

# Wincheap Foundation Primary School



## Finance Policy

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## 1. Policy Context

The Governors of Wincheap Foundation Primary School are committed to providing sound financial controls, to achieving value for money and to being worthy custodians of public money. To achieve these aims the Headteacher and the Governing Body have drawn up this Finance Policy to provide the guiding principles that all Governors and staff will operate within.

This Policy has been drawn up in accordance with the Local Authority's (LA) [Scheme for Financing Schools](#). It should be read in conjunction with our

- Anti-Fraud, Bribery and Corruption policy
- Whistleblowing policy
- Gifts and Hospitality policy
- Governors' Allowances and Expenses policy
- Charging and Remissions policy
- Pay policy

## 2. Principles

Wincheap Foundation Primary School Finance Policy adheres to the following principles;

- The responsibilities of the Governing Body, its committees, the Headteacher and staff will be clearly defined and limits of delegated authority established, where applicable.

The Governing Body is responsible for taking steps to ensure that expenditure reflects best value principles. This is done by;

- Using both performance data and financial benchmarking to **compare** to similar schools locally and nationally.
- Using the information gained to **challenge** performance and set new targets
- Using fair **competition** through quotations and tenders, ensuring resources and contracts for services are secured in the most economic, efficient and effective way
- **Consulting** parents on policy development and major changes in the use of resources

The school will establish sound internal financial controls, based on the LA's Financial Controls to ensure the reliability and accuracy of its financial transactions.

The budget will reflect the school's prioritised educational objectives through its links to the School Improvement Plan, which indicates the resource implications of each priority.

The budget will be subject to effective monitoring, allowing the Governors, Headteacher and staff to maintain financial control in line with the Balance Control Mechanism by reviewing the current position and taking any remedial action necessary.

The school will be adequately insured against exposure to risk.

The school will ensure that:

- The Budget Share is spent for the purpose of the school only
- Purchasing arrangements achieve value for money
- There are sound procedures for the administration of personnel matters
- There are sound procedures for the administration of payroll matters
- Stocks, stores and assets are recorded and adequately safeguarded against loss or theft
- All income due is identified and all collections receipted, recorded and banked promptly
- The operation of the bank account and the reconciliation of bank balances with the accounting records are properly controlled
- The use of the school's One Cards are strictly controlled
- Any suspected irregularity will be reported immediately to the LA's Head of Internal Audit
- The school will adhere to current GDPR and Data Protection legislation
- Appropriate training in financial administration will be given to enable staff cover at all times

### 3. Putting Policy into Practice

#### 3.1 Overall and Delegated Responsibilities

The **Full Governing Body** of Wincheap Foundation Primary School has overall responsibility for the management of all of the school's finances covering the revenue budget, other budgets delegated or devolved by the LA.

The Full Governing Body of Wincheap Foundation Primary School will ensure the annual detailed report of the Schools Financial Value Standard (SFVS) is provided to them and the chair of governors will sign the completed form prior to sending a copy to the Local Authority.

The **Finance and Premises Committee** is delegated responsibility by the Full Governing Body for the following aspects of financial management:

- Evaluate and approve the three-year budget plan, which shows clear links to the School Improvement Plan
- To review the Finance Policy and agree levels of delegation
- To review and approve the Charges and Remissions Policy
- To review and approve the Pay Policy
- To make decisions in respect of service agreements and insurance
- To advise the Full Governing Body of any consultations to change the LA Scheme for Financing Schools, to allow the school to respond to any consultation
- To report monitoring and the outturn position to the Full Governing Body, highlighting any significant variances
- Evaluate any proposed virements (if applicable)
- Evaluate and report on Tenders for Contract Services to the Full Governing Body
- Keeping in-school financial procedures under review
- Benchmark the school's financial performance and report to the Full Governing Body

The **Headteacher** is responsible for implementing the decisions of the Governing Body and for the operational management of the school. The general administration of financial procedures may be delegated to other members of staff at the discretion of the Headteacher and these duties have been delegated to Lyn Wood, the **School Business Manager**.

**Other staff** may have control of areas of the budget where it applies to their responsibility (e.g. Subject Leaders) but only where this has been delegated to them by the Headteacher. The School Business Manager is responsible on behalf of the Headteacher for ensuring that the use and administration of such funds comply with the guidance laid out in our policies and the LA's Scheme for Financing Schools.

### **3.2 Internal Financial Controls**

The internal financial controls operated by Wincheap Foundation Primary School follow the financial controls set out in the LA's Scheme for Financing Schools.

### **3.3 Financial Links to the School Improvement Plan**

The School Improvement Plan has sufficient scope and depth of the financial implications and it is reflected in the school's three year budget plan.

### **3.4 Budget Monitoring and Virements**

Wincheap Foundation Primary School recognises that the regular monitoring of income and expenditure against the agreed budget is central to effective financial management. To this end, the Headteacher carries out a monthly internal monitoring procedure.

A monitoring report is sent at least six times a year to all members of the Finance and Premises Committee which reports to the Full Governing Body. Monitoring reports are submitted to the LA in accordance with its timetable. Governors should ensure their meetings are timed to see all monitoring submitted to the LA either prior to submission or soon after. This will ensure they have an up-to-date position of the school's finances.

On occasions, virements – the transfer of funds from one budget area to another - may need to be carried out. Virements to the approved budget are minuted appropriately and require the following authorisation:

Virements up to £8,000 - The Headteacher, reported to the Finance and Premises Committee

Virements from £8,001 to £15,000 – The Finance and Premises Committee  
Virements over £15,000 – The Full Governing Body

### **3.5 Insurance**

Wincheap Foundation Primary School is insured through the Kent County Council (KCC) with relevant cover, as identified by the schedule received from the LA's Insurance section.

### **3.6 Purchasing**

At Wincheap Foundation Primary School, budgets are delegated to TLR holders and class teachers. Budget holders are required to prepare an annual 'Needs Budget' for approval by the Headteacher. The Headteacher may approve this in whole or part in line with the priority needs of the school and the School Improvement Plan.

All staff adhere to the school procedures for purchasing items, as laid down in the School's Staff Handbook, paying regard to value for money at all times. The Headteacher, designated deputy or budget holder authorises all orders and invoices prior to payment.

Where the school purchases large items, we adhere to the procedure for Spending the Council's Money as laid down in the Scheme for Financing Schools ([www.kent.gov.uk/about-the-council/finance-and-budget/spending](http://www.kent.gov.uk/about-the-council/finance-and-budget/spending)), in summary:

- For purchases in excess of £10,000, but less than £50,000, three written quotations are obtained and submitted to the Finance and Premises Committee for approval
- For orders of £50,000 or over, no fewer than three competitive tenders are sought and submitted to the Full Governing Body for approval

All of the above will be minuted at the appropriate committee/Governing Body meeting to ensure that the School is seen to be obtaining value for money at all times.

### **3.7 One Card**

The school has employed the use of a corporate 'One Card' scheme, which allows the purchase of goods where it is not possible or appropriate to use cheques or invoiced orders. Card holders are:

- Headteacher
- Deputy headteacher
- School Business Manager

Each cardholder has a single transaction limit of £1000 and a monthly card limit of £5000. All purchases adhere to school procedures as set out in the Staff Handbook and are authorised by the Headteacher prior to purchase.

### **3.8 Petty Cash**

The school does not maintain a petty cash fund. Staff members that need to purchase items for the school that cannot be ordered and invoiced should seek permission from the Headteacher to use the school's OneCard. The purchase must be within the prescribed limits (see above), and the purchase receipt given to the School Business Manager when returning the card. This should be done promptly after card has been used.

### **3.9 Personnel Matters**

At Wincheap Foundation Primary School, at the start of every financial year the Headteacher uses a financial planning tool to calculate the salary costs of all members of staff, including increments, where applicable. These details are used by the Finance and Premises Committee for incorporation into the school budget planning process.

The Personnel and Pay committee undertakes an annual review of the Headteacher's salary, and recommends enhancements, if applicable, to the Full Governing Body.

The Headteacher undertakes an annual review of all other staff, in accordance with the school's Pay Policy and reports to the Personnel and Pay Committee.

Details of all salaries are recorded as a confidential item in the minutes.

### **3.10 Payroll Matters**

The payroll provider at Wincheap Foundation Primary School is HR Payroll who provide payroll services to the specification laid down by the LA. The Headteacher signs off the monthly payroll reports once they have been checked for accuracy.

### **3.11 Safeguard of Stocks, Stores and Assets**

All staff at Wincheap Foundation Primary School are responsible for the security of school assets. Subject leaders and class teachers safeguard their assets and the Senior ICT Technician maintains a general asset register, which is checked at least on an annual basis and certified by the Headteacher or designated deputy. Where a staff member is provided with equipment as part of their role (e.g. a laptop), they are responsible for the security of the asset(s) and must report loss or damage immediately. The use and storage of such equipment must comply with school guidance and policies.

When not in use, items of value are stored in a locked room or cupboard/cabinet wherever possible and all items are visibly security-marked to deter theft.

Where assets are written off and disposed of, the Finance and Premises Committee agrees this on behalf of the Full Governing Body and the agreement is minuted. If any items are sold as part of this process a record should be kept by the School Business Manager.

### **3.12 Income**

At Wincheap Foundation Primary School, the Lettings Policy is reviewed and approved by the Finance and Premises Committee.

Where debts are required to be written off, after every effort has been made by the Headteacher and Governors to recoup the monies, the Full Governing Body will approve up to £1,000. Approval to write off debts over £1,000 is required in writing from the LA Finance Business Partner CYPE.

We have agreed a level of cash to be held in school at any one time as £1000. Cash will be receipted, recorded and banked promptly at all times.

### **3.13 The School Bank Account**

Wincheap Foundation Primary School operates its school bank account(s) in accordance with the regulations in the LA's Scheme for Financing Schools. The school operates only one current account for the administration of KCC official funds.

Bank account signatories are updated immediately there is a change in staffing and details are copied to the Schools Financial Services, as a matter of course.

When Wincheap Foundation Primary School pays suppliers it adheres to all financial controls within the Scheme for Financing Schools.

Bank statements at Wincheap Foundation Primary School are received/printed out on at least a monthly basis and reconciled immediately. The Headteacher or designated deputy signs and dates the bank statement when the reconciliation has been checked.

### **3.14 Fraud and Irregularities**

Wincheap Foundation Primary School has a robust system of controls to safeguard against fraudulent or improper use of public money and assets.

We have:

- An Anti-Fraud, Bribery and Corruption policy
- A Whistleblowing policy
- A Gifts and Hospitality policy

All staff at Wincheap Foundation Primary School are aware of these policies and to whom they should report concerns. Policies are available on the Shared Drive. Additional advice and support can be obtained from the KCC website or via independent organisations such as Citizen's Advice or Protect's whistleblowing advice line on 020 3117 2520.

### **3.15 Data Protection**

Under the terms of the Data Protection Act 2018, the Headteacher and Governing Body are required to notify the Information Commissioner of our processing, storage and disclosure of data procedures, which are covered by this legislation. To this end, we have a password protection procedure. Systems are backed up regularly and the backups held securely, virus protection is in place and is updated regularly and the school has a disaster recovery plan for the administration network. Full details can be found in our Data Protection and GDPR policy.

### **3.16 Financial Administration**

At Wincheap Foundation Primary School, the School Business Manager is trained in the use of the finance software and financial administration procedures. We also purchase a support contract through the Schools Financial Services which is reviewed on an annual basis, allowing us the option to purchase additional support, if required.

## **4. Monitoring**

This policy will be reviewed annually by the Headteacher and approved by the Full Governing Body.