



# **FINANCIAL PROCEDURES MANUAL**

**February 2022** (Changes in purple)

**March 2023** (Changes in orange)



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# Introduction

## Purpose and compliance

The purpose of this manual is to ensure that the academies within ODST maintain and develop systems of financial control that conform to the requirements of both propriety and good financial management. It is essential that these systems operate properly to meet the requirements of the funding agreement with the Secretary of State.

ODST and its academies must comply with the principles of financial control outlined in the guidance published by the Education & Skills Funding Agency (ESFA) in the current version of the Academy Trust Handbook and any subsequent versions or revisions. This manual expands on that and provides detailed information on accounting procedures to be followed by all ODST academies. Please ensure that all staff involved with financial systems and management are familiar with both documents.

Compliance with this manual is mandatory and any contravention of procedures should be brought to the attention of the Headteacher and the ODST Chief Financial Officer.

## Other relevant documents

Academy Trust Handbook 2021 (**and subsequent updates**), which interprets the requirements of the following documents:

- Managing Public Money (HM Treasury **2021**)
- Regularity, Propriety and Value for Money (HM Treasury 2004)
- Companies Act 2006
- Accounting Standards
- Charities SORP **2019**

**Academies Accounts Direction 2020 to 2021 (and subsequent updates)**, which interprets the requirements of the following documents:

- Companies Act 2006
- Accounting Standards
- Charities SORP **2019**

**Your academy's supplementary funding agreement (SFA)**, issued by the ESFA

**The Business Cycle Wall Planner for Academies**, issued by the ESFA (for the current year) – see ESFA website

## Code of conduct

Everyone involved in managing an ODST academy's finances is expected to behave honestly, openly and in the best interests of ODST and its trustees, the academy 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
  - 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
  - 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
- **Standards expected of all public services**, taken from HM Treasury's "Managing Public Money" **2021**
    - (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.

## Organisational structure of ODST

### Board of Trustees

The Board of Trustees of ODST has overall responsibility for the administration of its constituent academies' finances. The main responsibilities of the board are prescribed in the Funding Agreement between ODST and the Secretary of State and the current version of the Academy Trust Handbook.

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

- To approve the annual budget for ODST and its constituent academies, and
- To approve the Annual Accounts Return.

### ODST Finance Committee

The Finance Committee is responsible to the Board of Trustees and has particular responsibilities as follows:

- To produce and maintain financial procedures manual, incorporating all the finance policies and Schemes of Delegation, for academies and for ODST itself, and to review them annually
- To undertake a financial assessment of schools wishing to join ODST, for consideration by the Board
- To agree budget plans for academies and for ODST, 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 agree and prepare the Annual Report and Accounts for approval by the Board
- To consider management accounts and reports on a regular basis and take such action as is agreed to be necessary
- To recommend to the Board financial sections for the Trust's Development Plan
- To consider and explore all means of external finance available to the Trust
- To review insurance arrangements annually
- To review financial benchmarking data regularly
- To maintain a register of pecuniary interest

- To oversee the business continuity plan
- To review the risk registers annually
- To commission and receive reports from internal and external auditors and Responsible Officers, and to determine what actions are to be taken as a result of their reports
- To receive and consider reports from other committees that have financial implications, and to advise as appropriate.

## **Chief Executive Officer / Accounting Officer**

The CEO has overall executive responsibility for the Trust's activities, including financial activities, although some of the financial responsibility is delegated to the Deputy CEO/ Chief Financial 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 Academy Trust Handbook. In summary, this entails the following:

- The AO is personally responsible to the Secretary of State for Education 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 and 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 funding agreement, 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 funding agreement, he/she must advise the ESFA's accounting officer of the position in writing.

## **Chief Financial Officer**

The Chief Financial Officer (or 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 ODST and its academies
- To maintain and monitor effective systems of internal control
- To ensure that proper accounting records are maintained
- To set and monitor the budget for ODST
- To monitor the setting of budgets for academies 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.
- To liaise with the various executive heads/heads of school/headteachers of academies (hereinafter referred to as Headteachers), their local governing bodies and their business

managers/bursars/finance officers (hereinafter referred to as School Business Manager) and to promote and maintain open and effective communications with them.

## School Support Officers

The School Support Officers (or SSO) are responsible for the day-to-day management of the finances of ODST and its academies, and have the following duties:

- To maintain and monitor effective systems of internal control
- Ensure all accounting records are properly and accurately maintained and all financial transactions are recorded promptly
- Manage payroll for the trust with the support of the trust's payroll agent. Check the total payroll charges for each academy against payments made from ODST'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
- Assist the CFO in developing and monitoring budgets linked to ODST's and its academies' objectives
- Review Period End Controls Return (PECR) from each academy, raising any concerns with the CFO
- Reporting to the CEO and to the CFO of ODST as required
- Assist the CFO in ensuring effective communication with auditors and responsible officers and to inform the finance committee of their reported findings
- Liaise with Headteachers of academies, their local governing bodies and their business managers/bursars/finance officers (hereinafter referred to as School Business Managers, or SBMs) and to promote and maintain open and effective communications with them.

## Academy Local Governing Bodies (LGBs) and their committees

The LGB and its committees, in conjunction with the Headteacher, take overall responsibility for financial matters within their Academy, and have the following responsibilities:

- To work with the finance staff to construct and review the annual budget plan
- To regularly review the budget monitoring reports and if there is a worsening of the forecast outturn, compared to the approved budget for the year, to take the appropriate remedial actions required to bring the budget back in line with the approved budget. ~~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 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

## Academy Headteacher/Executive Headteacher

The Headteacher, in conjunction with the LGB and its committees, takes overall responsibility for financial matters within his/her Academy, and has the following responsibilities:

- To work with the finance staff to construct and to review the annual budget plan
- To regularly review the budget monitoring reports and if there is a worsening of the forecast outturn, compared to the approved budget for the year, to take the appropriate remedial



~~actions required to bring the budget back in line with the approved budget. 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 sign cheques or 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

## **School Business Manager**

Finance staff in academies are responsible for the following:

- Day-to-day management of financial issues
- Maintenance of, and adherence to, effective systems of internal control
- Ensuring that all accounting records are properly and accurately maintained and that all financial transactions are recorded promptly
- Ensuring that income is banked as soon as possible after it is received
- Ensuring that payments are made promptly, in accordance with suppliers' payment terms and in accordance with legal requirements
- Authorising expenditure up to the limit defined in the financial scheme of delegation
- Completing bank reconciliations and submitting them to the central finance team in accordance with the schedule provided by the trust for each financial year.
- Completing Period End Controls Return (PECR) and submitting them to the central finance team, with copies to the Headteacher and the chair of either the Finance or Resource Committee, in accordance with the schedule provided by the trust for each financial year.
- Requesting the review of asset disposals and write offs by the Headteacher and LGB
- Reporting to the Headteacher, the LGB and its committees and to the CFO of ODST as required

## **Audit and Responsible Officer function**

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

Any member of staff in an academy who is concerned that financial regulations or requirements are, or may be, breached should report their concerns to one of the following, as they consider appropriate, so that the issue may be referred to the auditor if necessary:

- the School Business Manager,
- the Academy's Headteacher,
- a member of the Academy's LGB,
- the School Support Officers of ODST,
- the Chief Financial Officer of ODST,
- the CEO/ Deputy CEO of ODST, or
- a member of ODST's Finance Committee.

## **Budgets**

### **Budget setting**

Schools are expected to submit each year a balanced financial budget for the year ahead, unless (and only in exceptional circumstances) there is advance authorisation sought (and given) by the finance committee, at least six months before the start of the new financial year for which the budget is being prepared.

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

The budget and the academy's strategic plan should be documented in detail for the coming year and at least in outline for the following two years.

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

- known and expected changes to pupil numbers,
- 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 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), and
- the effect of efficiency savings, where they can be identified.

The academy's SBM will usually be responsible for drafting the budget, and will be advised by the Headteacher and LGB, who will provide strategic direction and guidance.

The budget will be created and presented using software as prescribed by the ODST Chief Financial Officer. At present, this is Orovia BPS.

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

### **Budget approval process**

The budget and any accompanying documentation must be reviewed in detail by the Headteacher, by the academy's finance or resources committee, 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 ODST Finance Committee for approval. Their agreement and any comments arising should be minuted.

The final version should be submitted to the ODST Chief Financial Officer for review by the end of May, before the start of the academy's financial and academic year.

The ODST Chief Financial Officer and CEO will review the budget.

The ODST Finance Committee will approve the budget, or will refer it back to the academy for amendment if necessary.

The Board of Trustees will, if content, authorise the Chief Financial Officer 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 Chief Financial Officer and/or the academy for amendment. If the budget is amended, it will be necessary to start the approval process again.

The budget must be submitted to the ESFA as part of the Trust's Budget Forecast Return by the deadline set by the ESFA.

## **Budget deficits**

Academies are not permitted to plan for budget deficits, **except in the most exceptional circumstances and with the prior approval of the Finance Committee.**

If, during the year, it becomes apparent that a deficit may occur, either in the current or in future financial years, the academy's LGB, Headteacher and/or finance staff should inform the Chief Financial Officer immediately. ~~who will report it to the ESFA as necessary.~~ **The central teams will then work with the academy to bring the budget back into balance.**

## **Budget surpluses**

LGBs, Headteachers and finance staff should bear in mind that funds are made available to them for the benefit of the pupils in school in each financial and academic year.

The ODST Chief Financial Officer 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.

## **Budget Monitoring and Reporting**

### **Budget monitoring reports**

Reports should be produced from the academy's finance system and should show the following information for each budget heading:

- the period to which the report relates,
- the original budget,
- the current budget,
- actual expenditure to date,
- commitments (orders) to date,
- outturn forecast, and
- budget variance.

If there is an overall negative variance against the approved budget or full year forecast, there should be an action plan that outlines how this negative variance will be eliminated during the remainder of the financial year, in order to bring the budget back into line with the original budget that was approved.

If reports from the academy's finance system are downloaded into MS Excel for presentation purposes, original reports from the finance system must be produced as well to provide evidence that the financial data has not been altered or manipulated in order to obscure the academy's actual financial position.

System reports must always be accompanied by a narrative report that should include the following information:

- the period to which the report relates,
- an explanation of any changes to the budget and how those changes impact on the academy's financial year in the current or future years, and
- 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 academy's final outturn position? Are there any other consequences to be considered?

## **Reporting framework and timetable**

Each individual budget holder/cost centre manager in academies should receive regular reports showing him/her what their budget is, what they have spent, what commitments they have, and how much they have left to spend. The format of these reports can be agreed, but it is recommended that a standard report from the academy's financial system should be used where possible, with annotations or notes as needed. The School Business Manager should liaise on a regular basis with budget holders/cost centre managers to ascertain what they plan to spend and when, so that forecasts of expenditure in future months or years can be as accurate as possible.

School Business Managers must provide their Headteacher and the Central Finance Team with a monthly budget monitoring report (with variance commentary) by the 15<sup>th</sup> **working** day of the month following the month under review. This should be accompanied by the completed period end controls report sheet for that month.

Budget monitoring reports should be produced monthly. The frequency of such reports may be reduced at the Chief Financial Officer's discretion but will be not less than quarterly. These reports should be provided to the chair of the academy's LGB Finance or Resources committee on a monthly basis.

Budget monitoring reports should be reviewed by the academy's full LGB regularly and not less than quarterly.

## **Payroll Processes**

### **Roles and levels of authority**

Changes to an academy's staffing structure are:

- costed by the School Business Manager,
- proposed by the Headteacher to the LGB,
- reviewed by the Chief Financial Officer and the CEO,
- agreed by the Finance Committee, and
- authorised by the Board of Trustees.

The Headteacher and LGB, with advice from ODST 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 academy's pay policy is adhered to, and
- statutory obligations regarding safe recruitment policies and procedures are met.

The School Business Manager or other appointed person in school 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 Chief Financial Officer or the CEO, in pursuance of their duties.

### **Role of payroll agent**

ODST's payroll agent (as of April 2017, this is MHR) is 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 ODST and the academies,
- agreeing with ODST the response time and costs for any additional work or reports required, and
- providing access, together with ODST, to data and reports for academy and Trust auditors.

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

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

### **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 ODST HR team by the agreed means, and copies retained.

## **Expenses**

Expenses must be claimed on the appropriate form, and must be agreed in advance with the budget holder.

The budget holder must check and authorise expenses claims.

Expenses forms will be processed locally through the normal monthly payroll. Copies should be retained on file.

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

## **Payroll charges and reconciliation**

Payments for all contracted staff must be checked on a monthly basis and reconciled against records of expected costs as calculated in the academy's budget plan.

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 is incorrect, the error should be corrected and the resulting variance should be explained in the budget monitoring report.

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 monthly payroll reconciliation must be signed by the Headteacher and retained.

ODST's finance team must check the total payroll charges for each academy against payments made from ODST'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.

## **Self-employed persons**

No person may be treated as self-employed without the appropriate checks being performed by the school concerned, to ensure that the person is genuinely self-employed for tax purposes. For further information, please contact the Chief Financial Officer.

## **Income**

### **Funding from the Education & Skills Funding Agency (ESFA)**

For each academy:

- General Annual Grant (or "GAG") funding is credited to the Trust's bank account on a monthly basis, normally in twelve equal instalments; however, this may vary slightly.
- funding for rates is credited to the Trust's bank account after it has been claimed by each academy, and

- Pupil Premium funding is credited to the Trust's bank account quarterly, in January, April, July and October.

To reclaim the cost of rates relief funding, each academy should follow the current procedures given on the ESFA website. Funding received will be credited to the Trust's bank account and passed on to the academy in the next cash advance.

## **Cash advances**

The academy will receive a monthly bank transfer from the Trust's bank account, which is calculated as shown in Appendix D (cash advance statement). The main elements of the calculation are:

- the amount of GAG funding, rates funding, pupil premium and any other funding credited to the Trust in the previous month by the ESFA
- MINUS the expected payroll charges for the month according to the academy's approved budget
- PLUS or MINUS the difference between estimated and actual payroll charges for the previous month
- MINUS the central support services charge...
- PLUS any VAT reimbursement received from HMRC...
- PLUS or MINUS any other adjustments, according to the notes on the calculation spreadsheet as shown in Appendix D (cash advance statement).

A copy of the calculation of the academy's cash advance will be sent to the School Business Manager each month, and should be checked against the bank transfer received to ensure they agree.

## **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 academy's own bank account.

## **Central support services charge**

5% of each academy's GAG funding (excluding rates relief and pupil premium) is payable to ODST and will be used to provide services to academies as follows:

- services provided by ODBE enhanced level service agreement,
- support from ODST school improvement team,
- support from ODST finance team, and
- other services as deemed appropriate by ODST.

The CSS charge will be deducted on a monthly basis and will be calculated as 5% of the amount of the relevant GAG funding received for that month. This is shown in more detail on the cash advance statement (Appendix D).

The ODST 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.

## School Census

Census funding is an important part of income, and it is vital to ensure that all data is correctly entered, to avoid any errors in calculation. There should be formal evidence of review of this return e.g signature of Headteacher.

If you require support or advice in this regard, please contact a member of the ODST finance team.

## Non-funding income

Income may be collected by an academy 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, and
- other chargeable activities or services, such as an Out of Hours Club or Breakfast Club.

**Note: Income generated from the sale of tickets for school productions is to be used to continue or improve cultural activities within the school.**

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 ODST Chief Financial Officer.

No amounts of unpaid income may be written off without referring to the ODST Chief Financial Officer, because he/she is responsible for reporting total write-offs across the Trust as a whole, above a given level as determined by the ESFA.

Unless and until ODST registers for VAT, no VAT is chargeable on income invoices.

## Recording and banking 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 bank account. The School Business Manager 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 academy's insurance policy.

## Events and trips

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

For all events for which there is ticket income or gate money, reasonableness checks should be carried out to ensure that takings equate to the numbers of tickets issued multiplied by the price per ticket.

Similar records should be maintained for sponsored events and school trips, including supporting evidence of any monies collected. These must be retained for audit purposes.



From 1<sup>st</sup> January 2018, all school trips (including risk assessments, where appropriate) should be logged on the Trust's health and safety system (currently "Smartlog").

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

### **Purchasing principles**

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

### **Purchase orders**

All purchases should be authorised in advance of the purchase being made, in all but the most exceptional circumstances. This supports good financial management, ensures that sufficient monies are available before the academy'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 contracts, such as for regular grounds maintenance, where the authorisation of expenditure and ascertaining of best value is deemed to have taken place when the contract for services was signed, or
- 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.

Authorisation limits are as described in the financial scheme of delegation.

At least three written quotations should normally be obtained for all orders over £2,000 and these should be retained for audit purposes. Telephone quotes may be accepted, as long as they are confirmed in writing before the purchase decision is made. If, for any reason, it is not possible to obtain as many as three quotations, approval should be sought from the Trust Chief Financial Officer.

Requisition orders should be given to the School Business Manager, and should be signed by the budget holder, to confirm that sufficient funds are available for the purchase, and that the goods represent good value for money.

The School Business Manager will record a purchase order on the finance system, which will be emailed to the supplier, or posted/faxed if email cannot be used.

### **Choosing suppliers**

The School Business Manager should advise budget holders about suppliers that 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 at a later stage to pool purchasing experience from all the ODST academies in order to compile and maintain a register of approved suppliers, that academies may consult, and that may also enable the Trust to negotiate bulk discounts on behalf of its academies with frequently used suppliers.

## Delivery of goods/services

Schools are required, for audit purposes, to keep a copy of all delivery notes for goods received. Paperwork should be initialled and dated by a member of staff to confirm receipt of the goods as ordered.

## 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 School Business Manager as soon as they are received, together with confirmation that the goods received or services delivered are satisfactory and complete.

If the invoice includes anything which has not been received or delivered, please make sure this is made clear to the School Business Manager so that the invoice may be queried with the supplier.

Invoices should be paid by BACS where possible, otherwise by cheque or direct debit. Payment must not be made in cash.

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 that outweigh the loss of interest receivable on the monies held in the academy's bank account, and that do not adversely affect the academy's cash flow position.

Authorisation limits for payment of invoices are as described in the financial scheme of delegation – these limits are matched by bank mandates for cheque signatories or BACS authorisation.

All invoices should be recorded promptly on PS Financials, in the periods to which they relate.

## Tendering process

All goods and services ordered with a value of over **£40,000 excluding VAT** (or for a series of contracts which exceed **£40,000 excluding VAT** in total) must be subject to formal tendering processes. For further guidance, see ODST's Purchasing and Competitive Tendering Policy.

No academy within ODST may authorise an order (or series of orders for the same project, which will be treated as one order) in excess of £10,000 **excluding VAT**. If any academy wishes to place such an order, advice must be sought from the Trust CFO, who will provide details of the process to be followed and support the academy through the process.

## Bank account and cash flow management

### Bank account

Each academy will be required to have its own bank account with the Trust's bankers, currently Lloyds Bank plc, 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 ODST bank account.

The facility to make payments, view transactions and download electronic bank statements is available via online banking. All passwords must remain confidential, and smartcards/PINs must be kept secure.

Bank reconciliations must be carried out at least monthly, using the finance system.

A bank reconciliation report must be printed monthly, signed by the Headteacher and forwarded to the Central Finance Team, together with the PECR. A copy should be retained by the academy for audit purposes.

Any other bank accounts that existed prior to conversion to an academy must also be included on PS Financials, and monthly reconciliations must be carried out.

Any queries regarding the academy's bank account may be referred to the ODST School Support Officers or to the Lloyds customer relationship manager, whose contact details will be supplied by ODST.

## **Bank mandate**

The CFO is responsible for maintaining an up-to-date list of bank mandates, both for the central MAT and for all ODST schools/academies individually.

Any changes to the list of approved signatories on an academy's bank account requires two signatures and should be reported to the CFO.

## **Payments**

Payments will be made by BACS where possible and otherwise by cheque. Payment to suppliers or to individuals in cash is not permitted.

Authorisation limits for BACS payment runs or for cheque signatories are as described in the financial scheme of delegation.

Any new direct debits should be authorised by two signatories.

For cheque payments, two signatures are required at all times. There is also a restriction on any cheques over £10,000 where the second signatory must be either the CEO or the Chief Financial Officer.

The payees of cheques which remain unpresented after three months must be reminded to present their cheques promptly. After six months, the cheques may be cancelled, and the payees informed.

All cheque books must be stored in a safe or locked cabinet.

## **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 bank account. The School Business Manager 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 academy's insurance policy.

## **Business charge cards**

All new applications for business charge cards (refers also to debit card/credit card/procurement card), or changes to card limits, must be authorised by the Chief Financial Officer.

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.

Receipts must be obtained for all transactions, although in exceptional cases, 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. If this occurs more than once, the ODST CFO must be informed.

Receipts for purchases, or notes of purchases for which the receipts are lost, must be given to the School Business Manager promptly.

The School Business Manager must check procurement card statements monthly and must ensure that all transactions are correctly recorded in the finance system.

For further guidance, please refer to ODST's Credit Card policy.

## **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 School Business Manager 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 School Business Manager as soon as possible. Unused cash must be banked, and expenditure must be recorded in the finance system in the usual way.

## **Cash flow**

The academy must be mindful of its cash flow position at all times, as while income is received on a relatively regular basis, expenditure is often not spread evenly throughout the year.

Overdrafts are not permitted under any circumstances.

The School Support Officer will prepare a monthly cash flow statement for ODST, both by individual academy and for the MAT as a whole. This will be reported to the Chief Financial Officer on a monthly basis, and an update will be provided to the Finance Committee at their regular meetings.

If the School Business Manager believes there is a possibility that the academy may have insufficient money in the bank to meet its obligations, he/she must inform the Central Finance Team 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 School Support Officers, with the prior approval of the Chief Financial Officer.

The TFM must inform the Chief Financial Officer immediately if any academy 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. Should any such situations arise, the CFO will provide an update to the Finance Committee at their next regular meeting.

## **Fixed Assets and Capital Expenditure**

The School Business Manager should ensure that the Fixed Asset Register (Smartlog) is updated on a monthly basis.

See the Trust's Fixed Asset Policy for further guidance.

## **Insurance**

ODST currently subscribes to the Risk Protection Scheme (RPA) provided by the ESFA, which aims to cover all likely insurable events on a pooled risk basis.

School Business Managers must report to the Central Finance Team any claims to RPA, or incidents that may lead to a claim, within five working days.

## **VAT**

### **VAT registration**

ODST is not currently registered for VAT, but if total non-business income exceeds the HMRC threshold, then the Trust will have 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 CFO must monitor all non-funding income for all the Trust's academies to ensure that, if the threshold is approached, professional advice may be sought on VAT registration.

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

### **Reclaiming VAT on expenditure**

ODST may reclaim expenditure incurred by the Trust and its academies on form VAT 126 and, in order to support the cash flow of the Trust and its academies, the form should be submitted at least quarterly, other than in exceptional circumstances.

School business managers should ensure that VAT is correctly recorded against all expenditure, ensuring the correct rate is selected when posting credit card and purchase invoice transactions. Supplier VAT registration numbers must be entered against any credit card transactions that are subject to VAT.

The central finance team will collate the VAT information from academies and from ODST's own records and will submit a VAT 126 claim to HMRC at least quarterly.

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

# **FINANCIAL PROCEDURES MANUAL**

**FINANCE-RELATED POLICIES**

**&**

**APPENDICES**





## Register of Business or Pecuniary interests

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 Trust and its academies therefore maintain a register of the business interests of each trustee, 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 Trust and/or academy may wish to buy goods or services; and
- interests in the appointment, salary, promotion or conditions of service of members of staff.

See example in Appendix C.

The information in the register is taken into account whenever buying or staffing decisions are made. Any trustee, 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.

Trustees, governors and members of staff will be required to inform the Trust and/or academy 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 trustee, 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 Trust Board, Local Governing Body or any other committee which can influence a buying decision will record a standard agenda point seeking updates to trustees' and governors' business interests.

The only exception to the requirement to disclose a business interest is where 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 Trust and/or academy has or may have dealings with the company.

The register is freely available for inspection by trustees, governors, staff and parents.

## Gifts and Hospitality Policy

### Receipts of gifts, hospitality, entertainment or other services

While corporate hospitality and gifts may be a feature of the business world, ODST as charitable company are working in a different context. At all times, we need to be mindful of the potential perception arising from the acceptance of such gifts and hospitality.

It is important that the conduct of Trustees, governors and members of staff is beyond reproach and reflects the highest possible standards of probity and ethics. Their conduct should never lead anyone to suspect dishonesty or think that they may have been unduly influenced by gifts and hospitality.

Trustees, governors and members of staff involved in making buying decisions, in particular, should not accept excessive, frequent or regular gifts, hospitality, entertainment or other services from existing or prospective suppliers.

When considering whether to accept such offers, they must consider whether they could affect their independence or cause concern that they might affect their independence. ODST and each academy will maintain a register of gifts and favours offered and whether these were accepted or rejected.

Trustees, governors and members of staff are required to inform the Chief Executive Officer/ Chief Financial Officer of ODST, using Appendix 1, of such offers as they arise, **and whether these were accepted or not.**

*ODST Board:* gifts, hospitality etc. exceeding £200 p.a. cumulative from one third party, must be reported, **and whether these were accepted or not.**

*Local governing body:* gifts, hospitality etc. exceeding £100 p.a. cumulative from one third party, must be reported, **and whether these were accepted or not.**

*All other staff members:* gifts, hospitality etc. exceeding £50 p.a. cumulative from a single person/organisation and £100 if from a group of parents (i.e. class teacher gifts), must be reported, **and whether these were accepted or not.**

### Expenditure on Gifts, Hospitality, Entertainment and Favours

The Local Governing Body will approve any expenditure as detailed below on gifts, hospitality, ex-gratia payments and losses to be written off. The academy will maintain a log of these. Such expenditure is only authorised if the Local Governing Body can demonstrate that they have taken into account the principles of probity, accountability and value for money.

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 School Business Manager will maintain a register of the occasions when hospitality is provided, the number of people involved and the costs incurred.

## 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 ODST if more than £1,000

## ODST

- Chair of Trustees and AO 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.

Last reviewed on: ~~28<sup>th</sup> February 2020~~ 9<sup>th</sup> February 2023

By: Finance Committee

Next review due: ~~February 2023~~ February 2026

# APPENDIX 1

## Declaration of Gifts and Hospitality - Receipt

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Place of work: \_\_\_\_\_

Job title: \_\_\_\_\_

Description of item	Offered by (name and/or organisation)	Date of receipt	Did you accept the item? (Y/N)	Approximate value (£)

I certify that I have listed above all gifts and hospitality which need to be declared under the terms of the Trust's Gifts & Hospitality Policy.

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_

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

## Notice of Financial Concern

The Trust may issue a notice of concern to any academy it maintains where, in the opinion of the Chief Financial Officer or the Chief Executive Officer of the Trust, the academy has failed to comply with any provisions of the current version of the Academy Trust Handbook and/or the academy's Supplementary Funding Agreement, or where actions need to be taken to safeguard the financial position of the Trust or the academy.

Such a notice will set out the reasons and evidence for it being made and may place restrictions, limitations or prohibitions in relation to the management of funds. These may include but are not limited to:

- Insisting that relevant staff undertake appropriate training to address any identified weaknesses in the financial management of the academy;
- Insisting that an appropriately trained/qualified person chairs the Finance Committee of the LGB, or (if no finance committee exists) leads the LGB on finance matters;
- Placing more stringent restrictions or conditions on the day-to-day financial management of an academy than is usually required by the Trust – such as:
  - the setting of a lower approval level above which a transaction must be approved by the ODST finance team;
  - **the prior approval of any recruitment taking place;**
  - all purchase orders, **above an agreed level**, to be approved by the ODST finance team;
  - the approval of any BACS runs by the ODST finance team.
- Insisting on regular financial monitoring meetings at the academy, attended by officers of the Trust;
- Imposing restrictions or limitations on the manner in which an academy manages its extended activities funded from within its delegated budget share – for example, by requiring an academy to submit income projections and/or financial monitoring reports on such activities.

The notice will clearly state what the requirements are and the way in which and the time by which such requirements must be complied with in order for the notice to be withdrawn. It will also state the actions that the Trust may take where the Academy does not comply with the notice.

Policy last reviewed on: **30<sup>th</sup> September 2021**

By: Finance Committee

Next review due: **October 2024**

# Charging and Remissions policy

## Introduction

The Oxford Diocesan Schools Trust believes that all our pupils should have an equal opportunity to benefit from school activities and visits (curricular and extra-curricular) independent of their parents' financial means. This charging and remissions policy describes how we will do our best to ensure a good range of visits and activities is offered and, at the same time, try to minimise the financial barriers which may prevent some pupils taking full advantage of the opportunities.

The 1996 Education Act requires all schools to have a policy on charging and remissions for school activities, which will be kept under regular review. The review date for this policy is recorded at the end of the document. The policy identifies activities for which:

- voluntary contributions may be requested
- charges will be made
- charges will not be made
- charges may be waived

## Voluntary Contributions

Separately from the matter of charging, schools may always seek voluntary contributions in order to offer a wide variety of experiences to pupils. All requests for voluntary contributions will emphasise their voluntary nature and the fact that pupils of parents who do not make such contributions will be treated no differently from those who have.

The law states:

- If the activity cannot be funded without voluntary contributions, the Governing Body or Headteacher will make this clear to parents from the outset.
- No child will be excluded from an activity because his or her parents are unable or unwilling to pay.
- If insufficient contributions are received, the trip or activity may have to be cancelled.
- If a parent is unwilling or unable to pay, their child will still be given an equal chance to go on the visit.

## No charges will be made for the following:

- An admission application to any maintained school
- Education provided during school hours (including the supply of any materials, books, instruments or other equipment);
- Education provided outside school hours, if it is part of the National Curriculum, or part of a syllabus for a prescribed public examination that the pupil is being prepared for at the school, or part of the school's basic curriculum for religious education;
- Tuition for pupils learning to play musical instruments (or singing), if the tuition is required as part of the National Curriculum, or part of a syllabus for a prescribed public examination that the pupil is being prepared for at the school, or part of religious education;
- Entry for a prescribed public examination, if the pupil has been prepared for it at the school,

although if a pupil fails, without good reason, to meet any examination requirement for a syllabus a charge may / will be made;

- Examination re-sit(s) if the pupil is being prepared for the re-sit(s) at the school;
- Education provided on any trip that takes place during school hours;
- Education provided on any trip that takes place outside school hours:
  - if it is part of the National Curriculum, or
  - part of a syllabus for a prescribed public examination that the pupil is being prepared for at the school, or
  - part of the school's basic curriculum for religious education;
- Supply teachers to cover for those teachers who are absent from school accompanying pupils on a residential trip;
- Transport provided in connection with an educational visit.

### Charges **may** be made for the following:

- Residential and non-residential activities (other than those listed above as not incurring charges) which take place outside school hours, but only if the majority of the time spent on the activity takes place outside school hours. Time spent on travel counts in this calculation if the travel itself occurs during school hours.
- The board and lodging costs only of residential trips deemed to take place during school time. However, those pupils whose parents are in receipt of certain benefits will be exempt from paying the cost of board and lodging – please refer to the remissions policy below.
- Music tuition for individuals or appropriately-sized groups of pupils to play a musical instrument or to sing, and which is not an essential part of the either the National Curriculum or a public examination syllabus for all pupils.
- **Extended day services offered to pupils (such as breakfast and after-school clubs).**

### Other matters

When any trip is arranged parents will be notified of the policy for allocating places. This should recognise that parents may not be able to pay quickly and may have to budget for the trip over a reasonable period of time.

If the number of school sessions on a residential trip is equal to or greater than 50% of the number of half days spent on the trip 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.

An academy's Local Governing Body may choose to impose charges for optional activities (known as 'Optional Extras'), and must document what these are. Any charges made will not exceed the actual cost (per pupil) of provision, and parental agreement will be obtained before any such charges are made.

### Remissions

In order to remove financial barriers from pupils, the **Headteacher and** Local Governing Body may agree that some activities and visits where charges can legally be made will be offered at no charge or a reduced charge to parents in particular circumstances. **The remissions policy should set out the**

~~circumstances in which such charges might be waived, for example if the pupil is in receipt of free school meals.~~

## **Additional considerations**

The Trust recognises its responsibility to ensure that the offer of activities and educational visits should not place an unnecessary burden on family finances. With this in mind, it is recommended that Local Governing Bodies should do the following:

- Publish a list of visits (and their approximate cost) at the beginning of the school year, so that parents can plan ahead.
- Establish a system for parents to pay in instalments.
- When an opportunity for a trip arises at short notice, make it possible to arrange to pay by instalments beyond the date of the trip.
- Acknowledge that offering opportunities on a 'first pay, first served' basis discriminates against pupils from families on lower incomes, and that this method of selection is to be avoided.

Policy last reviewed on: 23<sup>rd</sup> June 2022

By: Finance Committee

Next review due: June 2025



# Purchasing and Competitive Tendering policy

## 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 ODST 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.

## Tendering for purchases of **£40,000 (excluding VAT) and above**

Open, restricted and negotiated tenders are all acceptable. Please contact the ODST CFO 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.

Tenders should be submitted in plain envelopes clearly marked "TENDER" alongside the ITT reference number. Tenders will be time- and date-stamped on receipt and stored in a secure place prior to opening. Tenders received after the deadline will not normally be accepted.

All tenders submitted will be opened at the same time and the tender details will be recorded. These details will include the names of the companies submitting tenders, the amount tendered and will be signed by the people present at the tender opening.

## Contracts worth less than £75,000

Three people (**at least**) should be present at the tender opening. These must **include**:

- The budget holder, academy Headteacher or academy Business Manager
- The School Support Officer
- The ODST Chief Financial Officer

## Contracts worth £75,000 or more

Four people (**at least**) should be present at the tender opening. These must **include**:

- The School Support Officer
- The ODST Chief Financial Officer
- The ODST Chief Executive
- The academy Headteacher

## Contracts above the World Trade Organisation's (WTO) Government Procurement Agreement (GPA) threshold (currently £189,330)

It is crucial that you consult the ODST Chief Financial Officer prior to embarking on any procurement of this nature.

## Important Notes

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

The evaluation process should include those present at the tender opening, unless a conflict of interest is identified.

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 ODST CFO, highlighting the issues and recommending a decision. The ODST Chief Financial Officer is responsible for the acceptance of a tender, **following approval by the Finance Committee or Main Board as appropriate.**

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 ODST. All tenderers should be informed of the final decision.

## Sole Tender

The only exception to the above guidelines is where a school/ the trust is contracting for a service that can only be provided by a particular supplier. An example of this would be services that can only be provided by the diocese, which are fundamental to the religious character and ethos of the school. Under these limited circumstances, which should be carefully documented, a sole tender process is permitted.

Policy last reviewed on: **30<sup>th</sup> September 2021**

By: Finance Committee

Next review due: **October 2024**

## **Credit card policy**

### **Introduction**

Purpose of the Credit Card:

Credit cards are issued to authorised individuals in both the central team and in each academy, for the purpose of purchasing items relating to the legitimate business of ODST.

Each cardholder is responsible for ensuring that the card is used exclusively for the purpose intended and that all transactions are accurately authorised and recorded. See below for examples of approved use.

### **Aims of the Credit Card Policy**

ODST's credit card policy aims to ensure that:

- ODST complies with the requirements of the Academy Trust Handbook in its operation of the credit card account, and in particular that balances are cleared before interest accrues;
- cardholders can accurately account for expenditure on the credit card;
- security measures are in place to minimise the potential for fraud/misuse of the credit card;
- adequate controls are in place to avoid breach of the conditions of usage of the credit card;
- control is maintained over the nature and level of expenditure;
- cardholders comply with ODST's travel and subsistence guidelines; and
- credit card usage is only used for business (not personal) expenditure.

### **ODST Procedures**

These procedures are designed to ensure good practice is followed and misuse of Trust funds is prevented.

Using the Credit Card:

- Cards should only be used for the legitimate business of ODST, and not for personal use
- All expenditure must be supported by a till receipt or VAT invoice (where applicable)

Examples of legitimate use:

This list is not exhaustive but will demonstrate what would be classed as "intended use". All cases must be pre-approved and within the allocated amounts as identified in the 'Limits' section:

- Payment for external training course – the delegate must ensure that they have received authorisation to attend such training prior to any payment being made by credit card. However, ideally it would be preferable that employees negotiate with the training provider to request an invoice for payment, instead of paying via credit card.
- Travel expenses – for example, train travel to an approved course or training event
- Payment for working lunch (external attendees) – arrangements should be made for an external lunch to be purchased either via website or local supermarket
- Payment for DBS/security checks – any checks required as part of our normal recruitment processes
- Payment for books/magazines – any such publications that are required for CPD or in line with ODST operational requirements

- Purchases of school supplies from suppliers such as Amazon or eBay – one-off / ad hoc purchases for small amounts, where it is not possible to negotiate payment by invoice

Emergency use of credit cards:

In the event of an emergency, the CFO or the CEO/ Deputy CEO may authorise a single transaction up to £1,500. In such situations, the officer concerned should email the chair of the finance committee or the chair of trustees, advising them of the nature and value of the transaction.

Misuse of the credit card:

Misuse or non-compliance with these procedures will result in the credit card facility being withdrawn from use by the individual and may result in other sanctions such as inappropriate payments being recouped from the employee's salary and disciplinary procedures.

## Statements

- Credit card statements must be reconciled on a monthly basis
- Any unrecognised transactions on the statement should be investigated internally in the first instance. If it appears to be fraudulent, the transaction should be reported immediately to Lloyds by either the cardholder or another authorised person on the account.
- Records of signed statements (with receipts attached) should be maintained by the SBM (or Finance Administrator for central team) for audit purposes.
- Card statements should be signed off by the appropriate authority – see below:
  - Schools
    - Headteacher - signed by Chair of Governors
    - SBM - signed by Headteacher
    - Any other - signed by Headteacher
  - ODST central team
    - CEO - signed by Chair of Trustees
    - Deputy CEO - signed by CEO
    - HR Manager - signed by CEO/ Deputy CEO/ CFO

## Limits and authorisation

Limits:

For the central team:

The total facility limit is £1,500 – allocated across 3 cards.

Cards should be held by the CEO, the Deputy CEO and the HR Manager.

For schools:

The total facility limit is ~~£1,500~~ £2,000 – allocated across 2 – 3 cards. The Finance Committee has delegated powers to the central finance team to increase this limit to ~~£2,000~~ £3,000 for a school on a case by case basis.

Cards should be held by the Headteacher and the School Business Manager. A third card can be requested by the Headteacher and this requires the authorisation of the Trust Chief Financial Officer.  
Authorisation:

For the central team, the ODST Finance Committee will agree and authorise which members of staff will be cardholders. For schools/academies, the Headteacher will decide which members of staff will be cardholders, and new applications will be approved by the Trust Chief Financial Officer.

The ODST Finance Committee will review the allocation of credit cards and spending to the central team and all academies on an annual basis. In addition, the facility and individual card limits will be reviewed.

## Security

Each cardholder should receive a copy of this policy, and sign and date the form below to confirm receipt of their card.

Named cardholders are responsible for the security of, and spending, on the credit card which bears their name. Cardholders are also responsible for the security of any credit card details saved on websites such as Amazon or eBay.

Under no circumstances must the card number, expiry date or 3-digit security code (CVV number) be written down or kept by anyone. The card's PIN should be memorised and not written down and kept with the card.

If a credit card is lost or stolen, it should be reported to both the central finance team and to the relevant banking helpline (Currently Lloyds).

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### To be signed by the cardholder

I confirm receipt of the Lloyds Bank Corporate Card number

\_\_\_\_\_

I have read and understand the Credit Card Policy and Procedures above, and confirm that I will adhere to these in my use of the card provided.

<b>Cardholder</b>	<b>ODST Trust Chief Financial Officer/Chair of Governors</b>
Signed	Signed
Print name	Print name
Date	Date

Policy last reviewed on: **10<sup>th</sup> February 2022**

By: Finance Committee

Next review due: **February 2025**

## 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 ODST. 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 £1,000 (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 **and assets bought together as a set which should be capitalized as a group (for example a batch of laptops)**. Fixed assets are categorised as follows:
  - A Land and Buildings
  - B Plant and Machinery
  - C Furniture, Fixtures and Fittings
  - D Computer Equipment
  - E Vehicles
- 2.2 Any items that meet the definition of a fixed asset but are below the £1,000 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 **Smartlog**) 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~~ **spot checks, carried out termly**, and the ~~register~~ **asset management system** will be reported to **LGB of the school at the next available meeting**. These should also be reported to the CFO who will inform the Finance **and Premises** Committee ~~at the next available meeting~~. **if the discrepancy is deemed material.**

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:**

Land ( <i>see footnote</i> ):			
Freehold – not depreciated	n/a	n/a	n/a
Leasehold – over term of lease	0.8 % per annum	125 yrs	straight line
Buildings ( <i>see footnote</i> ):			
Freehold – over UEL	n/a	n/a	n/a
Leasehold – shorter of UEL or lease	2% per annum	50 yrs	straight line
Improvements >£25,000	5% per annum	20 yrs	straight line
Furniture, Fixtures and Fittings	20% per annum	5 yrs	straight line
ICT Equipment:			
Servers, projectors etc	20% per annum	5 yrs	straight line
PCs, laptops etc	33.3% per annum	3 yrs	straight line
Vehicles	20% per annum	5 yrs	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 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 use of the Fixed Asset Disposal Form (Appendix E) and in line with the latest Scheme of Delegation**. Where significant, **the item** 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.

Policy last reviewed on: **23<sup>rd</sup> June 2022**

By: Finance Committee

Next review due: **June 2025**



## Capital and reserves policy

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.

Reserves are maintained to provide an appropriate level of working capital, to invest in infrastructure for the future and to provide a contingency against unforeseen cost and liabilities that might arise in the present.

Whilst wishing to ensure the stability of organisational operations, the Trust also believes that the funding received in any one year should be used to support the children on roll at that time - *unless* there is a specific project which will require the accumulation of funding over more than one year.

LGBs that wish to spend reserves need to obtain prior written agreement from the Finance Committee of the Board. This should be sought well in advance of the budget submission deadline dates.

The following criteria will be applied when assessing any requests for expenditure from reserves:

- Are there clearly identified objectives for the expenditure, agreed by the LGB and which fit into the School Development Plan?
- Does the expenditure fit into the medium and long term educational and financial plans for the school?
- Does the expenditure take reserves to below the one month minimum for reserves and if so is there a detailed plan of how this will be addressed by the school and timescales involved?

If school reserves are above the maximum three months, the Trustees may request clarification and seek evidence that this is in the best interests of the children on roll.

Policy last reviewed: **10<sup>th</sup> February 2022** By:

Finance Committee

Next review due: **February 2025**

## **Policy for the loan of equipment**

Items of equipment belonging to the academy or to the Trust (for example, laptops, cameras or musical instruments) that are to be removed from academy premises must be recorded in a “Register of Equipment Loans”. The register must be signed by the academy’s Headteacher/ School Business Manager, 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 or the academy 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.

There may be a requirement to bring laptops into the academy frequently to update anti-virus software. The person borrowing the equipment must check this with the IT Department in the issuing academy.

An example Register of Equipment Loans form is shown in Appendix F.

## Lettings policy

All lettings are subject to a letting agreement, setting out the terms and conditions of the academy's letting, including the agreed charge.

The LGB approves letting rates, bearing in mind the cost of arranging lettings, such as for cleaning and overtime for premises staff.

Free use and charges below economic cost are not permitted unless the hire is time limited (for example, as an introductory offer to encourage long term letting) or a substantial case is made to the Headteacher and the LGB, clearly demonstrating that the letting contributes significantly to the academy's aims and objectives.

All hiring of academy rooms or premises must be recorded on the letting planner kept by the Site Manager/Caretaker and in a lettings diary.

The lettings diary and the letting planner are reviewed by the School Business Manager on a monthly basis to ensure that all lettings have been invoiced.

The hirer must complete a hire form when the letting or series of lettings is booked.

All lettings must be invoiced promptly, and at least termly.

The academy must ensure that relevant insurance is in place for each letting.

ODST Policy (ALL Schools with no change allowed to core text): under Section 6:16 of the DfE Governance Handbook (Mar 19) and section 2:41 of the Academy Trust Handbook (2019) all schools are required to have appropriate procedures in place for whistleblowing.

## **ODST Whistleblowing Policy**

### **Introduction**

1. All schools and academy trusts are required to have appropriate procedures in place for handling whistleblowing and for ensuring school staff know who they can contact if they wish to raise a concern.
2. This document explains the types of concerns that can be raised under this procedure, the legal protection for whistle-blowers and how whistleblowing concerns will be handled.
3. This procedure should be followed for any whistleblowing matters raised by employees of the school, supply staff, agency workers or employees in the central team.

### **Policy Statement**

4. ODST and its member schools are committed to the highest possible standards of:
  - openness and inclusiveness
  - accountability and
  - integrity.

### **Aim of procedure**

- To encourage those working in the school and wider Trust to report suspected wrongdoing promptly, in the knowledge that it will be taken seriously.
- To provide guidance on how to raise concerns.
- To reassure staff that they are able to raise genuine concerns made in the public interest without fear of reprisals, even if they turn out to be mistaken.

## **What is Whistleblowing?**

5. Whistleblowing is when a worker reports certain types of wrongdoing or misconduct within an organisation.
6. The wrongdoing disclosed must be in the public interest. This means it must affect others, e.g. pupils or the general public etc.
7. The wrongdoing must relate to or show one of the following:
  - a criminal offence
  - a failure to comply with a legal obligation
  - a possible miscarriage of justice
  - a Health & Safety risk
  - damaging the environment
  - misuse of public money
  - corruption or unethical conduct
  - abuse of pupils, students or other users
  - deliberate concealment of any of these matters
  - any other substantial and relevant concern.
8. The concern could be about something that happened in the past, is currently happening or likely to happen in the future.
9. Concerns or complaints that employees wish to raise formally, about their own employment, should normally be raised using the ODST Grievance Procedure, unless the employee believes the concern is in the public interest. This includes for example, concerns related to working conditions, working relations, employment rights or bullying or harassment.

## **Legal protection for whistle-blowers**

10. Whistle-blowers are protected by law from being treated unfairly or losing their jobs because they 'blow the whistle'.
11. Whistle-blowers must hold a reasonable belief that the concern they are raising is in the public interest.
12. The Trust will provide all reasonable protection for those who raise concerns made in the public interest.
13. The Trust will ensure that appropriate personal support is offered both to a worker raising a concern and to any worker against whom allegations have been made under this procedure.
14. Although an employee has certain legal obligations of confidentiality to the school/ Trust, in a limited set of circumstances, whistleblowing may override these obligations. This guidance sets out the circumstances under which these disclosures may lawfully be made.

## Procedure for raising a whistleblowing concern

### Step 1- Deciding who to report the concern to

15. Concerns can be raised verbally or in writing.
16. Concerns can be raised at Trust level (see Annex 1 for contact details) or locally to your line manager, Headteacher or the Chair of Governors.
17. If you wish to report the matter to someone outside of the school/ Trust you can contact one of the external bodies/organisations listed in Annex 2.
18. Reporting concerns to the media, in most cases will lead to the loss of your whistleblowing law rights.
19. Although you are not expected to prove beyond doubt the truth of your concerns, you will need to demonstrate that you have sufficient evidence or other reasonable grounds to raise them.
20. You may wish to obtain advice from a trade union representative, the Citizen's Advice Bureau or Public Concern at Work on 020 7404 6609 / [www.pcaaw.co.uk](http://www.pcaaw.co.uk)
21. You can be accompanied by a trade union representative or colleague to any meetings that are required.

### Step 2

22. The person with whom you have raised your concern, will decide what action is needed. They may ask you to provide further information. They will write to you within 10 days to let you know how your concern will be dealt with.
23. The information you can expect to receive is:
  - an indication of how the concern will be dealt with
  - an estimate of how long it will take to provide a final response
  - whether any initial enquiries have been made
  - whether further investigations will take place, and if not why not
  - information about support available for you.
24. The person with whom you have raised your concern will at the same time notify the ODST HR team that a whistleblowing allegation has been made.
25. Advice on dealing with concerns is available in the first instance from the ODST HR team.

### Step 3

26. Initial enquiries will be made to decide whether an investigation is appropriate.

27. An investigation may be carried out, depending on the nature of the allegations and the evidence/information presented. Full details of the investigation may be withheld from you to protect the confidentiality of other people.
28. Information will need to be passed on to those with a legitimate need to have this information and it may be necessary for you to provide a written statement and act as a witness in any subsequent disciplinary proceedings or enquiry. This will be discussed with you first.
29. Where an investigation is necessary, it may take the form of one or more of the following:
  - an internal local investigation by the head teacher or a governor, which may, for example, take the form of a disciplinary investigation
  - an investigation by the Internal Audit Service
  - a referral to the Police
  - the setting up of an external independent inquiry

#### Step 4

30. You will be informed of the outcome of any investigation, in writing, and/or of any action taken, subject to the constraints of confidentiality and the law.

If you do not feel your concern has been addressed adequately you may raise it with an independent body such as one of the following as appropriate (See Annex 2 for further details):

- your trade union
  - the Citizens Advice Bureau
  - a relevant professional body, regulatory organisation or a voluntary organisation
  - the Police
  - the Local Government Ombudsman
  - Equality and Human Rights Commission
31. If there is an issue of an exceptionally serious nature which you believe to be substantially true, then you may disclose the issue to someone other than those listed in paragraph 18 and ~~19~~<sup>21</sup>. In determining whether it is reasonable for you to have made a disclosure, the identity of the person to whom the disclosure is made will be taken into account. Disclosures to anyone outside of the recognised bodies listed in paragraphs ~~35-32~~ and Annex 1 and 2 may not be protected disclosures under the Act.
  32. You have a duty to the school/ Trust not to disclose confidential information. This does not prevent you from seeking independent advice at any stage or from discussing the issue with the charity Public Concern at Work on 020 7404 6609 and [www.pcaaw.co.uk](http://www.pcaaw.co.uk) in accordance with the provisions of the Public Interest Disclosure Act 1998.

#### **Review and Reporting of the Procedure**

33. This procedure will be regularly reviewed by the Board of Trustees of ODST to ensure that it continues to remain compliant and meets the needs of Schools and those working in schools.

## Annex 1- Contact List for ODST

If you wish to report the matter to someone within the Trust but outside of the ODST school, please contact one of the following:

Name	Contact
Christine Gibbins	<a href="mailto:odst.whistleblowing@oxford.anglican.org">odst.whistleblowing@oxford.anglican.org</a>
Stephen Barber- Trustee	01865 208752

## Annex 2

You can blow the whistle to an external organization rather than your employer. The list below documents some of the prescribed people or bodies that you can go to. Please choose the correct one for your concern. A full list can be found online at Gov.Uk:

[https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/431221/bis-15-289-blowing-the-whistle-to-a-prescribed-person-list-of-prescribed-persons-and-bodies-2.pdf](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/431221/bis-15-289-blowing-the-whistle-to-a-prescribed-person-list-of-prescribed-persons-and-bodies-2.pdf)

**Some of the bodies that may be relevant for school's staff are:**

Ofsted	Piccadilly Gate, Store Street, Manchester, M1 2WD Tel: 0300 123 3155 Email: <a href="mailto:whistleblowing@ofsted.gov.uk">whistleblowing@ofsted.gov.uk</a>
Office of Qualifications and Examinations Regulation	Casework Manager, Ofqual, Spring Place, Coventry Business Park, Herald Avenue, Coventry CV5 6UB Tel: 0300 303 3346 <a href="mailto:Public.Enquiries@ofqual.gov.uk">Public.Enquiries@ofqual.gov.uk</a> Online reform form: <a href="http://www.ofqual.gov.uk/complaints-and-appeals/whistleblowing/">www.ofqual.gov.uk/complaints-and-appeals/whistleblowing/</a>
National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children (NSPCC)	The NSPCC Whistleblowing Advice Line is for anyone with child protection concerns in the workplace. The helpline provides support and advice to those who feel unable to get a child protection issue addressed by their employer. It can be contacted anonymously on 0800 028 0285.
Health and Safety Executive	Tel: 0300 003 1647 Online form: <a href="http://www.hse.gov.uk/contact/raising-your-concern.htm">http://www.hse.gov.uk/contact/raising-your-concern.htm</a> <a href="http://www.hse.gov.uk">www.hse.gov.uk</a>
The Local Government Ombudsman	Address: PO Box 4771, Coventry. CV4 0EH Web: <a href="http://www.lgo.org.uk">www.lgo.org.uk</a> Tel no. 0300 061 0614
Data Protection and Freedom of Information	The Office of the Information Commissioner, Wycliffe House, Water Lane, Wilmslow, SK9 5AF Tel: 0303 123 1113 Email: <a href="mailto:casework@ico.gsi.gov.uk">casework@ico.gsi.gov.uk</a>



## APPENDIX A - Glossary

For the purposes of this manual, the following definitions (adapted from the Academy Trust Handbook) will apply:

Academic year	The “school year” starting 1 September and ending 31 August.
Academy trust	ODST, 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 ODST who has been designated as accountable for regularity, propriety and value for money. In single-academy trusts this should be the Headteacher. In multi-academy trusts it should be the chief executive or executive Headteacher of the overall trust.
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 and forms part of the trust’s annual accounts.
Accounts Direction	The ESFA’s guide for academies on preparing their annual report and accounts.
Academy accounts return	A return of key financial information is submitted online, based on the 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 executive of the academy trust and head of the management team.
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.
Chief Financial Officer	Principal Finance Officer of ODST
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.
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
ODST	Oxford Diocesan Schools Trust (multi-academy 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, behaviour 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

### Oxford Diocesan Schools Trust - Scheme of Delegation

ODST										
		ESFA / SoS	ODST Board of Trustees	ODST Finance Committee	ODST CEO/ Deputy CEO	ODST CFO	LGB	Academy Principal	Academy Business Manager	Academy cost centre manager
	Annual Budget	Reviews	Authorises	Approves	Reviews	Prepares				
	Purchasing	Acquisition of freehold on land or buildings	Authorises over <b>£50,000</b> , excluding freeholds on land or buildings	<b>Authorises up to £50,000</b>	Authorises up to £25,000	Authorises up to £10,000				
	Asset disposal	Disposal of freehold on land or buildings or of heritage assets	Authorises transactions over £25,000 and all disposals other than freeholds on land or buildings or of heritage assets	<b>Authorises up to £25,000</b>	Authorises up to <b>£10,000.</b>	Authorises up to <b>£5,000</b>				
	Write-offs	Above 1% of total annual income/£45,000 max per transaction or 5%/ <b>£250,000</b> cumulatively pa	Up to 1% of <b>total annual income</b> /£45,000 max per transaction and up to 5%/ <b>£250,000</b> max cumulatively pa	<b>Authorises up to £25,000</b>	<b>Authorises up to £10,000</b>	Authorises up to £5,000				

Academy											
		ESFA / SoS	ODST Board of Trustees	ODST Finance Committee	ODST CEO/ Deputy CEO	ODST CFO		LGB	Academy Principal	Academy Business Manager	Academy cost centre manager
	Annual Budget		Authorises	Refers to Board	Reviews	Reviews		Reviews	Reviews	Prepares	Bids
	Purchasing		Authorises up to <b>WTO</b> limits	Authorises up to £100,000	Authorises up to £50,000	Authorises up to £25,000		Reviews over £10,000	Authorises up to £10,000	Authorises up to £1,000	Authorises up to £500
	Asset disposal	Disposal of freehold on land or buildings or of heritage assets	Authorises all disposals, other than freeholds on land or buildings or of heritage assets	<b>Authorises up to £25,000</b>	<b>Authorises up to £10,000</b>	Authorises up to £5,000		Reviews	Reviews	Reviews	
	Write-offs	Above 1% /£45,000 max per transaction or 5% cumulatively pa	Up to 1% /£45,000 max per transaction & up to 5% max cumulatively pa	<b>Authorises up to £25,000</b>	<b>Authorises up to £10,000</b>	Authorises up to £5,000		Reviews	Reviews	Reviews	

## APPENDIX C – Register of Business or Pecuniary Interests

Name of Trustee, Governor or Member of Staff:

Date of Appointment to Trust Board or Governing Body:

Date of Resignation/Retirement:

Name of Business	Nature of Business	Nature of Interest	Date of Appointment or Acquisition	Date of Cessation of Interest	Signature of Trustee, Governor or Member of Staff

I certify that I have declared all beneficial interests which I or any person closely connected with me have with business or other organisations which may have dealings with the Trust. I have also declared all pecuniary interests.

### Record of Review

Date of review	Reviewed by	Signature		Date of review	Reviewed by	Signature

## APPENDIX D ODST Cash Advance Statement template 2021/22

School name	Month
	Actual / forecast
<b>GAG funding - subject to CSS charge</b>	
Pupil-led factors	
Other factors	
Minimum funding guarantee	
Education Standards Grant	
SEN LACSEG Adjustment	
Allocation Protection	
Other (see note 1)	
	<b>A</b>
	<b>£0.00</b>
<b>Plus: Other funding not subject to CSS charge</b>	
Pupil Premium	
UFSM Funding	
PE & Sports Grant	
Rates Relief	
Other (see note 2)	
	<b>B</b>
	<b>£0.00</b>
<b>Less: Insurance costs charged by ESFA</b>	
ACAD risk protection	
	<b>C</b>
<b>Total funding received from ESFA</b>	<b>D=A+B-C</b>
	<b>£0.00</b>
<b>Less: Amounts retained by ODST from funding received</b>	
5% CSS charge	E=5% of A
Expected payroll costs for the month	
Previous month payroll costs higher than estimate (see note 3)	
Other amounts retained (see note 4)	
	<b>F</b>
	<b>£0.00</b>
<b>Plus: Amounts added by ODST to cash advance</b>	
Previous month payroll costs lower than estimate (see note 3)	
VAT reimbursement	
Other amounts added to cash advance (see note 5)	
	<b>G</b>
	<b>£0.00</b>
<b>Total cash advance</b>	<b>H=D-F+G</b>
	<b>£0.00</b>
Amount transferred to school account	£0.00
Amount owed to ODST due to negative cash advance	£0.00

## Notes to the cash advance statement

<b>Other GAG Funding received</b>	Note 1	
<i>Description</i>		£0.00
<b>Other Funding received</b>	Note 2	
<i>Description</i>		£0.00
<b>Payroll Adjustments</b>	Note 3	
Previous month's estimated payroll costs*		£0.00
Previous month's actual payroll costs		£0.00
Adjustment to cash advance for previous month's payroll		£0.00
<i>*Payroll estimate for current month is based on last month's actual payroll costs</i>		
<b>Other amounts retained by ODST</b>	Note 4	
Payroll Costs (previous month's)		£0.00
Apprenticeship Levy (previous month's)		£0.00
Kiddivouchers Admin Charge (current month)		£0.00
Reclaim negative cash advances		£0.00
DBS Checks Recharged		£0.00
16-17 costs (see comments)		£0.00
<b>Other amounts added to cash advance</b>	Note 5	
<i>Description</i>		£0.00
<i>Description</i>		£0.00
<i>Description</i>		£0.00



## APPENDIX E – Fixed Asset Disposal Form

Name of academy \_\_\_\_\_

### Section 1 - Details

1. Description of Item(s)\*: \_\_\_\_\_
2. Inventory Number\*: \_\_\_\_\_
3. Date of Purchase\*: \_\_\_\_\_
4. Original Price\*: \_\_\_\_\_
5. Current Value of asset\*:  
(Recorded on **Smartlog**) \_\_\_\_\_
6. Reason for Disposal:  
(please be specific) \_\_\_\_\_
7. Proposed Method of Disposal: \_\_\_\_\_
8. Income generated from disposal\*: \_\_\_\_\_
9. Code to be Credited: \_\_\_\_\_
10. If sold, has the appropriate IT Manager been consulted for Estimate of residual value (if any), and to ensure that hard disc is erased to comply with current data protection legislation, including GDPR? YES / NO
11. Health, Safety and Environmental issues. It is the responsibility of the disposer to ensure that:  
  
a) any equipment gifted or sold must be to a person competent to receive and fully complies with the H&S Provision and Use of Work Equipment Regulations.  
  
b) all Health, Safety and Environmental requirements been complied with, including, if applicable, items covered by the WEEE (Waste Electrical and Electronic Equipment) Directives. If applicable gifted or sold equipment must be covered by a current Portable Appliance Test Certificate (logged in PAT records).

## Section 2 - Approval

TO: ODST Chief Financial Officer (up to £5k)/Board of Trustees (above £5k)

Submitted for your approval to dispose of the above item(s) by method(s) indicated and for the value (if applicable) stated.

### Member of staff responsible for the Disposal\*

Signed \_\_\_\_\_

(print name) \_\_\_\_\_

### Headteacher

Signed \_\_\_\_\_

(print name) \_\_\_\_\_

### ODST Chief Financial Officer (up to £5k)/Trustee (above £5k)

Signed \_\_\_\_\_

(print name) \_\_\_\_\_

Date Disposal Completed\* \_\_\_\_\_

*Lines marked with an asterisk (\*) denote data held on Smartlog asset management system*

## APPENDIX F - Register of Equipment Loans template

Name of 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. The equipment is insured during the journey to my home and should not be left in a vehicle unattended. I will arrange for the equipment to be insured while it is in my home. I shall treat the equipment with care and ensure that it is kept safe.</p>	
<p>Signature of person borrowing equipment:</p>	
<p>Signature of Business Manager or Finance Officer:</p>	
<p>Date</p>	





ODST Registered Office:

**St Mary's Convent**  
Denchworth Road  
Wantage  
Oxfordshire  
OX12 9AU

Company number: 8143249