

St Matthew's High Brooms CE Primary School

Powder Mill Lane
Tunbridge Wells
Kent
TN4 9DY



Finance Policy

Headteacher: Claire Harris
Chair of Governors: Lynn MacKay

Ratified: May 2025
Next Review: May 2026

Policy written by: Kent Model Policy

Fulfilling God-given potential

*Distinctive Christian values-
Honesty, Kindness, Respect, Responsibility*

1. Introduction

The Governors of St Matthew's High Brooms CE Primary School are committed to providing sound financial controls, to achieving value for money and to being worthy custodians of public money. To achieve these aims the Headteacher and the Governing Body have drawn up this Finance Policy to provide the guiding principles by which all Governors and staff will operate within the **Committee Model of Governance**.

This policy has been drawn up with reference to the Local Authority's (LA) Scheme for Financing Schools.

2. Principles

St Matthew's High Brooms CE Primary School Finance Policy will adhere to the following principles:

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

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

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

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

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

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

The school will be adequately insured against exposure to risk.

The school will ensure that:

- The Budget Share is spent for the purpose of the school only
- Purchasing arrangements achieve value for money
- There are sound procedures for the administration of personnel matters

- There are sound procedures for the administration of payroll matters
- Stocks, stores and assets are recorded and adequately safeguarded against loss or theft
- All income due is identified and all collections receipted, recorded and banked promptly
- The operation of the bank account and the reconciliation of bank balances with the accounting records are properly controlled
- There is no use of petty cash
- The use of a corporate card is strictly controlled.
- The use of a NatWest **onecard** is strictly controlled
- The School Voluntary Fund and any other non-public funds are administered as rigorously as public funds
- Any suspected irregularity will be reported immediately to the LA's Head of Internal Audit
- The school will adhere to current GDPR and Data Protection legislation
- Appropriate training in financial administration will be given to enable staff cover at all times

3. Putting Policy into Practice

3.1 Delegated Authority

The **Full Governing Body** of St Matthew's High Brooms CE Primary School has overall responsibility for the management of all of the school's finances covering the revenue budget, other budgets delegated or devolved by the LA and other funds (e.g. the School Voluntary Fund).

The **Full Governing Body** of St Matthew's High Brooms CE Primary School will ensure the annual detailed report of the Schools Financial Value Standard (SFVS) is provided to them and the chair of governors will sign the completed form prior to sending a copy to the Local Authority.

The **Finance, Resources and Personnel Committee** is delegated responsibility by the Governing Body for the following aspects of financial management;

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

The **Headteacher** is responsible for implementing the decisions of the Governing Body and for the operational management of the school. The **Finance Assistant** has delegated responsibility by the Headteacher for the general administration of financial procedures.

3.2 Internal Financial Controls

The internal financial controls operated by St Matthew's High Brooms CE Primary School follow the controls set out in the LA's Scheme for Financing Schools. Any additional internal financial controls included within the school's financial procedures are reviewed by the **Finance Team** and ratified by the Governing Body.

3.3 Financial Links to the School Plan

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

3.4 Monitoring and Virements

St Matthew's High Brooms CE Primary School recognises that the regular monitoring of income and expenditure against the agreed budget is central to effective financial management. To this end, the Headteacher carries out a monthly internal monitoring procedure. A monitoring report is taken to all the meetings of the **Finance, Resources and Personnel Committee** which reports, as required, to the **Full Governing Body**. Monitoring reports are submitted to the LA in accordance with its timetable. Governors should ensure their meetings are timed to see all monitoring submitted to the LA either prior to submission or soon after. This will ensure they have an up-to-date position of the school's finances.

On occasions, virements need to be carried out. Virements to the ratified budget are minuted appropriately and require the following authorisation:

- Virements up to £8,000 - The Headteacher, reported to the Finance, Resources and Personnel Committee
- Virements from £8,000 to £15,000 - The Finance, Resources and Personnel Committee
- Virements over £15,000 – The Full Governing Body

3.5 Insurance

St Matthew's High Brooms CE Primary School is insured, through Gallagher with relevant cover, as identified by the schedule received from the LA's Insurance section. Staff Absence Insurance is covered by Convex. School Trip Insurance is through Chubb.

St Matthew's High Brooms CE Primary School recognises that cash is not insured through the LA's Insurance policy.

3.6 Purchasing

At St Matthew's High Brooms CE Primary School, some budgets are delegated to subject leaders and to year group teachers. Budget holders prepare a 'needs budget' for their area of responsibility, which is approved by the Headteacher in line with the priority needs of the school and the School Improvement Plan.

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

Where the school purchases large items, we adhere to the procedure for Spending the Council's Money as laid down in the Scheme for Financing Schools. (<http://www.kelsi.org.uk/policies-and-guidance/finance-guidance-and-policies/scheme-for-financing-schools>),

In summary:

- For orders in excess of £8000 but less than £15,000, three written quotes are obtained and submitted to the **Finance, Resources and Personnel Committee** for evaluation and approval, No referral is required to the **Full Governing Body**.
- For orders in excess of £15,000 but less than £50,000, three written quotations are obtained and submitted to the **Finance, Resources and Personnel Committee** for evaluation and report to the **Full Governing Body**.
- For orders in excess of £50,000, no fewer than three competitive tenders are sought and submitted to the **Full Governing Body** for evaluation and approval,

All of the above will be reported and minuted at a **Finance, Resources and Personnel Committee /Full Governing Body** meeting to ensure that the School is seen to be obtaining value for money at all times.

The school does not enter into any Hire Purchase agreements, Finance agreements or Finance Leases as this constitutes borrowing which is not permitted.

3.7 Personnel Matters

At St Matthew's High Brooms CE Primary School, at the start of every financial year the **Headteacher** uses a financial planning tool to calculate the salary costs of all members of staff, including increments, where applicable. These details are used by the **Finance, Resources and Personnel Committee** for incorporation into the school budget planning process.

The **Performance Management Committee** undertakes an annual review of the Headteacher's salary, and recommends enhancements, if applicable, to the Full Governing Body for approval.

The Headteacher undertakes an annual review of all other staff, in accordance with the Pay Policy and reports to the **Full Governing Body**.

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

3.8 Payroll Matters

The payroll provider at St Matthew's High Brooms CE Primary School is Capita Business Services Ltd, who provide payroll services to the specification laid down by the LA. The Headteacher, or a designated deputy head, signs off the monthly payroll reports once they have been checked for accuracy.

3.9 Safeguard of Stocks, Stores and Assets

All staff at St Matthew's High Brooms CE Primary School are responsible for the security of school assets. Co-ordinators, subject managers and class teachers safeguard their assets. The IT technician and Site Manager maintain an asset register, which is checked at least once a year and certified by the Headteacher or designated deputy head.

- Items of value are held in a locked cupboard/cabinet, wherever possible and all items are visibly security marked to deter theft.

- Where assets are written off and disposed of, the **Finance, Resources and Personnel Committee** agrees this on behalf of the **Full Governing Body** and their agreement is minuted.
- Where school assets are loaned to staff or pupils, a loans book is completed and signed upon borrowing the item and again upon the item's return.

3.10 Income

At St Matthew's High Brooms CE Primary School, the Lettings Policy is reviewed and updated approved by the **Full Governing Body**.

Where debts are required to be written off, after every effort has been made by the Headteacher and Governors to recoup the monies, the Full Governing Body will approve up to £1000. Approval to write off debts over £1,000 is required in writing from the LA Finance Business Partner CYPE.

Since the Local Authority does not insure for cash held on the school premises, we have agreed a level of cash to be held in school at any one time as £500. Cash will be receipted, recorded, kept at all times in a safe and secure place e.g. the safe and banked promptly at all times.

3.11 The School Bank Account

St Matthew's High Brooms CE Primary School operates its school bank account in accordance with the regulations in the LA's Scheme for Financing Schools. The school operates only one current account for the administration of KCC official funds.

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

St Matthew's High Brooms CE Primary School pays suppliers/invoices via BACS, cheques and direct debits ensuring it adheres to all financial controls within the Scheme for Financing Schools.

Bank statements at St Matthew's High Brooms CE Primary School are received on a weekly basis and reconciled in accordance with LA guidelines. The Headteacher or designated deputy signs and dates the bank statement when the reconciliation has been checked.

3.12 Online Payments

St Matthew's High Brooms CE uses the online payment system for parents through Parentpay.

3.13 Petty Cash

There is no petty cash facility in operation at St Matthew's High Brooms CE Primary School.

Staff must not use their own cash, personal debit or credit cards for the purchase of any items for the school.

Personal Reward cards must not be used in conjunction with any school purchase.

3.14 Purchase and Corporate Cards

St Matthew's High Brooms CE Primary School operates an approved NatWest **onecard** in accordance with the LA guidance.

Cardholder and/or Position	Single transaction limit	Monthly card limit
Deputy Head, Carolyn Pollard	£750	£2000

Headteacher, Claire Harris	£750	£2000
Finance Assistant, Lisa Weller	£3000	£5000

3.15 The Voluntary Fund

No voluntary fund operates.

3.16 Fraud and Irregularities

All staff at St Matthew's High Brooms CE Primary School are aware of the Local Authority's Whistleblowing procedure. The School has an Anti-Fraud, Bribery and Corruption Policy and a Whistleblowing Policy. These details are available to staff in the staff handbook.

3.17 Data Protection

St Matthew's High Brooms CE Primary School (as Data Controller) adheres to the GDPR and the Data Protection Act 2018 including paying a data protection fee to the Information Commissioners Office (ICO). The School's designated Data Protection Officer is Satswana.

3.18 Information Systems

St Matthew's High Brooms CE Primary School has a password protection procedure laid down in the staff handbook. Systems are backed up regularly and the backups held securely, virus protection is in place and is updated regularly and the school has a disaster recovery plan for the administration network.

3.19 Financial Administration

At St Matthew's High Brooms CE Primary School, two members of staff are trained in the use of the finance software and financial administration procedures. In event of staff absence, the Headteacher would seek advice from the LA's Schools Finance Services. We purchase a support contract through the LA's Schools Financial Services, which is reviewed on an annual basis, allowing us the option to purchase additional area support, if required.