset disposals and write-offs

- To liaise with the CFO to promote and maintain open and effective communications regarding finance-related matters.

## **2.8. Headteachers**

The Headteacher, in conjunction with the LGB and its committees, takes overall responsibility for financial matters within his/her school, and may have the following responsibilities as agreed in the school's Scheme of Delegation:

- To work with the Finance Officer to construct and to review the annual budget plan
- To authorise in-year budget changes and virements up to the limit defined in the financial scheme of delegation, assuming no worsening of forecast outturn, and excluding revenue/capital swaps and changes to staffing structure
- To authorise expenditure and to authorise BACS payments for individual transactions up to the limit defined in the financial scheme of delegation
- To review all asset disposals and write-offs
- To liaise with the CFO to promote and maintain open and effective communications regarding finance related matters.

## **2.9. School Finance Officers**

The responsibilities of Finance Officers in academies are as follows:

- Day to day management of financial issues
- To ensure the maintenance of, and adherence to, effective systems of internal control
- To ensure that all accounting records are properly and accurately maintained and that all financial transactions are recorded promptly
- To ensure that income is banked as soon as possible after it is received
- To ensure that payments are made promptly and in accordance with suppliers' payment terms and legal requirements
- To authorise expenditure up to the limit defined in the financial scheme of delegation
- To complete bank reconciliations and the Month End Financial Controls Return, submitting them to the ODBST Central Finance team by the 15<sup>th</sup> of the month following month end
- To request the review of asset disposals and write offs by the Headteacher and LGB
- To report to the Headteacher, the LGB and its committees and to the CFO and Central Finance team of ODBST as required
- To liaise with the CFO to promote and maintain open and effective communications regarding finance related matters.

## **2.10. Audit and Responsible Officer function**

Schools are asked to co-operate with the work of all internal auditors, external auditors or Responsible Officers (ROs) appointed by ODBST in order to comply with the Trust's obligations under the terms of the Academies Financial Handbook.

Any member of staff in a school who is concerned that financial regulations or requirements are, or may be, breached, should report their concerns to one of the following officers, as

they consider appropriate, so that the issue may be referred to the auditor if necessary. Reference should be made to the Trust's Whistleblowing and Fraud, Anti-Bribery and Corruption policies.

- School Finance Officer,
- School Headteacher,
- a member of the school's LGB,
- the CFO of ODBST,
- the CEO of ODBST, or
- a member of ODBST's Finance Committee.

### **3. Budgets**

The board of trustees, and any separate committee responsible for finance, **must** ensure that financial plans are prepared and monitored, satisfying itself that the trust remains a going concern and financially sustainable.

#### **3.1. Budget setting**

Budgets must be planned on a three-year rolling cycle, must be an integral part of the school's strategic planning process and links between the budget and the school's development plan and other objectives must be documented.

The budget and the school's strategic plan should be documented in detail for the coming year and cover the following two years.

The budget and subsequent forecasts must take account of expected income and expenditure, bearing in mind:

- known and expected changes to pupil numbers and to support this the board of trustees must review pupil number estimates termly
- known and expected changes to funding formulae and the impact of changes to factors which affect funding levels
- reasonable estimates of other income such as for catering, wraparound care and lettings
- known and expected changes to staffing and the impact of incremental increases and performance management reviews on salary costs
- the cost of staff recruitment, training and professional development
- the requirements for curriculum resources to support objectives identified in the academy's development plan
- the costs of maintaining premises and grounds
- the costs of utilities, insurances and rates
- administration costs
- the likely effects of inflation (which may differ between budget headings)
- the effect of efficiency savings, where they can be identified.

The school's Finance Officer will usually be responsible for drafting the budget, and will be advised by the Headteacher and LGB, who will provide strategic direction and guidance. Support will be provided by the ODBST Central Finance Team.

The budget will be created and presented using software as prescribed by the ODBST CFO. At present this software is IMP.

The budget may be supplemented by other documentation and notes as necessary or required.

### **3.2. Budget approval process**

The budget and any accompanying documentation must be reviewed in detail by the Headteacher, and any separate committee responsible for finance, and be presented to the full LGB. The review and any comments arising must be minuted.

The full LGB should agree the final version of the budget and documents which are to be submitted to the ODBST FRAPP for approval. Their agreement and any comments arising should be minuted.

The final version should be submitted to the ODBST CFO in accordance with the Budget timetable that will be issued each year.

The ODBST CFO/Central Finance team will review the budget and may make changes in consultation with the school.

The ODBST FRAPP Committee will approve the budget or will refer it back to the school for amendment if necessary. FRAPP approved adjustments may be made by the Central Finance team given time constraints around the budget submission to the ESFA.

Once approved by the ODBST FRAPP, the final budget will be submitted to the Board of Trustees who, if content, authorise the CFO to submit the budget to the ESFA as part of the annual Budget Forecast return. If the Board is not content, the budget will be referred back to the CFO and/or the school for amendment.

If the budget is amended, it will be necessary to start the approval process again, unless the adjustments are agreed during the board meeting

The budget must be submitted to the ESFA as part of the Trust's Budget Forecast Return by the date communicated by the DfE (currently 31<sup>st</sup> August).

### **3.3. Budget deficits**

The Trust is not permitted to set a net deficit budget without the explicit permission of the Secretary of State, and so deficit budgets from individual schools will not normally be accepted.

If, during the year, it becomes apparent that a deficit may occur, either in the current or in future financial years, the Headteacher should inform the CFO immediately, who will report it to the Board. The Board must notify ESFA within 14 days of its meeting if proposing a Trust deficit budget for the current financial year.

### **3.4. Budget surpluses**

LGBs, Headteachers and Finance Officers should bear in mind that funds are made available to them for the benefit of all pupils in the Trust in each financial and academic year.

The ODBST CFO has the responsibility to query the holding of a budget surplus where the amount held is either:

- considered to be excessive, or
- if there are no clear plans for its deployment in future years.

## **4. Budget Monitoring and Reporting**

### **4.1. Central Reporting**

The Academies Financial Handbook requires that the Trust must prepare management accounts each month. Management accounts must be shared with the Chair of Trustees each month and with other Trustees six times a year and they must be published on GovernorHub. The format of the management accounts must include:

- an income and expenditure account
- variation to budget report
- cash flows and balance sheet

In order to ensure that the requirements are met, the CFO requires monthly forecast returns from each school.

### **4.2. Month End Controls Return**

The Month End Controls Return is a checklist of month end controls that is completed to ensure the integrity of financial reporting. The return must be completed by each school's Finance Officer by 15<sup>th</sup> of the month following the reporting period. The return should be saved to the shared drive together with the following supporting documentation:

- Management accounts report (standard) from PS Financials
- IMP Budget Monitoring report (variance report/commentary and outturn)
- A copy of the bank reconciliation at the reporting period end date
- A copy of the aged creditors report
- A copy of the aged debtors report
- A copy of the month end Trial Balance report
- A copy of the report to Governors where applicable (see below)
- A copy of the bank statement for the period

- Proof of mid month payroll checks and month end salary reconciliation

The Budget Monitoring Reports available in IMP provide the template for variance and outturn reporting. The variance report/commentary should provide an explanation of any budget variances and whether any action is necessary, has taken place or is planned to address them. For instance, if staff absence has given rise to greater use of supply or other cover costs than was included in the budget, will insurance reimbursements offset the extra cost in whole or in part, and has this been shown in the monitoring report? If the whole of the extra cost is not recoverable, what savings are needed or have been identified elsewhere and how will they be monitored? Will there be an impact on the school's final outturn position? Are there any other consequences to be considered?

The Month End return should be signed by the Headteacher as confirmation that Headteacher review of budget monitoring has been completed. It should then be emailed to the Chair of Governors.

A copy of the Month End Controls Return can be found in Appendix C (hyper link [Controls](#)).

### **4.3. Cash Flows and Balance Sheet**

Cash flows and balance sheets are currently prepared by the ODBST Central Finance Team. The Trust may request additional information from the schools' Finance Officers to facilitate the preparation of these reports.

### **4.4. Local Reporting**

Management accounts/budget monitoring reports should be provided to the school's committee responsible for finance committee regularly and not less than quarterly.

Management accounts/budget monitoring should be considered by the academy's full LGB regularly and not less than quarterly.

Any additional financial reports provided to governors should be submitted to the Central Finance Team with the relevant Month End Return.

## **5. Payroll Processes**

### **5.1. Roles and levels of authority**

Changes to a school's staffing structure are:

- costed by the Finance Officer
- proposed by the Headteacher to the LGB
- reviewed by the CFO and the CEO
- agreed by the FRAPP Committee, and
- authorised by the Board of Trustees.

The Headteacher and LGB, with advice from ODBST where needed, must ensure that:

- personnel are competent, suitably qualified and trained to a level consistent with their responsibilities
- clear statements of criteria for personnel selection are provided
- formal job descriptions are provided
- the Trust's pay policy is adhered to
- statutory obligations regarding safe recruitment policies and procedures are met.

The Finance Officer is responsible for maintaining accurate and up-to-date personnel records and ensuring access to personnel and pay records is only granted to the Headteacher, members of the LGB, auditors, the CFO or the CEO, in pursuance of their duties.

## **5.2. Role of payroll agent**

ODBST's payroll agents (Buckinghamshire Council (BC) are responsible for the following:

- making returns to HMRC by the required dates
- making payments to the teachers' pension scheme and LGPS as appropriate
- ensuring the accuracy and security of payroll data files
- maintaining a record of authorising signatures for payments and payroll changes
- producing reports of payroll charges for the use of ODBST and the schools
- agreeing with ODBST the response time and costs for any additional work or reports required
- providing access to data and reports for school and Trust auditors.

## **5.3. Staff appointment, contract change and contract termination**

The appropriate forms must be completed correctly, authorised by the Headteacher, sent to the payroll agent by the agreed means, and copies retained in the relevant person's personnel file.

## **5.4. Supply, casual and overtime payments**

Supply work, casual work and overtime must be agreed in advance by the appropriate budget holder.

The budget holder must check claim forms and authorise payment.

Forms must be forwarded to the payroll agent by the agreed means, and copies retained.

## **5.5. Expenses**

Expenses must be claimed in accordance with the Trust Expenses Policy, on the appropriate form, and must be agreed in advance with the Headteacher. The budget holder/Headteacher must check and authorise expenses claims.

Staff expense forms must be forwarded to the payroll agent by the agreed means and copies must be retained.

Expenses cannot be reimbursed by cash or by using faster payments and may only be paid by BACS in exceptional circumstances, where it would be unreasonable to expect an individual to wait for payment.

## **5.6. Cycle to Work scheme**

ODBST has chosen to work with leading Cycle to Work Scheme provider, Green Commute Initiative (GCI), to administer a Cycle to Work scheme on our behalf. The Cycle to Work Scheme is a tax-exempt scheme which allows all employees to hire cycles and cycle safety equipment on a tax-free basis.

The tax exemption is dependent on the following conditions being met:

- the equipment hired must be a bicycle, bicycle related safety equipment or both;
- An employee must not, at any point during the hire period, own the cycle;
- At least 50% of the cycle's use must be for 'qualifying journeys', i.e. commuting to work purposes (you are entitled to use it for other purposes as well).

The Cycle to Work Scheme uses salary sacrifice as the mechanism for receiving the tax benefit. The employee, in entering the scheme agrees an employment contract variation to accept a lower salary in exchange for the employer providing the cycle and cycle equipment.

Full details of the scheme particulars are available from GCI's website at [www.greencommuteinitiative.uk](http://www.greencommuteinitiative.uk)

## **5.7 Payroll charges and reconciliation**

Payments for all staff on contract must be checked by the Finance Officer on a monthly basis and reconciled against records of expected costs as calculated in the school's budget plan, (IMP Payroll reconciliation tool).

The mid-month payroll check must be completed as this allows the capture and correction of possible payroll mistakes prior to the final payroll being run.

Variances must be investigated promptly to ascertain whether the payment or deduction is correct, or whether the budget plan is wrong or out-of-date and must be amended.

If the payment is wrong, the payroll agent and the employee should be informed as soon as possible, and the error corrected.

If the budget/forecast is incorrect, a note of the error should be made, and the procedures for budget changes should be followed.

Payments for supply, casual work, overtime and expenses must be checked against the retained copies of claim forms to ensure that they are correct. If a payment is wrong, the employee and the payroll agent must be informed as soon as possible, and the error corrected.

A copy of the mid-month payroll check and the monthly payroll reconciliation must be signed by the Headteacher and retained.

ODBST's Central Finance Team must check the total payroll charges against payments made from ODBST's bank account every month, to ensure that the totals debited are correct. Any discrepancy must be investigated and notified to the payroll agent immediately, and to the bank if appropriate.

## **5.8 IR35 legislation and Self-employed persons**

IR35 legislation defines the rules for operating PAYE for a worker who directly provides a service through an "intermediary" which in most cases is the workers own personal service company or limited company. IR35 applies when the worker performs a service to the school through the intermediary that would normally be expected to be performed by an employee. There are a range of criteria against which the worker's role must be assessed to determine whether they fall within IR35.

Since April 2017 the decision as to whether the worker falls within IR35 rests with the end user i.e. the school. The school should complete an IR35 checklist and determine employment status for every worker used by the school regardless of how often their services are used.

Relevant guidance provided by HMRC can be found as follows:

An **employee** is defined here: <https://www.gov.uk/employment-status/employee>

Employment status checking tool: <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/check-employment-status-for-tax>

If you are in any doubt about this issue, please contact ODBST's CFO for further guidance, as there are penalties for non-compliance.

## **6. Income**

### **6.1. Funding from the Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA)**

For each school, ESFA funding is paid directly into the Trust bank account:

- General Annual Grant (GAG) funding monthly
- Rates funding and associated cost (which net off to zero)
- Pupil Premium funding quarterly in arrears, in January, April, July and October
- UIFSM funding annually in July
- Other revenue grants such as Sports premium, as they become due
- Devolved Formula Capital (DFC) funding annually in July (see below).

Any funding received centrally will be credited to the Trust's bank account and passed on to the school in the next cash advance.

DFC is held centrally by the Trust and ringfenced for the use by each school of its own allocation.

## **6.2. Cash advances**

The school will receive a monthly bank transfer from the Trust's bank account, which is determined by the calculation set out in the Cash Advance Statement. The main elements of the calculation are:

- the amount of GAG funding, rates funding, pupil premium and any other revenue funding credited to the Trust in the previous month by the ESFA
- MINUS the expected payroll charges for the month according to the school's approved budget
- PLUS OR MINUS the difference between estimated and actual payroll charges for the previous month
- MINUS the central support services charge (see below)
- PLUS any VAT reimbursement received from HMRC
- PLUS OR MINUS any other adjustments according to the notes on the calculation spreadsheet. A copy of the calculation of the school's Cash Advance Statement will be sent to the Finance Officer each month and should be checked against the bank transfer received to ensure they agree.

## **6.3. Funding via the local authority**

Funding for early years and some SEN funding comes from the local authority and will be credited directly to each school's bank account.

## **6.4. Central support services (CSS) charge**

6.75% of each academy's GAG funding (excluding insurance funding, rates reimbursements and pupil premium but including related grants such as Teachers' Pension Employer Contribution Grant and Teachers' Pay Additional Grant) is payable to ODBST and will be used to provide services to schools as follows:

- services provided by ODBE core level service agreement
- support from ODBST school improvement team
- support from ODBST finance, HR and Ops teams
- other services as deemed appropriate by ODBST.

The CSS charge will be deducted on a monthly basis and will be calculated as 6.75% of the amount of the relevant funding received for that month.

The ODBST Board of Trustees reserves the right to vary the percentage CSS charge if the level of service to be provided changes, or if extra services are supplied on a buy-back basis.

## **6.5. Non-funding/Self-generated income**

Income may be collected by a school for:

- services such as pupil meals or adult meals
- sales such as of book bags, uniform or swimming hats
- letting part of the academy premises or grounds (see section 10)
- other chargeable activities or services.

Where appropriate, invoices for income must be issued promptly, payment terms agreed, and amounts outstanding after 30 days from invoice date must be pursued. Any amounts remaining as outstanding after three months must be reported to the ODBST CFO.

No amounts of unpaid income may be written off without referring to the ODBST CFO. The CFO is responsible for reporting total write-offs across the Trust as a whole, above a given level as determined by the ESFA.

ODBST is not currently registered for VAT, therefore no VAT is chargeable on income invoices.

All additional income should be reported on the correct accounting lines in the accounting system (guidelines circulated by the central finance team) to ensure accurate recording of non-exempt business income for statutory VAT reporting.

## **6.6. Recording and banking income**

All incoming cheques and cash must be recorded on the finance system as soon as possible.

All monies must be banked in their entirety into the school's official Lloyd's bank account. The school's Finance Officer must prepare reconciliations between the sums collected and the sums banked, and the sums recorded on the finance system. These reconciliations must be reviewed by a second person and signed monthly by the Headteacher.

Income awaiting banking must be held in a safe, locked cabinet or other secure location, and must not exceed the limit set by the Trust's insurance policy.

Money passing through the school bank account should only be related to the Trust's activities, collecting PTA funds or funds for private events is strictly prohibited.

## **6.7. Events and trips**

Records must be maintained for each fund-raising event, in sufficient detail to identify gross receipts and all costs incurred.

Similar records should be maintained for sponsored events and school trips.

Wherever possible the Bromcom MIS system or ParentPay/Parent Mail applications should be used to collect parental contributions for school trips and events.

## **7. Purchasing and procurement of goods and services**

### **7.1. Purchasing principles**

The staff of ODBST and its schools must make their buying decisions in accordance with the principles of best value, probity, accountability and fairness.

### **7.2. Purchase orders**

Purchases should be authorised in advance of the purchase being made in all but exceptional circumstances. This supports good financial management, ensures that sufficient monies are available before the school's funds are committed, and allows financial reporting to show the most up-to-date position at all times. Circumstances where purchase orders are not necessary are:

- In respect of services such as utilities, telephone bills and service contract such as for regular grounds maintenance and agency staffing where the authorisation of expenditure and ascertaining of best value is deemed to have taken place when the contract for services was signed.
- Urgent small purchases where goods are needed immediately AND raising a purchase order is not practicable AND the cost is small. This should be a rare occurrence, not a regular excuse to evade the proper procedure.
- In respect of services that are costed and approved by the budget holder in advance but may need to change at short notice, such as coach travel for school trips.

Authorisation limits are as described in the financial scheme of delegation (link [DOA](#))

At least three written quotations should be obtained for all orders over £5,000 and up to £15,000, and these should be retained for audit purposes. Telephone quotes may be accepted if they are confirmed in writing before the purchase decision is made. Purchases above £15,000 require the full tendering process, please refer to Tendering process section.

Where 3 quotes are unattainable and the value is between £5,001 to £10,000 the order can be authorised through the CFO who will act as a second signatory to the CEO or Headteacher, but appropriate reasons as to why 3 quotes cannot be obtained must be documented.

The Finance Officer will record a purchase order on the finance system, which will be emailed to the supplier, or posted if email cannot be used.

Headteachers can delegate Purchasing authority to an Assistant Head, Deputy Head or other individual in the school's Senior Leadership Team. Only one delegation is allowed unless the school has over 330 pupils and the authority cannot be delegated to the Finance Officer but only to academic staff.

### **7.3. Choosing suppliers**

The Finance Officer should advise budget holders about suppliers who have been found to provide quality, quantity, service, timely delivery and price competitiveness. Volume discounts and credit terms are taken into account. Consortia may be used where they provide value for money.

It may be possible in the future to pool purchasing experience from all the ODBST schools in order to compile and maintain a register of approved suppliers, which schools may consult, and which may also enable the Trust to negotiate bulk discounts on behalf of its schools with frequently used suppliers.

### **7.4. Paying invoices**

Invoices may be received when goods are delivered or may be sent by post or email later. All invoices must be passed to the Finance Officer as soon as they are received, together with confirmation that the goods received, or services delivered are satisfactory and complete.

Good practice is to use a dedicated Finance email address so that supplier invoices and statements are not lost, eg [finance@sma.odbst.org](mailto:finance@sma.odbst.org). This email address could also be used for receiving remittance advices against sales invoices.

If the invoice includes anything which has not been received or delivered, the budget holder should advise the Finance Officer so that the invoice may be queried with the supplier.

Invoices should be paid by BACS where possible, and only in exceptional circumstances by “faster payment” with the prior permission of the Trust’s CFO. All “faster payments” require CFO approval. Payment must not be made by cheque or in cash.

Invoices should be recorded individually on the financial management system – invoices for the same supplier should not be aggregated into a single transaction.

Documentation associated with the transaction should be electronically tagged to the transaction in the finance system, this allows complete visibility of documents and supports good audit practice.

Supplier payment terms and legal obligations concerning payments to small suppliers should be complied with. Early payment may be made if discounts can be obtained for doing so which outweigh the loss of interest receivable on the monies held in the school’s bank account, and which do not adversely affect the school’s cash flow position.

Authorisation limits for payment of invoices are as described in the financial scheme of delegation which can be found in appendix B of this document. All invoices must be recorded promptly on the accounting system in the periods to which they relate.

## **7.5. Tendering process**

All goods and services ordered with a value of over £15,000, or for a series of contracts which exceed £15,000 in total, must be subject to formal tendering processes.

The procedures for tendering are set out in the Purchasing and Competitive Tendering Policy, also see Appendix D for a template.

## **7.6. Expenses payments to non-ODBST employees (Trustees and Governors)**

Procedures for the payment of expenses to Trustees and Governors is set out in the Trustees and Governors Expenses Policy.

# **8. Bank account and cash flow management**

## **8.1. Bank account**

Each academy will be required to have its own bank account with Lloyds Bank plc, the Trust's bankers, from which all non-staffing costs will be paid. Salaries for directly employed staff and the related payments to HMRC, the teachers' pension scheme and the LGPS are paid from the central ODBST bank account.

Online banking and the download of electronic bank statements is available via Lloyds Commercial Banking Online. All passwords must remain confidential.

A bank reconciliation must be carried out at least monthly, using the accounting system and a bank reconciliation report must be printed signed by the Headteacher and retained for audit purposes.

Any additional bank accounts that existed before conversion must be included in the accounting system with all transactions being posted and monthly reconciliations carried out. Transactions and balances should be kept to a minimum and where possible transferred to the main account. This ensures effective financial control, reduces financial processing and provides transparency for local and central reporting.

Any queries regarding the school's bank account may be referred to the ODBST CFO or to the Lloyds customer relationship manager, whose contact details will be supplied by ODBST.

## **8.2. Payments**

Payments will be made by BACS where possible and only in exceptional circumstances by "faster payment". Payment to suppliers or to individuals by cash or cheque is not permitted. Authorisation limits for BACS payment runs are as described in the financial scheme of delegation.

### **8.3. Income**

Cash advances will be made to the academy's bank account, by the middle of each month, and are calculated as described in the section on income.

All incoming cheques and cash must be recorded on the finance system as soon as possible.

Payment by BACS is to be preferred where possible.

All monies must be banked in their entirety into the academy's official Lloyds bank account. The Finance Officer must prepare reconciliations between the sums collected and the sums banked, and the sums recorded on the finance system, and these must be reviewed by a second person, and signed monthly by the Headteacher.

Income awaiting banking must be held in a safe, locked cabinet or other secure location, and must not exceed the limit set by the Trust's insurance policy.

### **8.4. Business Charge Cards**

The Trust currently provides schools and central operations with the Lloyds Bank Business Charge Card facility. Applications for charge cards must be authorised by the ODBST CFO. Each cardholder is personally responsible for the safe custody of his/her card, and PIN numbers must not be disclosed.

Authorisation procedures for purchases must be observed irrespective of the method of payment. Budget holders must therefore approve payment via email or authorisation form before the spend is committed.

Receipts must be obtained for all transactions, although in an exceptional case, such as where a receipt is lost or not obtained, a note must be made of the date, the amount spent and what was purchased.

Receipts for purchases or notes of purchases for which the receipts are lost, must be given to the Finance Officer promptly.

The Finance Officer must check charge card statements monthly and must ensure that all transactions are correctly recorded in the finance system. The statements must be signed and dated by the Business Manager / Finance Officer and by the Headteacher to verify that the reconciliation process has been completed.

### **8.5. Cash**

Academies will not normally be permitted to hold petty cash balances.

If cash is required, for example for a school trip or as float for a fund-raising event then it may be withdrawn from the bank by the Finance Officer and must be signed for by the person who will be responsible for using it.

Receipts must be obtained for cash spent, although if this is not possible (for example if used to buy ice creams on a trip), a note must be made of the date, the amount spent and what was purchased.

All receipts, notes of unreceipted expenditure and unused cash must be returned to the Finance Officer as soon as possible. Unused cash must be banked, and expenditure must be recorded in the finance system in the usual way.

## **8.6. Cash flow**

The school must always be mindful of its cash flow position. Funding is often received both in advance (e.g. UIFSM) and in arrears (e.g. PPM) and expenditure is often not spread evenly throughout the year.

Overdrafts are not permitted under any circumstances.

If the Finance Officer believes there is a possibility that the academy may have insufficient money in the bank to meet its obligations, he/she must inform the ODBST CFO immediately. It may be possible to adjust cash advances to alleviate the problem. If this is not sufficient or possible, other solutions, such as delaying payments (with the agreement of suppliers) may be negotiated, but this can only be done by the ODBST CFO.

The CFO will inform the CEO and the FRAPP committee immediately if any school has a cash flow problem, and must explain how the problem has arisen, what solutions are proposed, and what the likely impact will be on the Trust as a whole.

The Trust is required to produce cash flow reports on a monthly basis, and this is currently undertaken at Trust level. The central finance team may request additional information from academy Finance Officers to facilitate the preparation of these reports.

## **8.7. Cash Investment**

Cash flow projections may indicate that the schools and Trust are holding cash balances in current accounts that are surplus to immediate operating requirements. This excess working capital can be transferred to Insignis, a banking platform with access to many high interest bank accounts. The interest earned on these investments will be used to benefit all schools. The investment of funds will be strictly in accordance with the Trust Investment Policy.

## **9. VAT**

### **9.1. VAT registration**

ODBST is not currently registered for VAT, but if total non-business income exceeds the HMRC threshold of £90,000 in a rolling 12 month period, then the Trust will be required to register.

Non-business income is defined as that which is not concerned with the Trust's main business of providing education, but the precise definition is complicated and so the ODBST CFO must monitor all non-funding income for all the Trust's schools to ensure that if the threshold is approached, advice may be sought on VAT registration.

Unless and until ODBST registers for VAT, schools may not charge VAT on their invoices for income due to them.

### **9.2. Reclaiming VAT on expenditure**

ODBST may reclaim expenditure incurred by the Trust and its schools on form VAT 126, and in order to support the cash flow of the Trust and its schools, the form should be submitted monthly other than in exceptional circumstances.

The ODBST Central Finance team will collate the VAT information from schools and from ODBST's own records and will submit a VAT 126 claim to HMRC regularly. (quarterly or more frequently).

VAT reimbursements received from HMRC into the ODBST bank account will be returned to schools via the cash advance.

## **10. Leasing**

There are two types of lease:

- Finance leases
- Operating leases

A finance lease is a form of borrowing and is not allowed under the provisions of the Academy Trust Handbook, unless it is on the DfE approved list. (includes telephony, IT equipment, catering equipment, bathroom items, LED lights, minibuses) An operating lease is similar to a rental agreement and generally allowable.

Before entering into a lease, schools must refer the agreement to the Trust CFO to confirm the status of the lease. If the CFO agrees that the lease is an operating lease or a finance lease that is on the DfE approved list, then the school will be able to authorise the agreement subject to the limits set out in the financial scheme of delegation and the usual considerations of best value regularity and propriety.

A note is required disclosing details of operating leases. Under FRS 102 [section 20.16(a)] the note must disclose the total of future minimum annual lease payments under non-cancellable operating leases, showing the total value of payments falling in the following periods: within one year, in more than one year and not later than five, and later than five years from the balance sheet date.

For finance leases, at the commencement of the lease term, a lessee shall recognise its rights of use and obligations as assets and liabilities in its statement of financial position at amounts equal to the fair value of the leased asset, or if lower the present value of the minimum lease payments, determined at the inception of the lease (FRS 102 paragraph 20.9).

Subsequently, a lessee apportions the minimum lease payments between the finance charge and the reduction of the outstanding lease liability using the effective interest method (FRS 102 paragraph 20.11).

Both notes will be made in the ODBST Annual Accounts Return and to support this schools must keep up to date records of their operating and finance leases.

## **11. Related Party Transactions**

From 1 April 2019, Trusts must report all transactions with related parties to ESFA **in advance of the transaction taking place**. The transactions must be reported using an online form which will be completed by the Trust.

Trusts must also obtain the ESFA's approval for:

- Transactions with related parties that are novel (no previous experience of), contentious (might cause criticism of Trust) and/or repercussive (cause pressure on others to take similar approach).
- A contract with a related party exceeding £40,000 or which takes the total value over £40,000 for the year.

### **11.1. Definition of a related party**

In the Academies Accounts Direction 2023/24, the description of a related party includes:

- parties with control over, or controlled by, the entity (e.g. parent & subsidiary companies)
- parties having significant influence over the entity, such as its Members
- key management personnel of the entity, including any director, whether executive or otherwise
- close family members of any of the above
- others subject to control or significant influence by any individual referred to above

### **11.2. Procedure required by Schools**

- Identify all transactions with related parties

- Inform the central finance team in advance of the transaction or agreement
- Keep a register at LGB level recording details

Detailed guidance and reporting templates will be provided by the Trust to all SBMs.

## **12. Alcohol**

The Academy Trust Handbook 2024 issued states that the purchase of alcohol is not allowed unless it is to be used in religious services.

## **13. Insurance**

All schools will be enrolled in the Risk Protection Arrangement (RPA) provided by the ESFA which aims to cover all likely insurable events:

- Buildings and contents
- Business interruption
- Employer's liability
- Third party (public) liability
- Governors' liability
- Professional indemnity
- Fraud
- Money in transit
- Personal accident
- UK travel
- Legal expenses
- Cyber fraud

Finance Officers should inform the Trust Chief Operating Officer (COO) of any claims to RPA, or incidents that might lead to a claim within five working days.

Schools must arrange and pay for their own insurance for minibuses and other vehicles.

Staff absence insurance is purchased at Trust level to take advantage of economies of scale. The monthly cost is recharged to schools through the cash advances

## **14. Retention of Records**

In accordance with Academy Trust Handbook 2024, all schools and the central office must retain financial records for at least six years after the end of the period to which the funding relates.

## 15. Fixed Asset and Capital Expenditure

The School Finance Officers must (per The Academy Trust Handbook 2024) ensure that a Fixed Asset Register (currently Safesmart Asset Management) is updated on a regular basis. See the Trust Fixed Asset Policy.

## 16. Statutory Provision on Websites

The Academy Trust Handbook 2024 (paras 1.45-1.51) requires all academy trusts to be transparent with governance details relating to both Trust governance and Local governance. Local Governing Bodies have been delegated their function and duties by Trustees through the Articles of Association via their schemes of delegation, and act as a local committee directly accountable to the Trust Board. School websites should include a link to the ODBST website for central Trust governance details – see paras 26 and 27 below, taken from the [SI Team Website Checklist](#)

Local governance information needs to be provided on each school website in a *readily accessible format*: the DfE have defined this as, “**Readily accessible** means that the information should be on a webpage without the need to download or open a separate document.” Each Local Governor and senior staff member should complete the Trust’s Declaration of Interests [Declaration of Interests](#) and the school website should display the [Register of Interests](#)

The following governance information needs to be provided on the school website using the links given:

1. Academies and free schools should publish or provide a link to the following **financial information** about the Academy Trust:
  - annual report
  - annual audited accounts (at least 2 years’ worth)
  - number of employees whose benefits exceed £100k (shown in increments of £10k)Also:
  - memorandum of association
  - articles of association
  - names of trust members and academy trustees (see below)
  - funding agreement
  - any supplemental funding agreement
  - amount paid by the trust for someone’s work who has an off-payroll arrangement, where the payment exceeds £100,000
  - gender pay gap information
  - any financial notice to improve (where applicable)
  - Details of the amount of time off taken by staff who are union officials to carry out their union duties (This can be as a stand-alone document, or included in your annual report for the relevant period.)
  - A modern slavery act statement (only required for trusts with an annual turnover of over £36 million)

**This link will serve this purpose on school websites** [ODBST Key MAT Information](#)

2. **Details of academy trust governance (members and trustees)** as a page on your website, for accessibility purposes. This must include:
- *the structure **and remit of the members, board of trustees, its committees and local governing bodies**, (the trust's **scheme of delegation** for governance functions) and the **full names of the chair** of each.*

*For each **member** who has served at any point over the past 12 months, their:*

- *full names,*
- *date of appointment,*
- *date they stepped down (where applicable),*
- *relevant business and financial interests including governance roles in other educational institutions*
- *For each trustee who has served at any point over the past 12 months,*
- *their full names,*
- *date of appointment,*
- *term of office,*
- *date they stepped down (where applicable),*
- *who appointed them (in accordance with the trust's articles),*
- *relevant business and financial interests including governance roles in other educational institutions.*
- *for each trustee their attendance records at board and committee meetings over the last academic year.*
- *Academy boards are 'encouraged' to collect and publish data about the diversity of the board and any local committees.*

**This link** [ODBST Trust Governance](#) **will serve this purpose on school websites.**

3. **Local governance arrangements**, displayed in a *readily accessible format*.

*The DfE say "Readily accessible means that the information should be on a webpage without the need to download or open a separate document."*

- The structure and responsibilities of the governing body including committees
- Information for each governor (and any associate member) at the school who has served at any point over the past 12 months:
  - *Their full name*
  - *the date of appointment*
  - *their category of governor*
  - *who appointed them (eg. Diocese, Trustees, elected by parents/staff)*
  - *their term of office*
  - *Date they stepped down (if applicable)*
  - *the names of any committees the governor serves on*
  - *for each local governor, their **attendance records** at local governing body meetings over the last academic year.*
- A register of governors' interests\* [Register of Interests](#) setting out:
  - *the relevant business and financial interests of each governor (eg directorships, partnerships and employments with businesses)*

- *details of any other educational establishments they govern (eg. trusteeships and governorships at other educational institutions and charities)*
- *relevant interests from close family relationships between the Trust's Members, Trustees or local governors*
- *relationships between governors and members of the school staff including spouses, partners and relatives*
- *relevant interests arising from close family relationships between those individuals and employees.*

*\* For each interest, the register should include: (1) The name and nature of business, (2) The nature of the interest and (3) the date the interest began. **If there is no interest to declare, the words 'nil return' should be used.***

- A link to the ODBST website for central Trust governance details: [ODBST](#)



Oxford Diocesan Bucks Schools Trust (ODBST)  
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# FINANCIAL PROCEDURES MANUAL

## FINANCE-RELATED POLICIES & Appendices

**September 2024**



Oxford Diocesan Bucks Schools Trust (ODBST)  
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## Fixed Assets Policy

<b>ODBST Level 1 Statutory Policy:</b>	<b>ALL</b> Schools require this policy with <b>no changes</b> allowed to core text. No changes are necessary to personalise this with school name and branding, as this is a Trust level policy for use, without change, by all schools. LGBs will <b>note</b> adoption in LGB meetings. Review will take place at Trust level, and schools will be notified of updates and review dates as necessary.
<b>Other related ODBST policies and procedures:</b>	ODBST Finance Manual Purchasing & Competitive Tendering Policy
<b>Committee responsible:</b>	FRAPP
<b>Approved by:</b>	FRAPP
<b>Date Approved:</b>	27th September 2023
<b>Date for Next Review:</b>	Autumn 2026

In reviewing this policy the Trust Board has had regards to the Equality Act 2010 and carried out an equality impact assessment. It is satisfied that no group with a protected characteristic will be unfairly disadvantaged.

## Fixed Assets Policy

### 1. Purpose

- 1.1 The purpose of this Fixed Asset policy is to establish a capitalisation, depreciation and disposal policy for tangible fixed assets held by ODBST. This will ensure that the Trust's Balance Sheet correctly reflects the net book value (NBV) of its tangible fixed assets.
- 1.2 The policy defines the treatment of tangible fixed or non-current assets.

### 2. Fixed Asset Register

- 2.1 The fixed asset register consists of a list of items purchased within an accounting period valued over £2,000 (with effect from 1 September 2017) that are considered to have a useful economic life (UEL) of more than one year. This threshold applies to single items only. Fixed assets are categorised as follows:
  - A. Land and Buildings
  - B. Plant and Machinery
  - C. Furniture, fixtures and assets
  - D. ICT Equipment
  - E. Vehicles
- 2.2 Any items that meet the definition of a fixed asset but are below the £2,000 capitalisation threshold, and are considered to be portable, valuable and desirable, shall be recorded as revenue expenditure on the Trust's financial account system (currently PS Financials) and on the Trust's asset management system (for insurance and audit purposes – currently Safesmart) but not capitalised in the accounts.
- 2.3 Transactions relating to the Fixed Asset Register will be recorded on the MAT's balance sheet within the financial accounting system.
- 2.4 All fixed assets and inventory items should have a barcode (asset tag) assigned which should be listed in the respective fixed asset or inventory records. Where appropriate, a security mark indicating the ownership of the property will be affixed to the asset.
- 2.5 The Fixed Asset Register should be reconciled at least annually to ensure accountability.
- 2.6 Any discrepancies between the physical count and the register will be reported to the Finance and Premises Committee at the next available meeting.
- 2.7 All disposals of assets are recorded in the Fixed Asset Register and the appropriate transactions recorded through the financial accounting system and the asset management system.
- 2.8 All accounting documentation for the purchase of assets is recorded electronically on both the financial accounting system and the asset management system.

### 3. Depreciation

- 3.1 Fixed assets are to be depreciated to reflect the recoverable amount in the financial statements, over the useful life of the asset.
- 3.2 Assets under construction are not depreciated, because depreciation is appropriate only when assets are in operational use.
- 3.3 Depreciation will be charged as a minimum on an annual basis for preparation of the year end accounts. If deemed appropriate it may also be charged monthly for the management accounts.
- 3.4 Groups of assets will use the same method of depreciation.

The Trust has determined the following depreciation rates, asset life and methods:

<b>Land (see footnote):</b>			
Freehold not depreciated	n/a	n/a	n/a
Leasehold – term of lease	0.8% pa	125 years	straight line
<b>Buildings (see footnote):</b>			
Freehold – over UEL	n/a	n/a	n/a
Leasehold – shorter of UEL or lease Improvements >£25,000	2% per annum 5% per annum	50 years 20 years	straight line straight line
<b>Plant &amp; Machinery</b>	10% per annum	10 years	straight line
<b>Furniture, Fixtures and Fittings</b>	20% per annum	5 years	straight line
<b>ICT Equipment:</b>			
Servers, projectors etc PCs, laptops etc	20% per annum 33.3% per annum	5 years 3 years	straight line straight line
<b>Vehicles</b>	20% per annum	5 years	straight line

*Footnote:*

*A number of schools occupy land and buildings owned by the Church under a “licence to occupy”. In this situation, the land and buildings are not capitalised in the accounts. Furthermore, improvements to such assets (e.g. new classrooms, extensions) would also not be capitalised. Therefore, all expenditure on improvements to church-owned land & buildings occupied by the school should be recorded as revenue expenditure only on PS Financials.*

*This said, each year the government updates its “Land and Buildings Collection Tool” (LBCT) which requires a value for church-owned land & buildings to be disclosed. The central finance*

*team is responsible for preparing this information, based on details provided at conversion, as well as any additional relevant data recorded in PS Financials and the Trust's asset management system.*

- 3.5 If the useful life of the asset is determined to be significantly different to the time scales above, this will be reported to the Finance and Premises Committee for a decision on the appropriate rate to apply to that particular asset.
- 3.6 Building Improvements/Site work: Building improvements will be capitalised if they are significant alterations or structural changes that cost over £25,000.

#### **4. Disposals**

- 4.1 Multi-academy trusts (or MATs) may dispose of any fixed assets, other than land, buildings and heritage assets, without the approval of the Secretary of State for Education. However, MATs must ensure that any disposal maintains the principles of regularity, propriety and value for money. This may involve public sale where the assets have a residual value.
- 4.2 Items that are to be disposed of by sale or destruction must be authorised for disposal by the Headteacher and reported to the Finance Committee and, where significant, should be sold following competitive tender.
- 4.3 Disposal of equipment to staff is not encouraged, as it may be more difficult to evidence the MAT obtained value for money in any sale or scrapping of equipment. In addition, there are complications with the disposal of computer equipment, as the MAT would need to ensure licenses for software have been legally transferred to a new owner.
- 4.4 The MAT is expected to re-invest the proceeds from all asset sales for which capital grant was paid in other MAT assets. If the sale proceeds are not re-invested, then the MAT must repay to the DfE a proportion of the sale proceeds.
- 4.5 All disposals of land, buildings and heritage assets must be agreed in advance with the Secretary of State for Education.



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## Reserves Policy

<b>ODBST Level 1 Statutory Policy:</b>	<b>ALL</b> Schools require this policy with <b>no changes</b> allowed to core text. No changes are necessary to personalise this with school name and branding, as this is a Trust level policy for use, without change, by all schools. LGBs will <b>note</b> adoption in LGB meetings. Review will take place at Trust level, and schools will be notified of updates and review dates as necessary.
<b>Other related ODBST policies and procedures:</b>	ODBST Finance Manual
<b>Committee responsible:</b>	FRAPP
<b>Approved by:</b>	FRAPP
<b>Date Approved:</b>	27 <sup>th</sup> September 2023
<b>Date for Next Review:</b>	Autumn 2026

In reviewing this policy the Trust Board has had regards to the Equality Act 2010 and carried out an equality impact assessment. It is satisfied that no group with a protected characteristic will be unfairly disadvantaged.

## **Purpose and Scope**

The Trust and its academies are expected to normally hold contingency reserves from their annual GAG funding or other income to cover a minimum of one month's (maximum three months) budgeting operating expenditure, subject to the constraint that the level of reserve does not exceed the level permitted by the ESFA.

If such a reserve is not already in place, there should be a plan to achieve this within a period of no more than three years. A target level of reserves through transition is set at 5% of total income.



Oxford Diocesan Bucks Schools Trust (ODBST)  
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## Loan of Equipment Policy

<b>ODBST Level 2 Statutory Policy:</b>	<b>ALL</b> Schools require this policy, which may be adapted to suit local requirements and schools may add their own branding. LGBs will <b>note</b> adoption this locally adapted policy in LGB meetings. Review will take place at Trust level, and schools will be notified of updates and review dates as necessary.
<b>Other related ODBST policies and procedures:</b>	ODBST Finance Manual Fixed Assets Policy
<b>Committee responsible:</b>	<b>FRAPP</b>
<b>Approved by:</b>	<b>FRAPP</b>
<b>Updated &amp; Approved:</b>	<b>5<sup>th</sup> October 2022</b>
<b>Date for Next Review:</b>	<b>Autumn 2025</b>

In reviewing this policy the Trust Board has had regards to the Equality Act 2010 and carried out an equality impact assessment. It is satisfied that no group with a protected characteristic will be unfairly disadvantaged.

## **Purpose and Scope**

Items of equipment belonging to the Trust (including its academies), for example laptops, cameras or musical instruments which are to be removed from academy premises must be recorded in a "Register of Equipment Loans", which must be signed by the academy's Headteacher/Finance Officer, and by the member of staff who is taking the item. No such items may be loaned to anyone who is not a member of staff of the Trust or the academy.

The equipment remains the property of the Trust and may be recovered at any time.

The person borrowing the equipment must ensure that they have adequate insurance cover in place to pay for a replacement item should it be lost, stolen or damaged while it is on loan. The equipment must not be left in an unattended vehicle.

No benefit in kind may accrue to the person borrowing the equipment, as this may give rise to a tax liability.

The ODBST "Register of Equipment Loans" form follows.

There are two forms, one used by an academy and one used by the Central Team.

**For Schools**

**ODBST  
Register of Equipment Loans**

Academy	
Employee name	
Employee contact details	
Nature of equipment	
Loan start date	
Reason for loan	
Name of person authorising the loan	
<p>I understand: (1) that no benefit-in-kind is to accrue to me personally arising from the use of this equipment; (2) that the equipment shall remain the property of the school and may be recovered at any time without prior notice; (3) that the equipment is insured by the school for accidental damage and theft only providing it remains in the school.</p>	
<p>I confirm: (1) that the equipment will be insured during the journey to my home and will not be left in any vehicle unattended; (2) that the equipment will be insured while it is in my home; (3) that I shall treat the equipment with care and ensure that it is kept safe.</p>	
Signature of person borrowing equipment:	
Signature of Headteacher or Finance Officer:	
Date:	



## **For Central Team**

### **Oxford Diocesan Bucks Schools Trust (ODBST) Employee Equipment Loan Agreement**

To borrow information technology equipment -including but not limited to computers, laptop computers, data projectors, mobile phones, cameras and other IT hardware and peripherals, the employee must read and sign this document, agreeing to the terms as stated:

- I understand that this equipment is provided to me for instructional and administrative purposes and solely for the completion of my job requirements ODBST.
- I agree to use the equipment in a legal and ethical manner, abiding by all aspects of the Trust's agreements and policies and national laws.
- I understand that downloading and sharing unlicensed audio and video content violates copyright laws and is prohibited.
- I understand that I may not install personal software, change system settings, or tamper with the hardware or existing software.
- I agree that I will not leave the laptop or equipment unattended at any time, and I will protect it from damage.
- I agree to return the equipment to the Trust when software installation and/or repairs are necessary.
- I agree to return all equipment in working condition upon termination of employment.

### **Confidentiality**

During my employment with ODBST, and beforehand where equipment is provided prior commencement of employment, I understand I will have access to and gain knowledge of confidential and proprietary information belonging to the Company.

- Under the terms of my signed contract of employment and this agreement I will, at all times, maintain the confidentiality and security of information gained by me during the course of my duties for ODBST.
- I will treat all information, whether corporate, staff or pupil information, in a discreet and confidential manner in accordance with the provisions of the Data Protection Act 2018.
- I agree to abide by ODBST's data protection policy, code of conduct for staff and any other ODBST policy or procedure that relates to the proper use of company

equipment or information. (Copies of policies and procedures are available on request).

- I understand that Company laptops must be password protected and mobile phones must be accessed by using either a PIN code or biometric data. Passwords and PIN codes must never be shared.
- I agree to promptly return all Confidential Information to the Trust upon the Company's request or the termination of my employment.

I understand that this agreement, will be kept on file by the Trust, is binding and enforceable during the entire period in which I have equipment privileges at ODBST.

<b>Equipment Type</b>	<b>Manufacturer/Name</b>	<b>Serial Number</b>

Employee name: .....

Signature:.....

Date .....



Oxford Diocesan Bucks Schools Trust (ODBST)  
 “Empowering our unique schools to excel”



## Lettings Policy

<b>ODBST Level 2 Statutory Policy:</b>	<b>ALL</b> Schools require this policy, <b>which may be adapted</b> where identified to suit local requirements and schools may add their own branding. LGBs will <b>note</b> adoption of this locally adapted policy in LGB meetings. Review will take place at Trust level, and schools will be notified of updates and review dates as necessary.
<b>Other related ODBST policies and procedures:</b>	ODBST Finance Manual
<b>Committee responsible:</b>	FRAPP
<b>Approved by:</b>	FRAPP
<b>Date Approved:</b>	24 <sup>th</sup> September 2024 (amended)
<b>Date for Next Review:</b>	Autumn 2026

In reviewing this policy the Trust Board has had regards to the Equality Act 2010 and carried out an equality impact assessment. It is satisfied that no group with a protected characteristic will be unfairly disadvantaged

## Contents

<b>1. AIMS AND SCOPE .....</b>	<b>42</b>
<b>2. AREAS AVAILABLE FOR HIRE .....</b>	<b>42</b>
<b>3. CHARGING RATES AND PRINCIPLES .....</b>	<b>43</b>
<b>4. APPLICATION PROCESS .....</b>	<b>44</b>
<b>5. TERMS AND CONDITIONS OF HIRE .....</b>	<b>44</b>
<b>6. SAFEGUARDING .....</b>	<b>46</b>
7. Health & Safety and first aid.....	6
<b>9. MONITORING ARRANGEMENTS .....</b>	<b>47</b>
<i>Appendix 1: Hire request form .....</i>	<i>48</i>

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### 1. Aims and scope

The Oxford Diocesan Bucks Schools Trust (ODBST) is committed to making the best use of the facilities occupied by its constituent academies. When not required by the academies, the premises may be let to external organisations; a school PTA is an external organisation and is subject to all expectations of hirers including those around H&S and Safeguarding and Child Protection. The needs of the pupils are paramount and will always take precedence over external lettings. The aims of this policy are to:

- Make sure the school’s premises and facilities can be used, where appropriate, to support community or commercial organisations
- Allow the hiring of the premises without using the school’s delegated budget to subsidise this
- Charge for the use of the premises to cover the costs of hire and, where appropriate, raise additional funds for the school
- Not let any hiring out of the premises interfere with the school’s primary purpose of providing education to its pupils
- Hire out facilities in a way that is safe, following government guidelines and the school’s risk assessment(s)

### 2. Areas available for hire

#### 2.1 Available areas

The school will permit the hire of the following areas:

- Sports hall
- Library
- Classrooms

- Playing fields

Add any other areas applicable to the school premises.

## 2.2 Capacity and charging rates

The maximum capacity and rates for hiring each area are as follows:

AREA	CAPACITY	COST
Sports hall	Enter the capacity for the area here, clarifying the seating/standing difference where necessary	Enter the cost and unit here (e.g. per hour/per 30 minutes/per evening)
Library	Enter the capacity for the area here, clarifying the seating/standing difference where necessary	Enter the cost and unit here (e.g. per hour/per 30 minutes/per evening)
Classrooms	Enter the capacity for the area here, clarifying the seating/standing difference where necessary	Enter the cost and unit here (e.g. per hour/per 30 minutes/per evening)
Playing fields	Enter the capacity for the area here, clarifying the seating/standing difference where necessary	Enter the cost and unit here (e.g. per hour/per 30 minutes/per evening)
Add any other areas in this and subsequent rows as necessary	Enter the capacity for the area here, clarifying the seating/standing difference where necessary	Enter the cost and unit here (e.g. per hour/per 30 minutes/per evening)

## 3. Charging rates and principles

### 3.1 Rates

The rates for hiring out different areas are listed in the table in the section above. The Trust expects the schools to charge Hirers for the use of the school premises at a commercially reasonable rate. The charge will vary depending on the facilities used and the category of the letting. Individual School Business Managers will maintain a list of the hire charges for their school. The school may decide to impose an additional cleaning fee on top of the hiring rates if they deem it necessary.

### 3.2 Cancellations

We reserve the right to cancel any agreed hiring with a minimum of 30 days' notice. A full refund will be issued if we do cancel a hire. The school shall not be liable for any indirect or consequential losses, including (without limitation) any loss of profits, loss of business or the loss of any revenue arising out of the cancellation of any hire.

The hirer of the premises can cancel any hire with a minimum of 30 days' notice. If less notice than this is given, the licensee shall not be entitled to a refund.

### **3.3 Review**

The revenue raised from hiring out will be reviewed by the [write job role/responsible person] and will be fed into the school's financial reporting, to ensure best value is being achieved.

## **4. Application process**

The process for making a lettings booking is as follows:

1. All booking requests are made through the school office and passed to the designated 'Lettings Co-Ordinator' in the school, who checks availability, confirms the charges and issues the appropriate forms.
2. Booking Forms and Terms and Conditions of Hire Forms must be fully completed by the Hirer in advance.
3. On receipt of the completed forms, the Lettings Co-ordinator checks the details. Successful bookings are then confirmed in writing to the Hirer.
4. The Lettings Diary is updated, and the forms are filed.
5. The Hirer will be invoiced in accordance with the Trust's financial procedures. Schools may wish to seek a deposit or full payment in advance of the letting.
6. If the Hirer is dissatisfied with any aspect of the letting, the Trust's Complaints Procedures will be followed.

## **5. Terms and conditions of hire**

The following terms and conditions must be adhered to in the hiring of the school premises. Any breach of these terms will result in cancellation of future hires without refund. "Hirer" means the person or entity identified in the relevant hire request form.

1. The hirer shall pay the full amount as stipulated by the school, and shall not be entitled to set off any amount owing to the school against any liability, whether past or future, of the school to the licensee.
2. The hirer shall occupy the part(s) of the premises agreed upon as a non-exclusive licensee and no relationship of landlord and tenant is created between the hirer and the school by this licence.
3. The hirer shall not sub-licence any of the premises under the licence.
4. The hirer shall not use the premises for any purpose other than that agreed upon in the licence, as set out in the hire request form.
5. Any additional uses of the premises not agreed in writing by the school will result in the immediate termination of the licence.
6. The school shall retain control, possession and management of the premises and the hirer has no right to exclude the school from the premises.

7. The hirer shall be responsible for all matters relating to health and safety and shall be responsible for those in attendance during the specified time.
8. The hirer must take out its own public liability insurance with a reputable insurer approved by the school and, where requested by the school, shall provide a copy of the relevant insurance certificate no less than 10 days before the start date of the licence.
9. The hirer shall not conduct, nor permit or suffer any other person to conduct, any illegal or immoral act on the premises, nor any act that may invalidate any insurance policy taken out by the school in relation to the premises.
10. The hirer shall indemnify and keep indemnified the school from and against:
  - a. Any damage to the premises or school equipment;
  - b. Any claim by any third party against the school; and
  - c. All losses, claims, demands, fines, expenses, costs (including legal costs) and liabilities, arising directly or indirectly out of any breach by the hirer of the licence or any act or omission of the hirer or any person allowed by the hirer to enter the premises
11. Save that nothing in the licence shall exclude or limit either party's liability for personal injury or death arising from the negligence of either party or any other liability that cannot be excluded by law, the school shall not be responsible for any losses of a direct or indirect nature, and its maximum liability to the hirer shall not exceed the total fees paid or to be paid to the school by the hirer under the licence.
12. Any cancellations by the school will be refunded.
13. Any cancellations by the hirer received with less than 30 days' notice will not be refunded.
14. The hirer will read the emergency evacuation procedures and be ready to follow them in the event of a fire or other similar emergency.
15. The hirer will leave the premises in the condition it was found in, leaving the area clean and tidy and not leaving any of their own equipment behind.
16. The hirer shall not display any advertisement, signage, banners, posters or other such notices on the premises without prior written agreement from the school.
17. If the hirer breaches any of the terms and conditions, the school reserves the right to terminate the licence and retain any fees already paid to the school, without affecting any other right or remedy available to the school under the licence or otherwise.
18. The hirer shall observe the maximum capacity rules of the part(s) of the premises being hired and not allow this to be breached.
19. The hirer will acquire all appropriate additional licences for any activities they are running, including those required for use of any third party intellectual property.
20. The hirer is responsible for carrying out any risk assessments of the premises relating to the activities it is running.

21. The hirer shall comply with all applicable laws and regulations relating to its use of the premises.
22. The school's premises hire policy, the relevant hire request form submitted by the hirer and the relevant hire confirmation letter issued by the school shall apply to and are incorporated in the licence.
23. This licence shall be governed, construed and interpreted in accordance with the laws of England and Wales.
24. The school and the hirer irrevocably agree that the courts of England and Wales shall have exclusive jurisdiction to settle any dispute or claim arising from this licence.

## **6. Safeguarding**

The school is dedicated to ensuring the safeguarding of its pupils at all times. It is a requirement of hire that hirers abide by the schools' requirements in respect of safeguarding. Any failure from the hirer in this respect will result in the hire being terminated. It is the responsibility of the hirers to ensure that safeguarding measures are in place while hiring out the space.

If there is a chance that those hiring the premises will come into contact with pupils, for example if the hire occurs during school hours, or when pupils may be present in the school (during after-school clubs or extra-curricular activities), we will ask for confirmation that the hirers have had the appropriate level of DBS check.

The hirer will be required to have appropriate safeguarding policies in place, including safeguarding and child protection, and shall provide copies of these policies on request to the school.

The hirer confirms that, should any safeguarding concerns present themselves during the hire of the school premises, they shall contact the lettings co Ordinator, headteacher or designated safeguarding leads as noted in the school areas as soon as reasonably practicable. The hirer understands that if our school receives an allegation relating to an incident where an individual or organisation is using our school premises for running an activity for children, we will follow our usual safeguarding procedures and inform our local authority designated officer (LADO).

## **7. Health and Safety**

The Hirer must comply with the Health and Safety law.

The Hirer, or a responsible person nominated by him in writing, shall be in charge of and be on the hired part of the premises during the whole time the premises are open to the public. There shall be sufficient staff or competent attendants on duty on the premises during that time. The person in charge shall not be engaged in any duties which will prevent them from exercising general supervision of the premises.

Capacity maximums should not be exceeded as agreed with the Headteacher as part of Health and Safety guidance for the school.

All doors, gangways, corridors, staircases and external passageways intended for exit shall be kept free from obstruction and shall not be used as cloakrooms.

Mats or other floor coverings shall be secured to prevent rucking.

Inflammable materials shall not be used for the decoration of the premises unless such materials have been rendered flame retardant and are maintained in that condition.

Temporary electrical installations, which are necessary for any particular function, must comply with the following conditions and only be installed by a qualified electrician:

The Institution of Engineering and Technology 18th Editions BS 7671 for the electrical equipment in buildings and The Electricity Supply Regulations 1988.

Any special requirements or installations that are to be approved, or any item that requires clarification, shall be brought to the notice of the Headteacher and Chief Operating Officer at the time of booking and at least 21 days prior to the proposed date of the required installation.

The Hirer shall ascertain the position of telephones, escape routes, fire alarm systems and firefighting equipment which shall be in the charge of some suitable person specially nominated for the purpose, who shall ensure that the appliances and equipment are always available for use.

Thorough checks should be made by the Hirer at the end of the hiring to ensure that all doors and windows are properly secured. Please note the schools operate a no smoking policy which includes all grounds.

If there is any doubt about the application of any of the above conditions, the advice of the Headteacher should be sought.

## **8. First Aid**

Hirers should not rely on school staff as qualified first aiders and are responsible for their own first aid.

## **9. Monitoring arrangements**

We will review and update this policy when the guidance on which it is based changes, or when this version of the policy otherwise stops being applicable.

Any updates to this policy will be shared with the full governing board.

## Appendix 1: Hire request form

Before filling out a request form, please familiarise yourself with our terms and conditions for the hire of our premises and our rates of hire, which you can find in sections 2 and 5 of this policy. If you have any questions, please contact [name and details of staff member responsible for premises hire].

Name of applicant/organisation and company number (where applicable)	
Applicant contact details	Address:  Phone no: Email address:
Preferred method of contact	
Purpose/activity of organisation	
Part of the premises requesting to be hired	
Date and time of first hire	
Is this a recurring request, or one off? If recurring, indicate the frequency and number of occurrences (e.g. weekly, 10 weeks)	
Number of expected participants in the activity	

Additional equipment you will require from the school (please note we may not always be able to provide this, but will inform you where this is/is not possible)	
Additional equipment you will be providing yourself	
Confirmation and details of the safeguarding and child protection arrangements you have in place	

By signing below, I agree to the terms and conditions set out in the school's premises hire policy.

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Please return this form via email to **[insert email address here]** or to the school office at **[insert address]**. We will be in touch to inform you if your application is successful, and if so, details of the full cost and documents that will need to be shared.

Appendix 2:

Licensing information:

## **Legislation for Licensing Premises**

### **Licensing Act 2003**

Licensable activities include:

- The sale or supply of alcohol;
- The supply of alcohol in club premises;
- The provision of regulated entertainment:
  - Plays
  - Showing films
  - Indoor sporting events
  - Boxing or wrestling entertainment
  - Live music
  - Recorded music
  - Performances of dance;

and

- The provision of late-night refreshment (the sale of hot food or drink between the hours of 11pm and 5am any day of the week).

If you undertake/provide any licensable activity you may need one or more of the following authorisations under the *Licensing Act 2003*:

- A **premises licence**: This is required for any premises where licensable activities take place;
- A **club premises certificate**: These certificates authorise qualifying clubs to use club premises for qualifying club activities;
- A **temporary event notice (TEN)**: This may be used on a limited basis for temporary events involving licensable activities at premises that do not have a premises licence or to premises that wish to amend their permitted hours for licensable activities on a 'one off' basis; and
- A **personal licence**: This is required where an individual wants to supply, or allow the supply of alcohol at premises that already holds a premises licence.

### **Police Reform and Social Responsibility Act 2011 (PRSRA)**

This act introduced a number of changes to the requirements of the *Licensing Act 2003*:

- A statement of the school's licensing policy must be published every 5 years;
- Individuals called '**premises users**' may carry out licensable activities on a temporary basis for a maximum of 168 hours in every 21 days;

- It is now allowed to supply and sell liqueur confectionery to a child of any age;
- **'Interested parties'** (i.e. residents, businesses, organisations who live or operate in the vicinity of licensed premises) may object to new licence applications or applications for variations. In effect it enables just about anyone to make objections; and
- A **licence authority** will no longer have to show that a condition placed on a licence is 'necessary' to promote the licensing objectives, only that it is 'appropriate'. An application can be refused or conditions imposed if it is 'appropriate' to do so.

How do I obtain a premises licence?

To obtain a premises licence, you will need to submit an application to your local licensing authority. The application must be accompanied by a plan of the premises. This plan must meet the requirements as in the Licensing Act 2003 (Premises licences and club premises certificates) Regulations 2005, SI 2005/42. Details of the requirements for the plan can be found [here](#).

If you are applying to sell alcohol, you will also need to provide details of the intended Designated Premises Supervisor (DPS) with your application. The DPS must hold a valid personal licence and they must consent to be appointed as the DPS (this signed consent must accompany the application).. There may be any number of personal licence holders at the premises, but only one DPS is required.

### **Temporary Event Notices (TENs)**

Environmental Health Practitioners (EHPs) from local councils are now able to lodge objections to licence applications as well as the police. TENs can now run for 7 days instead of 72 hours and the total number of days for specific premises has been increased from 15 to 21.

### **Early Morning Restriction Orders (EMROs)**

An EMRO may be granted if appropriate for the promotion of the licensing objectives.

### **Fees**

Each licensing authority will have the power to set fees subject to a cap. The fee income must equal the licensing authority's costs of operation.

### **Live Music Act 2012**

The *Live Music Act 2012* removes the requirement for a licence for unamplified music between 08.00 and 23.00 to audiences of any size.

It removes the requirement for a licence for amplified music between 08.00 and 23.00 to audiences of no more than 200.



## Gifts and Hospitality Policy

<b>ODBST Level 1 Statutory Policy:</b>	<b>ALL</b> Schools require this policy with <b>no changes</b> allowed to core text. No changes are necessary to personalise this with school name and branding, as this is a Trust level policy for use, without change, by all schools. LGBs will <b>note</b> adoption in LGB meetings. Review will take place at Trust level, and schools will be notified of updates and review dates as necessary.
<b>Other related ODBST policies and procedures:</b>	ODBST Finance Manual
<b>Committee responsible:</b>	FRAPP
<b>Approved by:</b>	FRAPP
<b>Date Approved:</b>	6 <sup>th</sup> July 2022
<b>Date for Next Review:</b>	Summer 2025

In reviewing this policy the Trust Board has had regards to the Equality Act 2010 and carried out an equality impact assessment. It is satisfied that no group with a protected characteristic will be unfairly disadvantaged.

## 1. Purpose

This policy aims to ensure that:

- The academy trust's funds are used only in accordance with the law, its articles of association, its funding agreement and the latest Academy Trust Handbook
- The trust and those associated with it operate in a way that commands broad public support
- The trust has due regard to propriety and regularity, and ensures value for money, in the use of public funds
- Trustees fulfil their fiduciary duties and wider responsibilities as charitable trustees and company directors
- Members, trustees and staff are aware of what constitutes acceptable gifts and hospitality, and the process that must be followed if they are presented with any of the same
- ODBST will assess and monitor the nature and the extent of its exposure to potential external and internal risks whilst recording and maintaining a register in line with good practice.

## 2. Legislation and guidance

- This policy is based on the [Academy Trust Handbook](#), which states that academy trusts should have a policy and register on the acceptance of gifts, hospitality, awards, prizes or any other benefit which might be seen to compromise the personal judgement or integrity of members, trustees, staff and/or any other representative of the trust. It states that the trust should ensure that all staff are aware of this policy.
- This policy also complies with our funding agreement and articles of association.

## 3. Definitions

- Gifts are any items, cash, awards, prizes, goods or services, offered without expectation of payment or benefit. Gifts also include goods or services offered at a discounted rate, or on terms not available to the general public.
- Hospitality is defined as food, drink, accommodation or entertainment (such as cultural or sporting events) provided free of charge, heavily discounted or on terms not generally available to the general public.

## 4. Roles and responsibilities

### • 4.1 Members, trustees and staff

- Must not give or accept gifts or hospitality to or from a third party where it might be perceived that their personal integrity has the potential to be compromised, or that the trust might be placed under any obligation as a result of acceptance
- Must not use their official position to further their private interests or the interests of others
- Must not solicit gifts or hospitality
- Token gifts of the kind provided at conferences or trainings courses, such as business pens or stationery, are permitted without further action on the part of the recipient
- Other gifts or hospitality with a value of less than £50 may be accepted provided they are reasonable in the circumstances and consent has been obtained where possible in advance. If in doubt, you should consult with your line manager. This includes a seasonal gift (Christmas box of chocolates)

- Subject to paragraph above, gifts received will be deemed to belong to ODBST and whether the employee will be permitted to keep the gift in particular circumstances, will be at the discretion of the Board of Trustees
  - Gifts of money must never be accepted
  - Invitations to lunch or dinner from an individual or an external organisation may be accepted when the primary reason is to meet with representatives of the hosting organisation or representatives of other organisations who may have business interests or activities in common with the respective Board. Otherwise, please consult the ODBST Chief Finance Officer
  - Corporate hospitality must be approved in advance by the academy Headteacher, ODBST Chief Finance Officer or Accounting Officer
  - On some occasions, it will be appropriate to give a small token of thanks to a volunteer or colleague
  - Hospitality or gifts offered to clients or contractors must be agreed in advance with your Headteacher or the ODBST Chief Finance Officer
- **4.2 Academy trustees**
    - Academy trustees will ensure that the trust's funds are used in a way that commands broad public support, pays due regard to propriety and regularity, and provides value for money.
- **4.3 The headteacher**
    - The headteacher is responsible for ensuring that staff are aware of and understand this policy, and that it is being implemented consistently.
    - The headteacher will act with the utmost integrity on all matters relating to gifts and hospitality, ensuring that they set a good example to the rest of the school and trust and to those outside the organisation.
    - They will also ensure, alongside the Chief Financial Officer, that decisions on whether individuals or the trust can accept or offer gifts or hospitality with a value of [over £50/other value set by the trust] are in line with this policy.
- **4.4 The Chief Financial Officer (CFO)**

The CFO will ensure that:

    - The trust maintains a gifts and hospitality register.
    - Figures for transactions relating to gifts made by the trust are disclosed in the trust's audited accounts, in accordance with the Academy Trust Handbook.
    - The academy trustees and headteacher are provided with information on gifts and hospitality received and given, as appropriate.
    - They will also ensure, alongside the headteacher that decisions on whether individuals or the trust can accept or offer gifts or hospitality with a value of [over £50/other value set by the trust] are in line with this policy.

## **5. Acceptable gifts and hospitality**

### **5.1 Offer of gifts and hospitality received**

- Members, trustees and staff can accept gifts and hospitality that have a value of up to £50. These do not have to be pre-approved or recorded on the gifts and hospitality register.

- Generally, gifts of nominal value, such as small tokens of appreciation, may be accepted. If in any doubt, members, trustees and staff must consult the CFO or headteacher.
  - Similarly, hospitality such as working lunches may be accepted in order to maintain good relationships with key contacts, provided the hospitality is reasonable in the circumstances. If in doubt, guidance must be sought from the CFO or headteacher.
  - Any gifts or hospitality offered with a value of over £50 must be recorded on the gifts and hospitality register within 7 working days, even if declined. Any member, trustee or member of staff who is offered such gifts or hospitality must consult the CFO or headteacher before accepting.
  - If the headteacher is the recipient, or intended recipient, of any offer of gifts or hospitality, they must inform the chair of the board of trustees and record the offer on the gifts and hospitality register.
  - Failure to declare any offer of gifts or hospitality on the register in line with this policy will be treated as a staff disciplinary matter.
- **5.2 Offer of gifts and hospitality given**
    - Alcohol must not be purchased out of the school budget.
    - Expense claims should be made to the [job title of relevant staff member] and receipts must always be enclosed.
    - The CFO or headteacher must be consulted about any proposal to provide gifts or hospitality with a value of over £50.
    - Expenditure on hospitality from public funds is only incurred in the provision of education. Hospitality is generally only provided in the workplace and usually restricted to tea/coffee, biscuits, soft drinks or sandwiches. Modest hospitality is occasionally provided outside the workplace. The Finance Officer will maintain a register of the occasions when hospitality is provided, the number of people involved and the costs incurred.
- **5.3 Allowable limits**
    - Local Governing Body**
      - Chair of Governors to approve up to £200.
      - Full LGB to approve £200 to £1,000.
      - Local Governing body refer to the Finance Committee and Chair of Board at ODBST if more than £1,000;
    - ODBST**
      - Chair of Trustees and Accounting Officer up to £1,000.
      - Full Trust Board if more than £1,000.
      - Before Board meetings, a copy of the Register will be circulated for comments on items over £1,000 only.
    - Private Use**
      - The academy does not obtain goods or services for the private use of governors and members of staff.
      - Governors and members of staff may not:
        - hold any interest in any equipment or property held or used for the academy

- acquire any interest in the disposal of academy equipment or property at the end of any contract between the academy and any third party.

## 6. Unacceptable gifts and hospitality

The following must never be offered or accepted:

- Monetary gifts
- Gifts or hospitality offered to family members, partners or close friends of members, trustees or staff
- Gifts or hospitality from a potential supplier or tenderer in the immediate period before tenders are invited or during the tendering process
- Lavish or extravagant gifts or hospitality, even if they relate to activities the recipient undertakes in their own time [you may also wish to define what you class as a lavish or extravagant gift]
- This list is not intended to be exhaustive.

## 7. Declining gifts and hospitality

- Any members, trustee or staff member who is offered any of the unacceptable gifts or hospitality outlined in section 6 above should politely decline the offer.
- If they feel it would not be appropriate for them to decline, they should refer the matter to the headteacher or CFO.
- The headteacher or CFO may decline the offer, or donate the gift or hospitality to a worthy cause, and must also record the offer on the gifts and hospitality register.
- Disciplinary action will be taken against anyone who fails to decline gifts or hospitality the trust has deemed unacceptable.
- Failure to declare any gifts or hospitality offered on the gifts and hospitality register, in line with this policy, will be dealt with as a staff disciplinary matter.

## 8. Monitoring arrangements

- The gifts and hospitality register is monitored regularly by the CFO.
- This policy will be reviewed every 2 years by the board of trustees and approved by the board of trustees.
- Links with other policies
- This gifts and hospitality policy is linked to the:
  - Staff code of conduct
  - Staff disciplinary procedures
  - Accounting policy

### Appendix 1: gifts and hospitality register

DATE	NAME	DESCRIPTION OF GIFT/HOSPITALITY AND APPROXIMATE VALUE	PARTY OFFERING GIFT/HOSPITALITY	ACCEPTED/REJECTED	APPROVED BY



Oxford Diocesan Bucks Schools Trust (ODBST)  
 "Empowering our unique schools to excel"



## Register of Business and Financial Interests Policy

<b>ODBST Level 1 Statutory Policy:</b>	<b>ALL</b> Schools require this policy with <b>no changes</b> allowed to core text. No changes are necessary to personalise this with school name and branding, as this is a Trust level policy for use, without change, by all schools. LGBs will <b>note</b> adoption in LGB meetings. Review will take place at Trust level, and schools will be notified of updates and review dates as necessary.
<b>Other related ODBST policies and procedures:</b>	ODBST Finance Manual
<b>Committee responsible:</b>	FRAPP
<b>Approved by:</b>	FRAPP
<b>Date Approved:</b>	24 <sup>th</sup> September 2024
<b>Date for Next Review:</b>	24 <sup>th</sup> September 2028

In reviewing this policy the Trust Board has had regards to the Equality Act 2010 and carried out an equality impact assessment. It is satisfied that no group with a protected characteristic will be unfairly disadvantaged.

## Purpose and Scope

The Governing Body and members of staff who can influence buying decisions recognise their responsibility to avoid any conflict between their business and personal interests and those of the academies.

The Clerk to the LGB must therefore maintain a register of the business interests of each governor, member of staff with significant financial responsibilities, their relatives and other individuals who may exert influence. The register includes:

- interests with suppliers from which the academy may wish to buy goods or services;
- interests in the appointment, salary, promotion or conditions of service of members of staff.

The information in the register is taken into account whenever buying or staffing decisions are made. Any governor or member of staff who has an interest in a business tendering for a contract does not form part of the committee awarding the contract. Any governor or member of staff who has an interest in the appointment, salary, promotion or conditions of service of a member of staff does not form part of the committee recommending or deciding these.

Governors and members of staff will be required to inform the clerk of any changes in their interests as these arise so that they can be entered in the register. The register will also be updated annually. Nil returns are obtained as appropriate. Any governor or member of staff who is unwilling to declare their interests or complete a nil return is not permitted to influence a buying or staffing decision.

The minutes of the Local Governing Body or any other committee which can influence a buying decision will record a standard agenda point seeking updates to governors' business interests.

The only exception to the requirement to disclose a business interest is that if the interest is so distant or small that no ordinary right-thinking person would expect it to influence a person who might have dealings with the firm concerned. In such cases, it need not be disclosed. An example is a modest shareholding in a large public company even if the academy has or may have dealings with the company.

The register is freely available for inspection by governors, staff and parents via the academy web site

The ODBST form follows.

## Appendix 1: Declaration of Interests Form 2024-25- *please insert your name here*

Our Trust is committed to acting with integrity and impartiality. To this end, we must keep a register of the relevant business and financial interests of **Members, Trustees, local governors and senior employees**.

We're also required to publish these interests with respect to Members, Trustees, local governors and the Accounting Officer.

These interests are anything that might sway your decision making or affect your ability to act in an impartial way. For example, if you:

- Are a Trustee or governor at another school or charity
- Work for a company that the school might engage the services of (e.g. a catering or payroll provider, etc.)
- Have a personal relationship with any Members, Trustees, local governors or employees of the Trust (e.g. spouse, partner, relative, etc.)
- Is connected to anyone who supplies goods and/or services to the school

If you're not sure an interest counts, err on the side of caution and declare it.

The following notes may help:

### CONFLICTS OF INTEREST, ODBST Articles of Association Clauses 97-98 Members/Directors /Trustees/Senior Central Staff

97. Any Director who has or can have any direct or indirect duty or personal interest (including but not limited to any Personal Financial Interest) which conflicts or may conflict with his duties as a Director shall disclose that fact to the Directors as soon as he becomes aware of it. A Director must absent himself from any discussions of the Directors in which it is possible that a conflict will arise between his duty to act solely in the interests of the Company and any duty or personal interest (including but not limited to any Personal Financial Interest).

98. For the purpose of Article 97, a Director has a Personal Financial Interest in the employment or remuneration of, or the provision of any other benefit to, that Director as permitted by and as defined by Articles 6.5 - 6.9 (*to paraphrase: the CEO, and occasionally, by strict definition, a Director also providing a service to the MAT*).

### Charity Commission Guidance on Connected Persons

If someone is connected to a trustee, they are known as a 'connected person'. For example:

- a spouse or partner
- siblings
- a brother- or sister-in-law
- parents
- business partner

If a connected person is to be paid or employed by the charity, the Trustee(s) they are connected to must not be involved in any part of the process.

ODBST needs the Charity Commission's permission to pay or employ someone who is connected to a Trustee.

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/payments-to-charity-trustees-what-the-rules-are>

We ask that you update us whenever your circumstances change so we can ensure our register of interests is accurate.

Please fill in and return the form below.

Category	Details of the interest declared  If you have nothing to declare, please indicate <b>nil return</b> in the box below	Date interest began	Date interest ceased in the last 12 months (if applicable)
<p>Current employment and any previous employment in which you continue to have a financial interest.</p> <p>Please also include companies in which you hold more than 1% of the share capital.</p>			
<p>Any governance roles held in other educational establishments <b>e.g. governor at another school, MAT or FE College</b></p>			
<p>Non- educational appointments (voluntary or otherwise), <b>e.g. trusteeships, directorships, local authority memberships, magistracy, tribunals etc.</b></p>			
<p>Membership of any professional bodies, special interest groups or mutual support organisations. <b>e.g. trade union membership</b></p>			
<p>Any contractual relationship with ODBST or any company or other organisation connected with the Trust. <b>e.g. with the</b></p>			

<b>local authority or ESFA</b>			
<p>Please indicate any <b>personal relationships</b> (including spouse/ partner/ close relatives) with any Trustee, Local Governor, Member or employee of the Trust.</p> <p>Please also indicate any relevant business or financial interests arising from goods and/or services offered by <b>connected persons</b> (see definition above) to the school/ trust.</p>			

To the best of my knowledge, the above information is complete and correct. I have set out below my interests in accordance with Clauses 6.39(b) and 97-98 the Articles of Association on Conflicts of Interest, compliance with the Academy Trust Handbook and guidance on Connected Persons as defined by the Charities Act. I undertake to update as necessary the information provided, and to review the accuracy of the information on an annual basis. I give my consent for it to be used for the purposes described in the conflicts of interest policy and for no other purpose.

Signed:

Date:

Position:

## Appendix 2: suggested website template for local governance

### Welcome to X school Local Governing Body

#### **ODBST Trust Board**

We are members of the Oxford Diocesan Bucks Schools Trust and the governance of the Trust belongs to the main ODBST Board of Trustees. Our Scheme of Delegation can be accessed here [ODBST scheme of delegation](#)

This also includes our Constitution and Terms of Reference. Paper copies can be obtained through the school office or by using the contact us option on this website. You can also find details of the Trust Board and details of our Trust Governance by clicking the link to the ODBST website [ODBST Governance](#)

The Clerk to the Local Governing Body is XXXX XXXX and can be contacted by email: *(provide email)*

#### **Our Local Governing Body Governors (LGB) 2024-25 are as follows:**

##### Register of Interests

Name (full name and title)	Role	Date of Appointment	Term of office	Date stepped down	Appointed by	Nature of relevant business or financial interest, including governance roles in other educational establishments and connected persons	Date interest began	Date interest ceased (if applicable)
Mrs A Test	Skills Governor	01/09/2023	4 years	N/A	Trustees	Nil return		
Mr B Test	Foundation Governor and Chair of Governors	30/04/2022	4 years	N/A	ODBE	Daughter is a class teacher at X Primary school within the ODBST. Son is Headteacher at X Primary School, Oxford	01/04/2021	01/07/2024
<b>Governors who left during the last 12 months</b>								
Mr C Smith	Foundation Governor	22/03/2023	4 years	31/08/2024	ODBE	Governor at St Andrew's Primary School, Buckingham.	22/3/2023	31/08/2024

A copy of the LGB meeting minutes can be made available by request from the clerk via (email)

**LGB Meeting Attendance 2023-24**

**LGB Meetings**

<b>Title</b>	<b>First Name</b>	<b>Surname</b>	<b>Term 1</b>	<b>Term 2</b>	<b>Term 3</b>	<b>Term 4</b>	<b>Term 5</b>	<b>Term 6</b>
Mrs	Test	Example						

**Key: = Present, A = Apologies Received. P = Part Attendance. Ab = Absent. N/A = Not appointed**



## Staff Expenses Policy

<b>ODBST Level 1 Statutory Policy:</b>	<b>ALL</b> Schools require this policy with <b>no changes</b> allowed to core text. No changes are necessary to personalise this with school name and branding, as this is a Trust level policy for use, without change, by all schools. LGBs will <b>note</b> adoption in LGB meetings. Review will take place at Trust level, and schools will be notified of updates and review dates as necessary.
<b>Other related ODBST policies and procedures:</b>	ODBST Finance Manual
<b>Committee responsible:</b>	FRAPP
<b>Approved by:</b>	FRAPP
<b>Date Approved:</b>	24 <sup>th</sup> September 2024
<b>Amended at FRAPP:</b>	n/a
<b>Date for Next Review:</b>	Autumn Term 2027

In reviewing this policy the Trust Board has had regards to the Equality act 2010 and carried out an equality impact assement. It is satisfied that no group with a protected charecteristic will be unfairly disadvantaged.

## Policy overview

The purpose of this policy is to set out what expenses can be claimed by employees and the procedure for making an expenses claim. The policy takes into account HMRC rules on such expenses. The policy also covers the steps staff must take to ensure they are adequately insured when using their own transport. This policy applies to all staff working for Bucks Schools Trust (the Trust) and any individual school within the Trust.

### 1. General

- 1.1 Claims for reimbursement of travelling expenses, subsistence by persons travelling on Trust business and other expenses, should be made on the Trust Expense Claim Form. Employees are required to use the most cost-effective form of transport and reimbursement of expenditure is restricted to the allowance or the amount spent, whichever is less. The Trust will normally reimburse employees only for expenses that they actually and necessarily incur in the course of any business travel.
- 1.2 It is the responsibility of Line Managers to authorise and ensure that expense claims for staff are accurate. All claims must be countersigned by the line manager before being submitted to the appropriate finance office. Valid claims will be reimbursed based on actual cost incurred and not allowance limits.
- 1.3 Any fines or penalty notices incurred by an employee whilst travelling on Trust business are entirely the responsibility of the employee concerned. Fines will not be reimbursed by the Trust under any circumstances.

### 2. Insurance

- 2.1 Any employee who uses their own vehicle for any journey on Trust business **must ensure that their insurance covers them for business use**. Employees using their own vehicle for Trust business are responsible for ensuring they hold a current driving licence, insurance certificate and M.O.T. certificate (if applicable). Any cost of business use cover is to be borne by the employee and is covered by the mileage allowance.

### 3. Car Travel

- 3.1 The Trust will reimburse the costs actually incurred by employees of journeys undertaken for business purposes by road but excluding ordinary commuting.
- 3.2 Expenditure on items such as parking, road and bridge tolls will also be reimbursed when supported by receipts.

### 4. Mileage claims

- 4.1 Mileage allowances can only be paid for business journeys. Claims for travel between an employee's home and the employee's normal place of work cannot be reimbursed.

- 4.2 Where an employee travels from home to a location other than their usual place of work for business purposes, mileage can be claimed for the return journey and subsequent journeys associated with travel to other business locations. The employee's normal home to place of work mileage should be deducted from such claims.
- 4.3 Mileage allowances are paid in accordance with the HM Revenue & Customs guidelines, which are reviewed annually. Current rates can be found in table 1 below.
- 4.4 Maximum claims must be made on the Trust Expense Claim Form.

## **5. Rail Travel**

- 5.1 All rail travel must be made in standard class.
- 5.2 Purchase of Rail Tickets: Rail travel should be booked as far in advance as possible to take advantage of any low-cost options that may be available. Where possible rail travel should be booked and paid for in advance by the appropriate finance office or by the school's nominated person, to ensure compliance with booking policies. Employees should forward their booking request (to include reason for travel), to the finance office or nominated person as early as possible.
- 5.3 In exceptional circumstances, for example a late notice booking, an employee may book and pay for their own rail journey, if the travel has been duly authorised in advance. In such cases the cost of travel will be reimbursed through the expense claims process.

## **6. Taxis**

- 6.1 Costs of taxis will be reimbursed only if one or more of the following apply and if supported by a receipt: -
- where the saving of time is important
  - when heavy luggage has to be transported to or from the place of departure on arrival
  - where there is no other suitable method of public transport
  - if a journey is made after dark or the use of public transport would involve a long wait in circumstances in which the person travelling would feel at risk; or where unfamiliar with location and associated Public Transport links.

## **7. Travel around London**

- 7.1 Journeys in London should normally be taken by Underground/public transport rather than by taxi, except where conditions in item 5 apply.

## **8. Subsistence**

- 8.1 The reasonable and necessary cost of accommodation, meals/snacks and beverages incurred by an employee whilst undertaking business away from the employee's ordinary place of work, will be reimbursed. Claims must be supported by relevant receipts and are subject to the limits shown in table 2 below.

- 8.2 The costs of other hotel 'extras' such as videos, newspapers, beverages not complementing an evening meal and private telephone calls, will not be reimbursed. No alcoholic drinks will be reimbursed.

## 9. Hotel accommodation

- 9.1 Staff should not normally stay overnight at the Trust's expense before a meeting when it is reasonable to travel on the day of the meeting. An exception to this may be made if in order to arrive in time for an event, the employee would be required to start their journey unreasonably early or if it can be demonstrated to be financially advantageous.
- 9.2 If an employee is required to stay away overnight in the course of their duties, hotel bookings should be made in advance and full advantage should be taken of advanced purchase discounts where available. The employee should ensure that a purchase order is completed and authorised.
- 9.3 Hotels should be selected based on lowest price and value for money and membership of loyalty schemes must not be taken into account. Limits for hotel bedroom rates can be found in table 2.
- 9.4 If a suitable hotel cannot be found within the price limits set by the Trust, authorisation should be requested in advance from the Chief Finance Officer.
- 9.5 Hotel invoices should be settled by the employee and claimed as an expense, if they have not been pre-paid by the Trust.

## 10. Sundry Business Expenses

- 10.1 Reimbursement of the cost of equipment, materials and services necessarily purchased by employees for the performance of their duties or the business needs of the Trust, can be made **in exceptional circumstances**. Relevant receipts must support the claims and any equipment or materials remain the property of the Trust.

## 11. Implications for Taxation and National Insurance

- 11.1 By following the HM Revenue & Customs rulings regarding employee liability for Tax and National Insurance contributions - reimbursement of actual travel and subsistence costs should not attract any liability.

## 12. Submission of Claim Form and Payment

- 12.1 The Expense Claim form, duly completed and signed by the line manager, should be submitted to the HR Manager/ School Business Manager or Bursar and will be paid through the payroll process. Only one claim form should be submitted by the 10th each month. Claims submitted after this date may not be paid until the following month due to payroll deadlines. Please note that staff claims submitted more than six months after the expenses were incurred will only be paid with the express approval of the Chief Finance

Officer.

- 12.2 Payment will be made through payroll process so as to capture reimbursement of expenses for HMRC audit purposes. No payments via cash or faster payments are allowed. In exceptional circumstance the Trust CFO can authorise a BACs cash advance.

### 13. Further Information

Please contact the ODBST finance team for further information on this policy, [finance.ODBST@oxford.anglican.org](mailto:finance.ODBST@oxford.anglican.org).

**Table 1 - MILEAGE ALLOWANCE RATES**

Car (petrol/ diesel/ electric) - £0.45 per mile	Motorbike - £0.24 per mile
Car share additional - £0.05 per mile	

**Table 2 - SUBSISTENCE AND MAXIMUM HOTEL RATES (inc. VAT)**

Meals	Breakfast £10.00
	Lunch £15.00
	Dinner £20.00
Hotel accommodation	Up to £150.00 per night



## Trustees and Governors Expenses policy

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<b>Other related ODBST policies and procedures:</b>	ODBST Finance Manual
<b>Committee responsible:</b>	FRAPP
<b>Approved by:</b>	FRAPP
<b>Date Approved:</b>	27 <sup>th</sup> September 2023
<b>Date for Next Review:</b>	Autumn 2026

In reviewing this policy the Trust Board has had regards to the Equality Act 2010 and carried out an equality impact assessment. It is satisfied that no group with a protected characteristic will be unfairly disadvantaged.

## **Introduction**

ODBST acknowledges the role of Trustees and Governors in setting the strategic direction and monitoring the performance of the Trust. Although the role is voluntary the Trust wishes to provide a facility for Trustees and Governors to be reimbursed for expenditure which they may incur in the course of their duties. This policy applies equally to all Trustees and Governors within ODBST and details which expenses are payable for attendance at 'Approved Duties'. However, it is always open to any individual to choose whether or not to claim, irrespective of this policy.

## **Claiming Expenses**

The expenses which may be claimed are summarised below:-

- Travel expenses
- Subsistence expenses
- Miscellaneous expenses

All claims submitted for payment must be supported by a valid receipt.

## **Approved Duties**

The following is a list of activities that ODBST has deemed an "Approved Duty" for the purpose of claiming expenses under this policy:

- Properly convened meetings of the Trust and Local Governing Board
- Other duties designated by the Trust or Local Governing Board, e.g. acting as a member of a panel convened for recruitment, disciplinary, pay or other approved reason
- Approved academy visits
- Attendance at a meeting or conference approved by the Local Governing Board

## **Allowable Expenses**

Trustees and Governors may only claim expenses in respect of actual expenditure incurred whilst attending the above meetings, undertaking training/development and otherwise acting on behalf of ODBST. These expenses are not subject to tax as long as only actual expenditure is reimbursed and a valid receipt has been attached to the claim form.

Governors cannot claim 'attendance allowances' i.e. payment for actually attending Governing Board meetings; Governors may not be reimbursed for loss of earnings.

## **Travel Expenses**

Consideration should be given to the mode of transport to ensure that the most cost effective means of travel is used. The costs of travel by car should be checked against other forms of public transport including rail travel prior to the journey being made.

All payments are on the basis that the journey was actually undertaken and expenditure necessarily incurred. Trustees and Governors are encouraged to coordinate travel arrangements where possible to minimise the costs to the Trust. If Trustees and Governors share transport, only the driver is eligible to claim for the journey. The following may be claimed:

- the approved mileage rates currently in force as set out on HMRC website
- the actual cost of standard rate public transport including bus and train fares (cheap rate fares should be used where they are available)
- the actual cost of car parking, toll road charges
- taxi fares (in exceptional circumstances i.e. no other transport options available and attendance essential).

Mileage claimable must be calculated on the basis of the shortest, most practical route for the journey. Where it is reasonable and practical to use public transport then Trustees and Governors will be expected to do so.

Car (petrol/ diesel/ electric) - £0.45 per mile	Motorbike - £0.24 per mile
Car share - additional - £0.05 per mile	

Under no circumstances will ODBST reimburse car parking fines, speeding tickets, damage to a vehicle whilst on official duties or the costs associated with any offences under the Road Traffic Acts.

Trustees and governors who use their own vehicle for any journey on Trust business must ensure that their insurance covers them for this use. Any cost of business use cover is covered by the mileage allowance.

### **Cost of Meals and Accommodation**

The cost of meals purchased by Trustees and Governors required to be at a location away from their home may be claimed. The cost of meals and accommodation will be paid when on a course or otherwise away overnight. These costs must be approved in advance and subject to the approved limits

Meals	Breakfast £10.00
	Lunch £15.00
	Dinner £20.00
Hotel accommodation	Up to £150.00 per night

The costs of hotel ‘extras’ such as videos, newspapers, beverages not complementing an evening meal and private telephone calls, will not be reimbursed. No alcoholic drinks will be reimbursed.

### **Miscellaneous Allowances**

Trustees and Governors may claim reasonable expenses for the following costs incurred in carrying out their approved duties:

- Photocopying or printing
- Postage

The Trust will pay up to £10 per annum of this category of expense. Often the Trust can print documents far cheaper than can be achieved on a home printer and therefore, if printed documents are required, these should be requested from the Trust in the first instance.

### **Payment of Expenses**

Expense claims will only be paid if submitted on the Trust approved Expenses form. Unless substantial sums are involved, claims should be submitted termly in arrears and claim forms must be submitted to the Chair of the ODBST for Trustees expenses or the Chair of the Local Governing Board in the case of Governors for review and approval. The Vice Chair in each case will authorise payments in respect of any claims made by the Chair. Payment will be made by the central or academy finance team by BACS transfer.

The Chair of the ODBST or Local Governing Board, Headteacher, Chief Financial Officer or Academy Business Managers have the right to ask for additional evidence to support any expense claims made under this Policy. The Academy Business Manager will maintain a record of claims made including date, name, amount and reason for budget monitoring purposes. Trustees and Governors' expenses are subject to audit.

All claims must be supported by a valid receipt. All receipts which contain VAT must be retained by the Academy in accordance with current VAT legislation. Claims outstanding for more than six months will not be accepted.

### **Publication of Expenses**

ODBST is obliged to publish details of all allowances and expenses paid to Trustees and Governors on its public website and in its annual accounts.



# PURCHASING & COMPETITIVE TENDERING POLICY

<b>ODBST Level 1 Statutory Policy:</b>	<b>ALL</b> Schools require this policy with <b>no changes</b> allowed to core text. No changes are necessary to personalise this with school name and branding, as this is a Trust level policy for use, without change, by all schools. LGBs will <b>note</b> adoption in LGB meetings. Review will take place at Trust level, and schools will be notified of updates and review dates as necessary.
<b>Other related ODBST policies and procedures:</b>	ODBST Finance Manual
<b>Committee responsible:</b>	FRAPP
<b>Approved by:</b>	FRAPP
<b>Version number</b>	2.0
<b>Date Approved:</b>	27 <sup>th</sup> September 2023
<b>Date for Next Review:</b>	Autumn 2026

In reviewing this policy the Trust Board has had regards to the Equality Act 2010 and carried out an equality impact assessment. It is satisfied that no group with a protected characteristic will be unfairly disadvantaged.

## Policy Statement

This Policy is subject to the published Equality Information, in line with the Equality Duty 2011 and is underpinned by the beliefs and values of our Academy Trust. It should be read in conjunction with the ODBST Scheme of Delegation.

## Background

The majority of purchases made by academies will be paid for with public funds. As public bodies, academy trusts must ensure regularity, propriety and value for money in their management of public funds.

Budget holders must be informed of the budget available to them as soon as possible after the start of the academic year. It is the responsibility of the budget holder to manage the budget and to ensure that the funds available are not overspent.

Academy Finance Officers are encouraged to discuss with the ODBST Chief Finance Officer occasions where detailed application of the policy is locally challenging.

Purchase level	Procedure
Less than £5000	A price must always be obtained prior to any order being placed. This price should be attached to the purchase order and filed. Authorisers should ensure probity and best effort to secure value for money and that expenditure is within budget.
Between £5,000 and less than £15,000	At least three written quotations should be obtained prior to any order being placed. These should be attached to the purchase order and filed alongside the rationale for selecting the chosen supplier. For spend between £5,001 and less than £10,000 where 3 written quotes cannot be obtained then additional approval from CFO is required. Authorisers should ensure probity and best effort to secure value for money and that expenditure is within budget or agreed funding.
£15,000 and above	Subject to a formal tendering process. Please see below and contact the ODBST Finance Director for support.
Above the UK Government Find a Tender threshold (£214,904 for Jan 2024 onwards)	Subject to a formal UK Government Find a Tender tendering process. Please see below and contact the ODBST Finance Director for support.  If ODBST schools wish to enter into multiple contracts to fulfil the same requirement, then the value of those contracts will be aggregated together to decide whether it crosses the threshold. The rules are very specific about this: when offering public sector tenders' contractors must not enter into separate contracts below the thresholds in order to avoid having to apply the regulations.

Please note that a series of purchases from a single supplier in a single academic year contributes towards that purchase level. Therefore, if an academy places multiple orders with a single supplier and the total purchase level exceeds £5,000 then evidence will need to be provided to demonstrate the rationale for selecting the chosen supplier

### **Tendering for purchases of £15,000 and above**

Open, restricted and negotiated tenders are all acceptable. Please contact the ODBST Finance Director to discuss and agree the best approach for your project.

Full consideration should be given to the objective of the project, the overall requirements of the academy, the technical skills that may be required, any after sales service and the form of any contract.

Bidders could be asked to suggest how they would address a problem as opposed to being restricted to one solution.

Like should always be compared with like.

All invitations to tender (ITT) must include the background of the project, the project scope and objectives, technical requirements, project implementation, terms and conditions, the form of response, the tender assessment criteria and a reference number. They should also state the date and time by which the tender should be received.

All interested tenderers must be provided with the same information and the same opportunity to visit the site if a site visit is considered necessary.

For guidance to school, it's important to include the following in a tender process:

1. Be clear on your budget and affordability criteria, look to benchmark against a similar sized school.
2. Be clear on the exact works that you want the supplier to do. Additional costs can come out once service has started and might be difficult to prevent.
3. For additional work not covered in the main contract have a schedule of costs for possible adhoc work.
4. Think what success looks like, i.e., at the end of the contract what would stop you from renewing (as long as the renewal cost is reasonable).
5. It's not all about the cost, there's no point going for the lowest bid if the supplier doesn't have a service benefit otherwise performance issues will arise, and you'll spend a lot of time and effort resolving issues.
6. Include a template for costs that you want the applicants to fill in, this means that you get the data back in a consistent manner so that you can compare. Its ok if they send you other detail or their format as well but insist on your format.

Please see Appendix D – Tendering Template ([Tendering](#))

### **Contracts above the UK Government Find A Tender threshold (£214,904 from 1<sup>st</sup> January 2024 onwards)**

It is crucial that you consult the ODBST Chief Finance Officer prior to embarking on any procurement of this nature. Details of the new UK Government procurement process that

replaced the EU process are available at the following website: <https://www.find-tender.service.gov.uk/Search>

### **Important Notes**

All interests, business and otherwise should be declared prior to tender evaluation. If there is a potential conflict of interest, then that person must withdraw from the tender process and be replaced by a suitable substitute from the Trust. Gifts or hospitality must not be accepted from potential suppliers during the tendering process.

Tenders should be assessed using the tender assessment criteria published in the ITT and full records of the assessment should be kept. A report should be prepared for the ODBST Chief Finance Officer highlighting the issues and recommending a decision. The ODBST Chief Finance Officer is responsible for the acceptance of a tender.

The Department for Education's approval must be obtained where required prior to the acceptance of a tender.

The accepted tender should be the one that is economically most advantageous to the academy and to ODBST.

All tenderers should be informed of the decision.



## Investment Policy

<b>ODBST Level 1 Statutory Policy:</b>	<b>ALL</b> Schools require this policy with <b>no changes</b> allowed to core text. No changes are necessary to personalise this with school name and branding, as this is a Trust level policy for use, without change, by all schools. LGBs will <b>note</b> adoption in LGB meetings. Review will take place at Trust level, and schools will be notified of updates and review dates as necessary.
<b>Other related ODBST policies and procedures:</b>	ODBST Finance Manual
<b>Committee responsible:</b>	FRAPP
<b>Approved by:</b>	FRAPP
<b>Date Approved:</b>	27 <sup>th</sup> September 2023
<b>Review date:</b>	Autumn 2026

In reviewing this policy the Trust Board has had regards to the Equality Act 2010 and carried out an equality impact assessment. It is satisfied that no group with a protected characteristic will be unfairly disadvantaged.

## **Purpose and scope**

To set out the processes by which the Trust can invest funds surplus to day-to-day operational requirements and to ensure that investment risk is properly and prudently managed.

In doing so, Trustees must:

- Act within their Charity's power to invest
- Set investment objectives
- Set the parameters that deposit counterparties need to meet
- Consider the level of liquid cash required to be held either overnight or within current accounts
- Approve the type of products that the Trust can invest in and seek external guidance if required
- Define processes to manage and make investment decisions
- Monitor and review investments on a regular basis

## **Responsibility**

The Trustees delegate the day-to-day responsibility of managing and implementing the investment policy to the CEO & CFO to ensure investments are managed in accordance with this policy and monitor regularly how the Trust's investments are performing.

## **Objectives**

To identify a level of funds that can be placed on deposit to generate additional interest income for the Trust in order to support its on-going charitable objectives.

Any investment decisions must be supported by a cashflow forecast that reduces the risk of the Trust not having the liquidity required to carry out its day-to-day activities.

## **Counterparty risk**

Following the Banking Crisis in 2007/2008, The Bank of England have (through the FSA and latterly, the FCA and PRA) implemented changes to stress testing and capital requirements of UK FCA registered banks to ensure the stability of the UK Banking system.

As such, the Trust can only make cash deposits with institutions with a UK banking licence and regulated by the FCA and PRA.

## **Counterparty Restrictions**

For Institutions with a "good" or better credit rating or implied credit rating (also known as Investment grade), the Trust can deposit a maximum of £3,000,000 (plus interest accrued) in any one institution. These ratings include:

Baa3 / P-3 or better (Moody's) or

BBB- / A-3 or better (S&P) or

BBB- / F3 or better (Fitch) or

An implied rating of BBB- or better

The Credit rating or Implied Credit Rating will be checked at the time of placing a deposit with a new bank.

It is worth noting that Implied Credit Ratings are usually the 'long term' position, however, the Trust will only by depositing 'short term' in deposits with a maturity date or notice period of 12-months or less.

It is recognised that the Trust's current account balance(s) may exceed the deposit limits stated above. For the purpose of this investment policy, current account balances are excluded from the counterparty limits detailed above.

### Ratings comparison supplied by Insignis Cash Solutions

Rating	Moody's		S&P		Fitch	
	Long Term	Short Term	Long Term	Short Term	Long Term	Short Term
Investment grade: Highest (Triple A)	Aaa	P-1 (Prime-1)	AAA	A-1+	AAA	F1+
Investment grade: Very high	Aa1 Aa2 Aa3		AA+ AA AA-		AA+ AA AA-	
Investment grade: High	A1 A2 A3		A+ A A-		A+ A A-	
Investment grade: Good	Baa1 Baa2 Baa3	P-2 (Prime-2) P-3 (Prime-3)	BBB+ BBB BBB-	A-2 A-3	BBB+ BBB BBB-	F2 F3/F2 F3
Speculative grade: Speculative	Ba1 Ba2 Ba3	Not Prime	BB+ BB BB-	B	BB+ BB BB-	B
Speculative grade: Highly speculative	B1 B2 B3		B+ B B-		B+ B B-	
Speculative grade: Very high risk	Caa1 Caa2 Caa3		CCC+ CCC CCC-		CCC CCC	
Speculative grade: Very near to default	Ca		CC C C		CC C C	
In default	C		SD/D	D	RD/D	RD/D

## **Assessing liquidity needs**

The Trust should ensure that a sufficient balance must be held across accounts with instant access so that the Trust's financial commitments can be met without the risk of the current account going overdrawn.

It should also allow enough flexibility to deal with reasonable, one-off events should they occur.

The Trust's cash flow forecasts will dictate how much is available for investment and for how long.

The cashflow forecasts should be reviewed monthly as part of the management accounts cycle and on maturity of fixed term deposits.

## **Investment Products**

The Trust can invest surplus funds in a mixture of interest-bearing accounts and money market facilities (where the capital is not placed at risk) including:

Overnight (instant access)

Notice accounts (typically from 30-days to 100+ days)

Fixed term deposits (typically from 1-month to 12-months)

Investment maturity dates should not exceed 12-months in term.

## **Investment Decisions**

The CFO is responsible for producing reliable cash flow forecasts as a basis for decision making.

The CEO & CFO are responsible for making investment decisions that comply with this Policy.

The opening or closing of bank accounts should be authorised in line with the current ODBST Financial Manual.

## **Monitoring & Reporting**

The CFO will report investments held and the performance of investments against objectives to the FRAPP Committee for review each time it meets or when requested to do so. The reporting should include:

- Funds invested
- Maturity dates
- Interest rates
- Current market rates
- Blended returns achieved against expected performance and policy benchmarks
- Latest cash flows showing 12-month liquidity requirements
- Recommendations for the next 3 months.

## **Review**

Trustees should review the Investment policy to ensure it is still fit for purpose annually.

## **Authorisation of cash transfers**

2 individuals within the finance team will have the capacity to set up a cash transfer.

Authorisation of the transfer will then require a secondary approval from either the CEO, CFO or HR Director.



# FRAUD, BRIBERY AND CORRUPTION POLICY

<b>ODBST Level 1 Statutory Policy:</b>	<b>ALL</b> Schools require this policy with <b>no changes</b> allowed to core text. No changes are necessary to personalise this with school name and branding, as this is a Trust level policy for use, without change, by all schools. LGBs will <b>note</b> adoption in LGB meetings. Review will take place at Trust level, and schools will be notified of updates and review dates as necessary.
<b>Other related ODBST policies and procedures:</b>	ODBST Finance Manual
<b>Committee responsible:</b>	FRAPP
<b>Approved by:</b>	FRAPP
<b>Date Approved:</b>	27 <sup>th</sup> September 2023
<b>Date for Next Review:</b>	Autumn 2026

In reviewing this policy the Trust Board has had regards to the Equality Act 2010 and carried out an equality impact assessment. It is satisfied that no group with a protected characteristic will be unfairly disadvantaged.

## 1. Introduction

- 1.1. Fraud, bribery, corruption, or other dishonesty, would adversely affect the Trust's reputation and put at risk its ability to achieve its objectives by diverting resources from the provision of education for the students.
- 1.2. The purpose of this policy is to confirm the academies commitment to preventing and detecting fraud, bribery and corruption.
- 1.3. The Fraud Act 2006 came into force on 15th January 2007. The Act created a single offence of fraud and defined this in three classes:
  - False representation.
  - Failure to disclose information where there is a legal duty to do so.
  - Abuse of position.
- 1.4. The Act also created four new offences of:
  - Possession of articles for use in fraud.
  - Making or supplying articles for use in fraud.
  - Obtaining services dishonestly.
  - Participating in fraudulent business.

Fraud is different to theft, which is defined in the 1968 Theft Act as:

*'A person shall be guilty of theft if he dishonestly appropriates property belonging to another with the intention of permanently depriving the other of it'.*

A bribe is:

*"A financial or other advantage that is offered or requested with the intention of inducing or rewarding the improper performance of a relevant function or activity, or with the knowledge or belief that the acceptance of such an advantage would constitute the improper performance of such a function or activity" [CIPFA].*

There are various Bribery offences, including offering or accepting a bribe (Sections 1 and 2 of the Bribery Act 2010), bribing or attempting to bribe a foreign official (Section 6) and being a commercial organisation failing to prevent bribery (Section 7). While the Trust is not a 'commercial organisation' for its normal activities, it is still considered appropriate for it to have regard to Guidance relating to the Bribery Act.

Corruption is:

*"The offering, giving, soliciting or accepting of any inducement or reward which would influence the actions taken by the body, its members or officers."*

The term "fraud" is used throughout this policy. For the purposes of this document the term also includes theft, bribery and corruption.

This Policy applies to Trustees, Governors and all employees (full time, part time, temporary and casual) of the Trust and its academies.

## 1.5. Policy statement

The Trust expects all Trustees, Governors, employees and those acting as its agents to conduct themselves in accordance with the seven principles of public life defined by the Nolan Committee 1995. The seven principles are:

- Honesty - Holders of public office have a duty to declare any private interests relating to their public duties and to take steps to resolve any conflicts arising in a way that protects the public interest
- Integrity - Holders of public office should not place themselves under any financial or other obligation to outside individuals or organisations that might influence them in the performance of their official duties
- Selflessness - Holders of public office should take decisions solely in terms of the public interest. They should not do so in order to gain financial or other material benefits for themselves, their family, or their friends
- Objectivity - In carrying out public business, including making public appointments, awarding contracts, or recommending individuals for rewards and benefits, holders of public office should make choices on merit
- Openness - Holders of public office should be as open as possible about all the decisions and actions that they take. They should give reasons for their decisions and restrict information only when the wider public interest clearly demands
- Accountability- Holders of public office are accountable for their decisions and actions to the public and must submit themselves to whatever scrutiny is appropriate to their office
- Leadership - Holders of public office should promote and support these principles by leadership and example.

## 2. Responsibility

The Trust aims to have in place efficient and effective systems of control that as far as possible prevent potential fraudsters from exploiting weaknesses.

The LGBs are responsible for ensuring there are strong and effective arrangements in place for managing the risk of fraud and ensuring the academy's interests are safeguarded, including its reputation.

Risk is managed through the existence and application of appropriate policies and procedures. The wide range of procedures in place to minimise the risk of fraud constitute a major part of the system of Internal Control, which is designed to ensure the academies conduct its business properly and effectively and completes its transactions fully, accurately and properly.

The responsibility for anti-fraud arrangements is widely dispersed. Trustees have to give clear support to the arrangements. The LGBs and Head Teacher / Head of Campus must provide strong leadership by advocating the academy's arrangements and supporting strong action when these are ignored.

The importance of a positive culture towards anti-fraud, bribery and corruption cannot be overstated. The effectiveness of the Trust's policy can be undermined by a culture that does not apply the public standards and supporting procedures routinely on a day to day basis. Maintaining appropriate arrangements, continually advocating them and taking robust action where they are not applied all help to build the right underpinning culture.

### 3. Key Procedures and Controls

The following key procedures and controls operate within the Trust:

- The Trust has an effective Anti-Fraud, Bribery and Corruption Policy and Strategy, and maintains a culture that will not tolerate fraud, bribery or corruption;
- Trustee, Governors and employees comply with respective Codes of Conduct;
- Risk Management procedures are in place;
- A Register of Interests is maintained to enable Trustees, Governors and employees to record any financial or non-financial interests that may bring about conflict with the school's interests;
- A Register of Gifts and Hospitality is maintained to enable Trustees, Governors and employees to record gifts and hospitality either received, or offered and declined, from contractors and suppliers;
- Confidential Reporting (Whistle blowing) procedures are in place and operate effectively;
- Suitable and enforced financial and contract procedure rules are in place;
- There are robust recruitment and selection procedures
- There are clear and active disciplinary arrangements;
- Sanctions are pursued against those who commit fraud, bribery and corruption.

The Trust maintains a continuous overview of its arrangements for managing the risk of fraud. A regular review of the Policy is carried out and the documents are revised as appropriate to reflect any key changes and to incorporate current best practice.

The Trust expects that the individuals and organisations with which it deals (e.g. partners, suppliers, contractors, and service providers) will act with integrity and without thought or actions involving fraud, bribery and corruption. Where relevant, the Trust will include appropriate clauses in its contracts about the consequences of fraud, bribery and corruption. Evidence of such acts is most likely to lead to a termination of the particular contract and will normally lead to prosecution.

In assessing the effectiveness of its arrangements, the Trust will monitor the extent to which:

- key personnel are trained in detecting and investigating fraud,
- identified incidents are investigated,
- perpetrators are robustly dealt with,
- the school responds to identified weaknesses in its systems and controls,
- there is any trend in incidents experienced,
- perpetrators are prosecuted,
- recovery of losses is sought.

#### **4. Reporting on Fraud**

The accounting officer will need to include any identified fraud in their statement on regularity, propriety and compliance.

The accounting officer should ensure that any references in the final signed statement to instances of material irregularity, impropriety or funding noncompliance are consistent with any findings from the work of the reporting accountant.

The accounting officer should be able to support their statement. Although specific documentation is not required, the accounting officer should retain a file that details work undertaken throughout the year to:

- provide support for the accounting officer sign off at year end
- assist with the reporting accountant's questions

The retention of a working papers file would also assist the academy trust if there were a change of accounting officer during the reporting period, or before finalisation of the accounts.

Where the accounting officer leaves during the year or up to the date of signing the declaration, including in the run-up to trust closure, the trustees must appoint a new accounting officer (interim/short-term if appropriate). The new accounting officer must be satisfied they can support their signing of the statement. This will be achieved through evidence of discussions between the new accounting officer and trustees, the internal auditor/scrutineer, the senior leadership team and, where possible, the previous accounting officer, along with the availability of all relevant minutes and reports during the period covered by the statement.

#### **5. Audit**

The Audit and Resources Committee and internal audit procedures are a key element of the Trust's control system. Internal audit carries out a risk based series of audits designed to assess the school's identification and management of fraud risks. The external Audit Team provides an independent appraisal of the integrity of all internal control systems.

#### **6. Raising Concerns**

It is the responsibility of the Trustees, LGB, CEO, Head Teacher and employees to prevent and help detect fraud, bribery and corruption. In high risk areas specific controls aimed at preventing and detecting frauds will be in place.

Governors, CEO and CFO have a duty to inform the Board of Trustees and the Audit and Resources Committee of any potential fraud, bribes, corruption or other suspected irregularities.

The CFO will ensure that a log is maintained of all reported incidents at the school which will be reported to the Trustees. Any incidents above £5000 will be reported to the EFA

A decision will then be made as to who is best placed to investigate any concerns raised. The investigating officer also has the responsibility to report all findings to the Audit and Resources Committee.

It is often the alertness of employees and the Public that enables frauds to be detected. In accordance with the Whistleblowing Policy, any member of staff with any concerns about the Trust or its academies' activities should normally raise concerns through their immediate

manager or senior management. However, it is recognised that this may not be possible in certain circumstances. In these cases, contact should be made with the Chair of the Trust or the Audit and Resources Committee; the CEO or the CFO as appropriate. Concerns may also be raised with the Trust's External Auditor.

All concerns, reported by whatever method, will be treated in confidence and will be reviewed and investigated by the person deemed to be appropriate and best placed to do so. This may mean that, depending on the level, type and details of the concern raised, that concerns are investigated by the Trust, internal audit or in the case of very serious concerns, the External Auditor or the Police.



## Charging and Remissions Policy

<b>ODBST Level 1 Statutory Policy:</b>	<b>ALL</b> Schools require this policy with <b>no changes</b> allowed to core text. No changes are necessary to personalise this with school name and branding, as this is a Trust level policy for use, without change, by all schools. LGBs will <b>note</b> adoption in LGB meetings. Review will take place at Trust level, and schools will be notified of updates and review dates as necessary.
<b>Other related ODBST policies and procedures:</b>	ODBST Finance Manual
<b>Committee responsible:</b>	FRAPP
<b>Approved by:</b>	FRAPP
<b>Date Approved:</b>	6 <sup>th</sup> July 2022
<b>Date for Next Review:</b>	Summer 2025

In reviewing this policy the Trust Board has had regards to the Equality Act 2010 and carried out an equality impact assessment. It is satisfied that no group with a protected characteristic will be unfairly disadvantaged.

## **Introduction**

Oxford Diocesan Bucks Schools Trust (ODBST) schools recognise the valuable contribution that a wide range of additional activities, including clubs and visits, can make towards a pupil's education. Each school's Local Governing Board aims to promote and provide such activities as part of a broad and balanced curriculum for the pupils of the school and as additional optional activities.

The relevant statutory provisions are contained in Chapter III of Pt VI of the Education Act 1996. This requires the Local Governing Board to determine and keep under review a Charging and Remissions Policy. Parents have a right to ask for this information and a summary must be included in the school prospectus / on the school website.

## **Roles and Responsibilities**

### **1. The Local Governing Board**

The Local Governing Board has overall responsibility for approving the charging and remissions policy, but can delegate this to a committee, an individual governor or the Headteacher. The Local Governing Board also has overall responsibility for monitoring the implementation of this policy.

### **2. The Headteacher**

The Headteacher is responsible for ensuring staff are familiar with the charging and remissions policy, and that it is being applied consistently.

#### **1. Staff**

Our staff are responsible for: Implementing the charging and remissions policy consistently Notifying the Headteacher of any specific circumstances which they are unsure about or where they are not certain if the policy applies

#### **2. Parents**

Parents are expected to notify staff or the Headteacher of any concerns or queries regarding the charging and remissions policy.

## **Charging Policy**

There are two types of financial contributions for which parents can be asked in relation to educational activities:

1. Voluntary contributions
2. Permitted charges

They have different limitations as set out below.

## **Voluntary Contributions**

Nothing in the legislation prevents a school from asking for voluntary contributions for the benefit of the school or any school activities. However, if the activity cannot be funded without voluntary contributions, the Local Governing Board or Headteacher should make this clear to parents at the outset. The Local Governing Board or Headteacher must also make it clear to parents that there is no obligation to make any contribution.

It is important to note that no child should be excluded from an activity simply because her or his parents are unwilling or unable to pay. If insufficient voluntary contributions are raised to fund a visit, then it must be cancelled. Schools must make sure that they make this clear to parents. If a parent is unwilling or unable to pay, their child must still be given an equal chance to go on the visit. Schools

should make it clear to parents at the outset what their policy for allocating places on school visits will be.

When making requests for voluntary contributions to the school funds, parents must not be made to feel pressurised into paying as it is voluntary and not compulsory. Schools should avoid sending colour coded letters to parents as a reminder to make payments into the school or maintenance funds.

There is no limit to the level of voluntary contribution, nor is there any restriction on the way in which such contributions may be used. Thus, voluntary contributions may be used to subsidise pupils of lesser means and to pay the travel and accommodation costs of accompanying teachers.

## **Permitted Charges**

Permitted charges are a direct request to cover certain costs involved with a school activity or visit. No charge can be made in respect of education provided during school hours (which excludes the midday break). Furthermore, no charge can be made for any education provided outside of school hours if this forms part of the syllabus for a public exam, or as part of the National Curriculum or religious education (non-chargeable education). A charge may be made however for board and lodgings on any residential educational visit (subject to the provisions of the school's remissions policy – see below).

### **1. Materials & Textbooks**

Where a pupil or parent wishes to retain items produced as a result of art, craft and design, cookery or design and technology, a charge may be levied for the cost of the materials used. Textbooks are provided free of charge, but in some subjects, additional revision guides are available, for which a charge is sometimes made.

### **2. Music Tuition**

Although the law states that all education provided during school hours must be free, music lessons are an exception to this rule.

The Education and Inspections Act 2006 introduced a regulation-making power which allowed the Department for Education to specify circumstances where charging can be made for music tuition. The new Regulations, which came into force in September 2007, provide pupils with greater access to vocal and instrumental tuition.

Charges may now be made for teaching either an individual pupil or groups of any appropriate size (provided that the size of the group is based on sound pedagogical principles) to play a musical instrument or to sing. Charges may only be made if the teaching is not an essential part of either the National Curriculum or a public examination syllabus being followed by the pupils.

### **3. Residential Activities / Activities Outside School Hours**

If the activity is held outside school hours and is education other than non-chargeable education, then it is regarded as an "optional extra". A charge may be made for the full cost of the activity but must not exceed the actual cost of providing the activity. The charge may include the costs of travel, board and lodgings, additional staff costs, entrance fees, insurance, materials and equipment. However, the charge made to individual parents cannot include any cost added to subsidise parents of children who are unwilling or unable to pay the charge.

## **When is an activity held in school hours?**

If the number of school sessions taken up by the visit is equal to or greater than 50% of the number of half days spent on the visit, it is deemed to have taken place during school hours (even if some activities take place late in the evening). Whatever the starting and finishing

times of the school day, Regulations require that the school day is divided into 2 sessions. A “half day” means any period of 12 hours ending with noon or midnight on any day.

**Example 1: Visit during school hours**

Pupils are away from noon on Wednesday to 9pm on Sunday. This counts as 9 half days including 5 school sessions, so the visit is deemed to have taken place during school hours.

**Example 2: Visit outside school hours**

Pupils are away from school from noon on Thursday until 9pm on Sunday. This counts as 7 half days including 3 school sessions, so the visit is deemed to have taken place outside school hours.

**4. Damage/Loss to Property**

A charge will be levied in respect of wilful damage, neglect or loss of school property (including premises, furniture, equipment, books or materials), the charge to be the cost of replacement or repair, or such lower cost as the Headteacher may decide.

**5. Lettings**

The school will make its facilities available to outside users at a charge of at least the cost of providing the facilities. The scale of charges will be determined annually by the Finance Committee and approved by the Local Governing Board.

**6. Other charges**

The Headteacher, Finance Committee or Local Governing Board may levy charges for miscellaneous services up to the cost of providing such services e.g. for providing a copy of an OFSTED report.

**Remissions Policy**

Where non-chargeable education is provided during a residential visit, parents in receipt of certain benefits (broadly equivalent to those which qualify pupils for Free School Meals) shall receive a complete remission of any charges that would otherwise be payable in respect of board or lodgings.

Parents who can prove they are in receipt of the following benefits will be exempt from paying the cost of board and lodging for residential visits:

- Universal credit in prescribed circumstances
- Income Support
- Income Based Jobseekers Allowance
- Support under part VI of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999
- Child Tax Credit, provided that Working Tax Credit is not also received and the family’s income (as assessed by Her Majesty’s Revenue and Customs) does not exceed £16,190
- The guarantee element of State Pension Credit
- An income related employment and support allowance that was introduced on 27 October 2008 Government guidance providing details of the benefits which exempt parents from being charged can be found at:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/charging-for-school-activities>

Additional information about charging for school activities (document 3.2c) can be found at:

<http://oeapng.info/>



We aspire for every pupil and adult to ‘experience life in all its fullness’ (John

**Oxford Diocesan Bucks Schools Trust (ODBST)**  
*“Empowering our unique schools to excel”*



## Cycle to Work Policy

<b>ODBST Level 1 Statutory Policy:</b>	<b>ALL</b> Schools require this policy with <b>no changes</b> allowed to core text. No changes are necessary to personalise this with school name and branding, as this is a Trust level policy for use, without change, by all schools. LGBs will <b>note</b> adoption in LGB meetings. Review will take place at Trust level, and schools will be notified of updates and review dates as necessary.
<b>Other related ODBST policies and procedures:</b>	ODBST Finance Manual
<b>Committee responsible:</b>	FRAPP
<b>Approved by:</b>	FRAPP
<b>Date Approved:</b>	24 <sup>th</sup> September 2024
<b>Date for Next Review:</b>	Autumn 2027

In reviewing this policy the Trust Board has had regards to the Equality Act 2010 and carried out an equality impact assessment. It is satisfied that no group with a protected characteristic will be unfairly disadvantaged.



# Cycle to Work Scheme

Policy document

Green Commute Initiative

[Date]

[Course title]

ODBST is committed to the health and wellbeing of its employees, and seeks to promote healthier journeys by encouraging employees to travel to work in a sustainable way which will also benefit our local community and planet.

We are committed to reducing the number of employees who travel to work by private car and as a result, we have introduced a Cycle to Work Scheme, providing excellent tax-free benefits for those wishing to purchase a bike and equipment via the scheme.

## Overview of the Scheme

ODBST has chosen to work with leading Cycle to Work Scheme provider, Green Commute Initiative (GCI), to administer the scheme on our behalf. Full details of the scheme particulars are available from GCI's website at [www.greencommuteinitiative.uk](http://www.greencommuteinitiative.uk)

The Cycle to Work Scheme is a tax-exempt scheme which allows all employees to hire cycles and cycle safety equipment on a tax-free basis. This enables scheme participants to save between 32% to 47%, depending on their personal tax circumstances.

The tax exemption is dependent on the following conditions being met:

- the equipment hired must be a bicycle, bicycle related safety equipment or both;
- An employee must not, at any point during the hire period, own the cycle;
- At least 50% of the cycle's use must be for 'qualifying journeys', i.e. commuting to work purposes (you are entitled to use it for other purposes as well).

The Cycle to Work Scheme uses salary sacrifice as the mechanism for receiving the tax benefit. The employee, in entering the scheme agrees an employment contract variation to accept a lower salary in exchange for the employer providing the cycle and cycle equipment.

## Eligibility for the Scheme

All permanent employees are eligible for the scheme. Those on temporary contracts should speak to Human Resources ([hr@odbst.org](mailto:hr@odbst.org)). The following conditions must be met:

- the employee is a UK tax payer via the PAYE system;
- following the salary sacrifice being applied, the employee's gross pay **does not reduce below the National Minimum Wage (NMW)**;
- the employee has a contract of employment which outlasts the duration of the salary sacrifice period;
- the employee is aged 18 years or over (if under 18, a guarantor will be required);
- must be attending work at the point of application;
- the equipment must be used mainly for qualifying journeys i.e. journeys (in whole or in part) between home and work or journeys between workplaces;
- any previous Cycle to Work salary sacrifice agreement must be completed with no monies outstanding.

## Qualifying items

Any type of road-legal cycle can be bought through the scheme, including ebikes, cargo bikes, trikes and adapted cycles. Second hand bikes with at least a 3-month warranty are also allowed. Currently electric scooters are not legal for use on public roads and are therefore not available on the scheme.

Safety equipment can include:

- Helmets
- Bells and horns
- Lights
- Mirrors and mudguards
- Cycle clips and dress guards
- Panniers, luggage carriers and straps to allow luggage to be safely carried
- Locks and chains to ensure cycle can be safely secured
- Pumps, puncture repair kits, cycle tool kits and tyre sealant to allow for minor repairs
- Reflective clothing
- NB: GPS devices, cameras, power meters and bike computers are NOT permitted.

If you don't need a new bike, you are able to just order accessories through the scheme.

## Terms of the Scheme

By participating in the Cycle to Work Scheme employees are agreeing to vary their terms and conditions of employment by reducing their gross contractual salary by the value of the cycle and cycle equipment hired.

The maximum spend for any cycle and cycle equipment hired under the agreement is £2,000 (inclusive of VAT). Please be aware that as this is a salary sacrifice scheme, ODBST will not be able to authorise any arrangement that will mean that following the salary sacrifice being applied, the employee's gross pay reduces below the National Minimum Wage (NMW).

The hire agreement lasts for a period of twelve months and is an agreement solely between Green Commute Initiative and the employee. The cycle and any cycle equipment hired under the scheme remains the property Green Commute Initiative until ownership is transferred.

The salary sacrifice agreement is between the employer and employee and the payments will commence in the next pay period following the receipt of signed agreements.

An employee entering into the scheme must be aware of the following:

- Employees are responsible for ensuring that the cycle and cycle equipment hired under the scheme is insured against theft, loss or damage. Replacement equipment is not provided under the scheme.
- Employees are responsible for maintaining the cycle and equipment during the hire period and any subsequent extended loan agreement.
- Employees must not hire out, transfer or otherwise dispose of the cycle or cycle equipment.
- Employees must not take the bike out of the UK during the hire period.
- Any cycle or cycle equipment must be suitable for commuting to and from work. There is no restriction on leisure use.

## What happens at the end of the hire period?

At the end of the twelve-month hire period, Green Commute Initiative will contact the employee and offer two options. The employee can either:

- Take ownership immediately and pay HMRC benefit-in-kind tax based on the [Fair Market Values Table](#).

or

- Enter into a free-of-charge extended loan agreement with GCI for a further 5 years and 9 months. GCI recommends this option as it tax-efficient and maximises savings.

## How to make an application

It's easy to take part; just follow the steps below:

### *FIND*

- Visit a retailer registered with GCI. Use GCI's shop finder to help you locate a shop: <https://www.greencommuteinitiative.uk/gci-registered-bike-shops/>
- Request a quotation for the bike and any accessories. GCI recommends leaving a refundable deposit to secure the order. Ensure package price will be honoured for at least 30 days.

### *APPLY*

- Submit an application on <https://www.greencommuteinitiative.uk/instant-quotes/>

### *SIGN*

- Upon approval, GCI will issue documents for signature – you must electronically sign both the Hire Agreement and the Salary Sacrifice Agreement.
- Once signed, GCI will send you the Collection Voucher.

### *RIDE*

- Contact the store to arrange a suitable collection/delivery date and if you are happy with the order, give the retailer your voucher. Remember to take some photo ID with you.

You can expect the lead time from point of application to receipt of Collection Voucher to be 30 days. Please note that the voucher process may change dependent upon the retailer, so check with the retailer at the time of placing your order.

## Leaving the scheme early

An employee is responsible for paying the full cost of items as advised when signing the Salary Sacrifice Agreement. If your employment ceases before the end of the salary sacrifice period, you are obliged to pay the outstanding balance of the agreement. This can be taken from your gross pay so you can still benefit from the tax saving. However, if this would take you below National Minimum Wage, the proportion of the remaining balance left will be taken from net pay. Should this still not cover the amount owed, you will be required to pay from alternative means within 14 days of leaving employment.

## Taking ownership early

If you wish to take ownership of the bike before the end of the extended loan agreement, you will be required to pay the benefit in kind tax as detailed in HMRC's [Fair Market Value](#). This may be entered onto your P11D.

## Effect on pension benefits

### State Pension

Provided the employee pays the minimum requirement for NI payments, a salary sacrifice will not normally affect their basic state pension. Employees are responsible for making their own enquiries as to whether state pensions will be affected.

### Company Pension

Your payments into the company pension scheme will be reduced as it will be based upon your gross salary after salary sacrifice deductions are made. Whilst the percentage contribution will remain the same, the value will change.

## Effect on other benefits

### Overtime

If an employee joins the Cycle to Work Scheme and reduces their monthly salary, any salary/wage-related payments e.g. overtime, will be calculated using the gross salary before any salary sacrifice is deducted.

### Life Assurance

Life Assurance cover will be based on the gross salary before deductions for Cycle to Work Scheme.

### Tax credits

Entitlement to tax credits may be reduced by participation in the Cycle to Work Scheme and for some people participation in the scheme could make them worse off. More information about this can be found on the HMRC website.

### Statutory Maternity Pay

Statutory Maternity Pay (SMP) and Statutory Adoption Pay (SAP) are affected by participation in a salary sacrifice scheme. Statutory Maternity Pay is calculated on the amount of average weekly earnings during the 8-week period in the fifteen weeks before the expected date of childbirth. SMP would be based on the reduced salary of someone participating in the Cycle to Work Scheme.

### Statutory Paternity Pay

Statutory Paternity Pay (SPP) should not be affected by entering into a salary sacrifice scheme. However, an employee should check their own individual situation before joining the scheme to ensure that the salary sacrifice does not take their average earnings below the lower earnings limits for National Insurance Contributions purposes.

## Frequently Asked Questions

What are the savings for the employee?

Typical savings for employees are between 32% for basic rate taxpayers and 42% for higher rate taxpayers, the actual amount depends on the employee's personal tax band.

Who actually owns the bike?

The bike and equipment remain the property of Green Commute Initiative throughout the hire period and extended loan period. The employee is responsible for the maintenance of the bike and for the payment of any associated costs relating to the bike's maintenance. Employees can choose to take ownership before the end of the extended loan period but will need to pay a benefit-in-kind tax to HMRC.

Would I need to insure the bike? And what happens if the bike gets stolen?

If the bike is stolen the employee will still be liable for any outstanding monies on the salary sacrifice agreement.

It is the employee's responsibility to make sure the bike is insured and securely locked. Safety equipment, including 'Sold Secure' D-locks and cable locks, can be obtained as part of the scheme.

It is a good idea to inform the insurer that the bike is being bought through the Cycle to Work Scheme. Do check your household insurance policy as you may be already covered and supplementary policy may not be necessary.

From time to time there maybe offers on bike insurance available to GCI customers. Details of these offers can be found on [GCI's website](#).

Also consider logging your bike on an online data register, such as [www.immobilise.com](http://www.immobilise.com). This will help reunite you with the bike in case of theft and recovery by the police.

More frequently asked questions can be found on [GCI's website](#).

### **GCI customer support team contact details**

020 3740 1836 (Lines open Monday to Friday 8.30am to 5pm)

theteam@greencommuteinitiative.uk

# Appendix A

**Glossary - for the purposes of this manual, the following definitions will apply (adapted from the Academy Trust Handbook 2024):**

Academic year	The “school year” starting 1 September and ending 31 August.
Academy trust	ODBST, being the company, which has entered into a funding agreement with the Secretary of State to run one or more academy schools
Accounting officer	Chief Executive of ODBST who has been designated as accountable for regularity, propriety and value for money. In multi-academy trusts it should be the chief executive.
Accounting Officer’s Statement on regularity, propriety and compliance	The academy trust’s accounting officer is required to complete and sign a statement on regularity, propriety and compliance each year. This statement must be included in the trust’s annual report and so be submitted to the ESFA at the same time as the annual accounts.
Accounting officer’s statement on value for money	The academy trust’s accounting officer is required to complete and sign a statement describing how the trust has delivered value for money each year. This statement must be submitted to the ESFA but does not form part of the trust’s annual accounts.
Accounts Direction	The ESFA’s guide for academies on preparing their annual report and accounts.
Accounts return	A return of key financial information in spread sheet format based on academy trusts’ annual accounts, to be used for consolidation of trusts’ accounts into the ESFA’s accounts and for the collection of benchmarking data. The ESFA will collect these returns from those academy trusts in scope in a format, and by a date, to be notified.
Asset	Anything that is capable of being owned or controlled to produce value and that is held to have positive economic value. Can be “revenue” (e.g. cash) or “capital” (e.g. a building).
Board of trustees	The senior committee of an academy trust – also the company board of directors.
Capital	Capital assets or funding are those from which an academy trust can expect to derive a benefit for more than one year: typically land, buildings, vehicles, etc. Capital assets are usually referred to as fixed assets.

Chief executive	The senior executive of the academy trust and head of the management team.
DfE	Department for Education.
Economy	Obtaining an outcome for the least possible input of resources.
ESFA	The Education and Skills Funding Agency: an executive agency of the Department for Education that acts as the agent of the Secretary of State.
Effectiveness	Obtaining the desired outcome.
Efficiency	Obtaining the best possible outcome for the resources input.
Executive Headteacher	A head teacher responsible for more than one academy, to whom the Headteachers of each of those academy's reports.
Finance Director/CFO	Chief Finance Officer of ODBST.
Finance system	PS Financials.
Financial Management and Governance Self-assessment (FMGS)	A checklist for completion and return to the ESFA by a notified date, by new academy trusts that are not yet preparing financial statements and not yet subject to a regularity audit. The return asks trusts to self-assess their financial management arrangements in several specified areas.
Financial year	For academy trusts, this is usually the same as the academic year, from 1 September to 31 August. For most other public sector bodies (such as the ESFA) it means the period from 1 April to 31 March.
GAG	General Annual Grant: the main source of income for academy trusts.
MAT	Multi-academy trust
ODBE	Oxford Diocesan Board of Education
ODBST	Oxford Diocesan Bucks Schools Trust
Headteacher	The head teacher of an academy.
Propriety	The requirement that expenditure and receipts should be dealt with in accordance with Parliament's intentions and the principles of Parliamentary control. This covers standards of conduct, behavior, and corporate governance.

Public funds	Funds which, ultimately, derive from Parliamentary authority. All academy trusts' income, expenditure, assets and liabilities are consolidated into the accounts of the DfE and will be considered by Parliament to be public unless otherwise demonstrated.
Regularity	The requirement to deal with all items of income and expenditure in accordance with legislation, the terms of the trust's funding agreement and this Handbook, and compliance with internal trust procedures. This includes spending public money for the purpose intended by Parliament.
Secretary of State	The Secretary of State for Education.
SORP	The Charity Commission's document <b>Accounting and Reporting by Charities: Statement of Recommended Practice</b> , which describes the form and content of charity accounts.
Special payments	Payments outside the normal range of activities approved by Parliament and therefore requiring greater control. They include ex- gratia payments, staff severance payments, compensation payments and other extra-statutory or extra-contractual payments. See annex 4.13 of HM Treasury's <b>Managing Public Money</b> .
Value for money	Achieving the best possible educational and wider societal outcomes through the economic, efficient and effective use of all the resources in the trust's charge, the avoidance of waste and extravagance, and prudent and economical administration. A key objective is to achieve value for money not only for the academy trust but for taxpayers more generally.

## Appendix B – ODBST Delegated Financial Authority for Purchasing

### Central Trust

Financial Limit	Required Authorisation	Procurement Requirements
Over £60,000	ODBST Trust Board	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Expenditure (excluding Capital) within budget</li> <li>Ensure probity and best value evidenced by full tendering process</li> </ul>
£40,001 to £60,000	ODBST FRAPP Committee	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Expenditure (excluding Capital) within budget</li> <li>Ensure probity and best value evidenced by full tendering process</li> </ul>
£20,001 to £40,000	CEO	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Expenditure (excluding Capital) within budget</li> <li>Ensure probity and best value evidenced by full tender process</li> </ul>
£15,001 to £20,000	CEO	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Expenditure (excluding Capital) within budget</li> <li>Ensure probity and best value evidenced by 3 written quotes. Where 3 written quotes cannot be obtained then additional approval from CFO required.</li> </ul>
£2,001 to £15,000	CEO or CFO	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Expenditure (excluding Capital) within budget</li> <li></li> </ul>
to £2,000	Central SLT	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Expenditure (excluding Capital) within budget, probity and best value</li> </ul>
Over £60,000	ODBST Trust Board	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>School DFC over £25,000, SCA and CIF (including project management) for Building related and Estate Projects including Net Zero</li> </ul>
to £60,000	ODBST FRAPP Committee	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>School DFC over £25,000, SCA and CIF (including project management) for Building related and Estate Projects including Net Zero</li> </ul>

### Primary Schools

Financial Limit	Required Authorisation	Procurement Requirements
£100,000 to OJEU limits	ODBST Trust Board	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Expenditure within budget</li> <li>Ensure probity and best value evidenced by full tendering process</li> </ul>
£40,001 to £100,000	FRAPP Committee	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Expenditure within budget</li> <li>Ensure probity and best value evidenced by full tendering process</li> </ul>
£25,001 to £40,000	CEO in conjunction with CFO	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Expenditure within budget</li> <li>Ensure probity and best value evidenced by full tendering process</li> </ul>
£15,001 to £25,000	CEO	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>DFC &amp; Expenditure within budget</li> <li>Ensure probity and best value evidenced by full tendering process</li> </ul>
£10,001 to £15,000	CEO	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>DFC &amp; Expenditure within budget</li> <li>Ensure probity and best value evidenced by 3 written quotes</li> </ul>
£5,001 to £10,000	CEO or CFO or Head*	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>DFC &amp; Expenditure within budget, or additional funding separately identified (e.g. Catch-up Premium)</li> <li>Ensure probity and best value evidenced by 3 written quotes: Where 3 written quotes cannot be obtained then additional approval from CFO required.</li> </ul>
to £5,000	CEO or CFO or Head*	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>DFC &amp; Expenditure within budget, probity and best value</li> </ul>
to £1,000	SBM	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>DFC &amp; Expenditure within budget, probity and best value</li> </ul>

\* Headteacher can delegate their procurement authorisation to a Deputy Head, Assistant Head, or similar member of the school leadership team for authorising PO in the PS Financials System, they cannot delegate the authority to the Finance Officer/SBM/Bursar.

# Appendix C – Headteacher Month End Checklist



## Month End Controls Return

School	
Month	
Accounting Period	

Day of Month	Control area	Reporting System	Control checks	Report required to be saved to Shared SBM Drive	Completed (initials and date)
By 5th	Payroll	PSF & IMP	All payroll files uploaded to PSF and IMP by Central Staff	N/A central action	N/a central action
By 10th	Purchases	PSF	All purchase invoices entered for the month.		
			All credit card transactions entered for month and allocated		
			Aged creditors report downloaded, balance agreed to TB and appropriate actions taken.	Aged Creditors Report	
		Accruals identified and posted, or notified to the central finance team.			
	Sales	PSF	Raise sales invoices for month (lettings etc)		
			Aged debtors report downloaded, balances agreed to TB and appropriate actions taken.	Aged Debtors Report	
	Bank	PSF	Main Lloyds Account Bank reconciliation completed at month end	Bank Reconciliation Report and statement	
		PSF and Local spreadsheet	School Fund Account Bank reconciliation completed at month end	Reconciliation Report and statement	
	Trial Balance		Completed for period and accounts cross checked with supporting documentation	Trial Balance	
Daily between 5-10 month	Budget Monitoring & Payroll	PSF & IMP	Actuals transferred to IMP from PSF by Central Staff*	N/A central action	N/a central action
On 11th	PSF	PSF	PSF closed by Central Staff	N/A central action	N/a central action
By 12th	Payroll	Eforms	All contract changes/claims submitted to Bucks Payroll		
On 15th	Payroll	Anycoms	Mid month payroll reports issued by Bucks Payroll	Signed/authorised mid month payroll reports with any actions annotated	
By 15th	Payroll	IMP	Payroll Reconciliation completed and variances corrected/annotated for acceptance	Summary Salary Reconciliation	
	Budget Monitoring	IMP	Forecast complete in IMP	IMP monthly forecasting report	
On 16th	Budget Monitoring	IMP	IMP forecast frozen and rolled forward by Central Staff	N/A central action	N/a central action
By 20th	Payroll	Bucks Payroll	Contact if there are any errors in the mid month reports, this is the absolute latest to		
Last working day	Payroll	Anycoms	Month end payroll reports issued by Bucks Payroll	Month end payroll reports	
	Staff Insurance	Insurance	Confirm all staff insurance claims have been made within notice period		

Month End Control Return and reports have been saved in school area of shared SBM drive, discussed with headteacher and emailed to Chair of Finance Committee and Chair of Governors, the following items need to be highlighted:

Completed by:	SBM	Name		Date	
---------------	-----	------	--	------	--

I have reviewed the month end control documentation in conjunction with the SBM, have checked and signed all reports and have the following comments:

Reviewed by:	Headteacher	Name		Date	
--------------	-------------	------	--	------	--

# Appendix D – ODBST Advised Template for a Tender

Insert school logo here  
(Remove text box)



## INVITATION TO SUBMIT A PROPOSAL for

Closing Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Contact: \_\_\_\_\_

1.	INTRODUCTION.....	105
2.	INSTRUCTIONS TO TENDERERS .....	105
3.	FREEDOM OF INFORMATION .....	106
4.	EVALUATION CRITERIA.....	106
5.	SPECIFICATION.....	107
6.	INFORMATION FOR TENDERERS .....	107
7.	PRICE SCHEDULE .....	107
8.	PRESENTATION FROM TENDERERS .....	107
9.	DECLARATION AND REFERENCES .....	107

## 1. Introduction

1.1. The Oxford Diocesan Bucks Schools Trust (ODBST) comprises the following schools:

1.2. We are looking for the following:

## 2. Instructions to Tenderers

2.1. Bids should be submitted by email to [xxxxx.xxxxx@xxx.odbst.org](mailto:xxxxx.xxxxx@xxx.odbst.org) A hardcopy of each bid should also be made in a plain unmarked envelope addressed as Private and Confidential to [xxxxx xxxxx](#), Chief Finance Officer. The deadline for receipt is [\\_\\_\\_\\_\\_](#).

The address for hand, post or courier delivery is:

[Oxford Diocesan Bucks Schools Trust](#)  
[Marsh Farm](#)

2.2. Submissions received after the deadline will not be considered.

2.3. Tenderers should ensure that they allow enough time to submit their bid response. The Trust will accept no responsibility for difficulties during the process of submission and/or late or lost submissions.

2.4. Please study the documentation carefully. If you are in any doubt as to any aspect of the brief, or require clarification of any part of the document please [contact ....](#)

2.5. Tenders will only be considered if they provide competitive prices strictly in accordance with the brief.

### 3. Freedom of Information

- 3.1. In accordance with Freedom of Information Act 2000, from January 2005, public organisations must respond within 20 working days to valid written requests for information from anyone. The information requested must be supplied unless it falls into specified categories of information which include: confidential, personal, trade secret, or information which would or would be likely to prejudice the Tenderer's or the Trust's commercial interests. These categories are exemptions under which information may not be disclosed.
- 3.2. It will be the Tenderers' responsibility to clearly state in their bid submission any information which they regard as confidential, personal information, trade secret or may prejudice their commercial interests and to discuss this with the organisation prior to submission.
- 3.3. Tenderers are advised that information which falls into our agreed interpretation of the legal definition of confidentiality, personal information, trade secret or prejudice to their commercial interests may still have to be disclosed in some circumstances. You should be aware that the organisation may be forced to make information public as a result of an appeal by a member of the public against our initial decision not to reveal information. The public can appeal through our internal complaints procedure and ultimately to the Information Commissioner's Office, the Government organisation responsible for the Act.
- 3.4. You will also need to provide with your submission a contact within your organisation to ensure that should we need to consult on a Freedom of Information request we can do this promptly. If we are unable to contact anyone to consult we may have to release the information to ensure that we remain within the 20 working days deadline.

### 4. Evaluation Criteria

- 4.1. All of the tenders will be subject to a detailed evaluation process which will be based on an appropriate balance between technical expertise and a firm commitment to meeting all of the Trust's requirements. The Trust will select the best value for money tender (using a price:quality ratio of 60:40) considering the following factors:
  - Technical expertise
  - Ability to offer support services such as xxxxxxxxxxxx
  - Commitment to working with the Trust to enhance the service offered
  - Cost
  - Commitment to and in experience in working within the academies' sector.
  - Bid quality/compliance
  - References
- 4.2. The above criteria are not listed in relative order of importance.
- 4.3. The Trust shall be under no obligation to accept the lowest or any tender submitted hereunder.
- 4.4. The Trust may request additional information as part of the bid clarification process to enable the Trust to better understand the Tenderer's bid.

## 5. Specification

5.1. The Trust wishes to engage in a contract for \_\_\_\_\_ at an agreed cost for the services described in 1.2.

## 6. Information for Tenderers

6.1. The Trust provides the following to assist Tenderers:

- 

6.2. The Trust uses .... Include anything particular to the services requirement

6.3. The Trust offers potential tenderers the opportunity to conduct a site visit to better understand the nature of the requirements. If you would like to arrange a site visit, please email .....

## 7. Price Schedule

7.1. The Trust requires an itemised proposal of full year cost. The pricing will be held for the duration of the contract, other than inflation only. All pricing submitted is to include all costs including anticipated expenses. **USE TEMPLATE**

7.2. The pricing to be held for the duration of the contract (normally X years)

7.3. The cost of any additional work not included in 1.2 will be negotiated when required and be separate from the main contract.

7.4. The hourly rate for each person re: any additional works

7.5. All pricing submitted is to include all costs including anticipated expenses.

## 8. Presentation from Tenderers

8.1. Please ensure that you keep xxx free for presentations if you are short listed. An agenda will be provided nearer the time detailing how long you have and the areas that you will be asked to present and discuss on. It will be a requirement of the presentation that the Partner or Manager who would have direct responsibility for the contract is present.

## 9. Declaration and References

I/We hereby offer to provide the services as specified in the tender proposal.

Signed

Name (block capitals)

Designation For and on behalf of

Telephone number

Fax Number

Email Address

Please note we accept inserted signatures and/or you can detach this page from the document sign and scan back in, attaching as a separate document.

We ask you to provide at least two reference clients that you believe are most closely comparable to the requirements of the ODBST, preferably at least one of which is local, and that can be contacted during our evaluation. For these referenced clients please provide the following:

- Contact name and job title
- School name, address and telephone number
- Scope of services
- Are any of the contracts stated above the responsibility of the management team proposed for ODBST?