

VPNS FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT POLICY AND PROCEDURES

Based on Model FMP provided by WBC Schools Accountancy Team (Updated Model Policy October 2024).

1. AIMS

- 1.1 This document has been adopted by the Governing Body, as the basis for the administration and management of finances in relation to all delegated and devolved funds received from the Local Authority (LA) and other direct government grants. The aim of the policy is to create a framework within which the school conducts its finances, the delegation of responsibility and the methods of operations, so that all parties concerned are aware of their duties and responsibilities and that efficient and effective internal and financial controls are maintained.
- 1.2 The implementation of appropriate practice and procedures will ensure the best use of the limited funds available to enhance the education of the school's pupils.
- 1.3 The operation of all other funds available to the school are managed separately under the Friends of Victoria Park Nursery School & Family hub and audited independently.

2 OVERALL MANAGEMENT RESPONSIBILITIES

- 2.1 The Governing Body will manage its affairs in accordance with the high standards of Public Sector administration, based on a distinct set of values, of which the fundamental principles are:
 - 2.1.1 Openness – open approach to all interested parties in the disclosure of information that lends itself to necessary scrutiny
 - 2.1.2 Integrity – honesty and objectivity, and a high standard of propriety and probity in the stewardship of public funds and resources
 - 2.1.3 Accountability – the process whereby individuals are responsible for their actions and decisions
- 2.2 The Governing Body will adopt and comply with the following regulations and guidelines as published by the LA to the extent that such regulations and guidelines apply to schools, including:
 - 2.2.1 The West Berkshire Council (WBC) Scheme for Financing Schools 2024 (updated for issue 16) found on [Microsoft Word - Scheme For Financing Schools 2024 \(updated for Issue 16\) - V1.4 FINAL \(westberks.gov.uk\)](#)
 - 2.2.2 The WBC (part 9) Financial Rules of Procedure (updated September 2024) Found on <https://www.westberks.gov.uk/constitution-financial-rules#App%204%201>
 - 2.2.3 The WBC (part 11) Contract Rules of Procedure (updated April 2023) Found on https://www.westberks.gov.uk/media/51571/Contract-Rules-of-Procedure/pdf/Part_11_-_Contract_Rules_of_Procedure.pdf?m=1726060981227
 - 2.2.4 [Procedure/pdf/Part_11_-_Contract_Rules_of_Procedure.pdf?m=1726060981227](https://www.westberks.gov.uk/media/51571/Contract-Rules-of-Procedure/pdf/Part_11_-_Contract_Rules_of_Procedure.pdf?m=1726060981227)
 - 2.2.5 The WBC Anti-Fraud and corruption Policy Summary (Revision May 2024) found on https://www.westberks.gov.uk/media/59415/Anti-Fraud-and-Corruption-Policy-Summary-May-2024/pdf/Anti_Fraud_and_Corruption_Policy_Summary_May_2024_-_Final.pdf?m=1721839653830
 - 2.2.6 The WBC Whistleblowing Policy and Procedure (July 2024) found on https://www.westberks.gov.uk/media/59416/Whistleblowing-Policy-and-Procedure-July-2024/pdf/Whistleblowing_Policy_July_2024.pdf?m=1721839713423
- 2.3 The Governing Body will also comply with Department of Education (DfE), Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA) and School Financial Value Standard (SFVS) regulations and guidelines for budget management and the spending and receipt of monies.

- 2.4** The Governing Body will operate in accordance within the requirements and standards laid down by both the DfE and WBC Audit and Accountancy Departments.

3 FINANCIAL POLICY

3.1 Delegation

- 3.1.1 The Governing Body has delegated certain functions and the making of certain decisions to its Finance Committee, in accordance with the terms of reference of that committee, set out in a separate document.
- 3.1.2 The Governing Body has delegated to the Headteacher the day to day management of the budget and the virement of funds subject to the limits agreed in the school's Register of Authorising Officers which is in Appendix 1. The Governing Body will take due account of the advice given by the Headteacher in respect of financial matters.
- 3.1.3 The signing of cheques and other bank instructions is delegated to school staff in line with the table of responsibilities (see table of responsibilities in section 5.1 below). Two signatories shall always be required.
- 3.1.4 The Governing Body will note and approve the Headteacher's allocation of financial duties to staff so as best to achieve separation to ensure probity, and that shadowing of financial duties occurs to provide continuity in the event of absence (see table of responsibilities in section 5.1 below) to the extent that this is achievable in our small school.
- 3.1.5 The Governing Body will monitor the competencies of school finance staff, staff with financial responsibilities and its own members (governors) in line with the requirements of SFVS using the ESFA skills analysis matrices for governors and staff with financial responsibilities and will make recommendations to the Headteacher as appropriate.

3.2 Budget Management

- 3.2.1 The Governing Body will delegate to their Finance and HR Committee (FHRC) the preparation of a three year budget for income and expenditure and take this preparation into account in setting the three year budget.
- 3.2.2 When setting the budget the Governing Body shall consider the aims and objectives of the school and School Development Plan and ensure that the budget and financial processes of the school support and reflect these as far as possible.
- 3.2.3 The Governing Body will carry out regular benchmarking exercises to compare the school's performance and financial efficiency with similar schools and use the outcomes to inform their budget monitoring and planning.
- 3.2.4 In setting the budget governors will take due account of the need to resource the management and administration of the school's finances and to ensure, through regular review, that staff resource and competence is sufficient, and is supported through appropriate development and training.
- 3.2.5 All material budgetary decisions will be communicated between all relevant and interested school staff and the Governing Body on a regular and timely basis, to ensure that the financial context of the school is understood and that necessary actions are implemented. As required by the School Financial Value Standard, this financial management policy is available to staff and parents through the School website.
- 3.2.6 The Governing Body's FHRC/FGB will review the school budget and longer term forecasts at regular intervals throughout the year – the current (April 2024) recommendation in the SFVS is 6 times per year. The Committee will, in line with its

terms of reference, agree any appropriate action in relation to budget variances, anticipated expenditure and income, and significant proposed virements may be considered where the amount of the budget line is in excess of £10,000 or 500%, whichever is greater.

Below this level the Headteacher has full authority to agree budget variances and virements without reference to governors. Virement will be subject to any 'ring-fencing' restrictions and other restrictions as defined by WBC Schools Accountancy.

3.3 Procurement

3.3.1 The Governing Body will ensure that purchases or leases made with public funds are fair, legal and open, as well as securing the best possible value for money with the resources available to them. (Value for Money: The school has in place rules for the procurement of goods and services to obtain best value for money from the resources available).

3.3.2 The Governing Body has robust procedures in place to ensure that every purchase is managed in the most effective and appropriate way including clear designated roles to ensure separation of duties between staff responsible for making buying decisions and making payments (Sections 5 and 6 below).

3.3.3 A list detailing all contracts e.g. maintenance, software, photocopying etc. with annual/total costs, start/end dates or contract term should be maintained in school and available for governor review/approval.

3.4 Governor Reimbursements

3.4.1 The payment of any allowance or reimbursement of costs incurred by the Chair of the Governing Body requires the approval of the Governing Body's FHRC before payment. The payment of any allowance or reimbursement of costs incurred by any other Governor requires the approval of the Chair of the Governing Body before payment. Payments of allowances or costs to any Governor shall be reported to the Governing Body on an annual basis.

3.4.2 All expenses or reimbursements claimed, by either Governors or staff, must be made within 3 months of being incurred. The maximum claimable is £100 per month. All claims must be made using the appropriate claims forms available from the school office and must be supported by appropriate receipts and /or VAT invoices.

3.5 Inventory and Assets Statement

3.5.1 The Governing Body is responsible for the safe custody and physical control of stores and equipment and is required to monitor the inventory of moveable, non-capital assets above the value of net £500.

3.5.2 The Headteacher is responsible for ensuring that assets under his/her control are correctly recorded in the inventory which is maintained in the electronic Inventory folder on H drive and will be available for inspection on an annual basis by the Governing Body.

3.6 Pecuniary and Business Interests Statement

3.6.1 All governors and those staff with financial responsibilities will declare any pecuniary or personal interest annually (or at such times as their interests change) through the Register of Business interests maintained by the school. Governors and other attendees will be required to declare any such interest relating to any Governing Body or committee meeting agenda item at the start of that meeting.

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Review: Annually

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3.7 Indemnity Statement

3.7.1 No indemnity of any sort may be given to the benefit of a third party.

3.8 Insurance

3.8.1 The Headteacher will review the insurance needs of the school annually and liaise with the LA to ensure that specific arrangements remain appropriate. Following the approval by the Governing Body, the Headteacher will ensure that agreed arrangements are in place and full evidence of sums insured, limits and cover will be supplied for approval.

3.8.2 The Headteacher will be responsible for ensuring that Governors are made aware of all new risks, and all incidents which may give rise to an insurance claim (e.g. accident, theft etc.). These should be reported immediately to the LA and RPA Scheme. Any delay could prejudice the claim and lead to the Insurers refusing cover.

3.9 Computer Systems

3.9.1 The Governing Body recognise the importance of protecting the school's financial management systems and the data therein. The Headteacher will ensure that the School and Governing Body are compliant with data protection legislation and controlling access to all data covered by such legislation.

3.9.2 The Headteacher will ensure that effective, secure and timely backup procedures are in place.

3.9.3 Access to school management computer systems will be limited to authorised staff. These staff will use passwords which should not be disclosed and should be changed regularly. Only authorised software will be used to prevent the import of computer viruses. Staff will only have access to those modules appropriate to their duties.

3.10 Personnel and Payroll

3.10.1 The Headteacher will, where possible, allocate duties to ensure that an appropriate division of duties exists in the area of completing, checking and authorising all documents and claims relating to appointments, termination of employment and expenses/reimbursements. *[See Table of Responsibilities at 5.1 below]*

3.10.2 Payroll transactions will be processed only through the WBC payroll system. Payment for employment will not be made to staff through any other mechanism. Payroll transactions relating to school employed staff may only be charged to a fund representing a delegated budget issued by the LA and not to a voluntary unofficial fund.

3.11 School Fund/Other Non-Government Funds e.g. Trusts

3.11.1 There is no school's private or voluntary fund. Just a PTA fund.

3.12 Petty Cash

3.12.1 There is no petty cash.

3.13 De Minimis Level for Capitalisation

3.13.1 Items of a capital nature (as defined by WBC) must be charged to the appropriate Capital Fund (Fund 76). The Governing Body has set its own de minimis of £2,000. The WBC de minimis level of £5,000 applies to non-VA schools.

4 ASSOCIATED POLICIES, DOCUMENTS AND REMITS

4.1 Terms of Reference (ToR) of the Governors' Finance & HR Committee (FHRC)

4.2 School Financial Value Standard (SFVS)

4.3 School Development Plan (SDP)**4.4** Charging and Remissions Policy**4.5** Lettings Policy**4.6** Register of Authorising Officers and Procurement Card Authorising Officers (Appendix 1 & 2)**5 FINANCIAL PROCEDURES**

5.1 Table of Responsibilities - The table below identifies day to day arrangements and also allows for short/medium term cover arrangements in the absence of key staff. Schools needing advice regarding longer term absence and continuity planning can contact WBC Schools Accountancy.

Member of staff	Internal Requisitions (1)	Purchase Orders	Invoices	Cheque/ BACS run (2)	Personnel & Payroll (5.2)	Inventory
Headteacher	Authorising	Authorising	Authorising	Signing/ Authorising	Authorising	Authorising write-offs
Assistant Headteacher	Authorising	Authorising	Authorising	N/A	Authorising only in the absence of the Headteacher	N/A
SBM	Processing OR Authorising	Processing OR Authorising	Processing OR Authorising	Signing/ Authorising	Processing OR Authorising in absence of HT	Administration and annual report
Finance Officer	Processing	Processing	Processing	Preparing/ Entering	Processing	Administration and annual report
Administrative Assistant	Processing	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A

(1) - if Internal Requisitions are used in school (see 6.2.1)

(2) - dual signature/authorisation required

See also Register of Authorising Officers (*Appendix 1 & 2*)

5.2 Recording of transactions and accounting

All financial transactions, journals and virements must be properly recorded without undue delay on the school's FMS.

5.3 Authorisation

The Governing Body will agree and document levels of authority of members of staff and governors to cover financial transactions which require the cooperation of the local authority. These include (but may not be limited to) budget virements, journals, internal transfers, overdraft requests and Imprest claims. Financial limits will be recorded on the school's Register of Authorising Officers, with specimen signatures of the designated members of staff, and signed by the Headteacher and Chair of Governors. The school will ensure that the Register is updated when necessary and a scanned copy submitted to Schools Accountancy (current copy appended below).

6 PROCUREMENT OF GOODS AND SERVICES**6.1 Compliance**

6.1.1 In all cases any purchase or service contract will comply with current Legislation, including Health & Safety and EC regulations where applicable.

6.1.2 School accounts (e.g. eBay, Amazon etc.) should be agreed by Headteacher (delegated by FGB Governors) and purchases comply with the FMP requirements.

6.1.3 The School will operate within the limits defined by the LA's Contract Rules of Procedure and in particular:

- 6.1.3.1 For supplies and services with a total contractual value below £2,500 the school may select one supplier without obtaining competitive quotations. Where a sequence of small orders is likely to be placed with one supplier a check of their pricing against competitors should be made on a regular basis. Schools should also be careful that repeat orders for a product or service from the same supplier or where purchases are connected, the combined values (across a year) may take the total over the figure at which three quotations should be obtained. In these circumstances the clauses below should apply.
- 6.1.3.2 For a total contractual value above £2,500 and below £12,000 minimum of two quotations shall be obtained unless it presents an immediate H&S issue and needs rectifying as soon as possible or there are no comparable suppliers.
- 6.1.3.3 For supplies and services with a total contractual value between £12,000 and £35,000 a minimum of three quotations shall be obtained, except where the nature of the purchase eg. H&S and/or the range of suppliers and/or the timescale precludes this, **in which case this will be brought to the attention of the Governing Body/ Governors' Finance Committee for consideration and approval and the reason for this shall be documented with the order.** Quotations will be reviewed by and a decision to order made by the Headteacher (or a member of staff with delegated authority). Internet and catalogue quotations should be suitably documented for future reference e.g. photocopies, screen shots etc.
- 6.1.3.4 Subject to 6.1.3.4 below, for supplies and services with a total contractual value of over £35,000 the nature of the contract may require additional procedures, including the receiving of quotations from more than three suppliers and a formal tender mechanism. **A procurement mechanism will be approved in advance in each case by the Governing Body/ governors' Finance Committee**, with appropriate specialist professional advice sought as necessary before commitment.
- 6.1.3.5 For supplies and services where the total contractual value is £100,000 or above a formal tender process is required in line with the LA's Contract Rules of Procedure. The school will seek appropriate advice from the LA regarding this and relevant EU and UK legislation. The Governing Body will be advised in each case and have oversight of the procurement process.
- 6.1.3.6 The most cost beneficial quotation will normally be accepted and if not, best value reasons for accepting a more expensive quote will be documented with the order.
Above all, consideration should be given to achieving best value.

6.2 Placement of orders

- 6.2.1 A Purchase Order will be raised on FMS to procure all supplies and services for the school, following receipt of an authorised internal requisition (if these are in use in the school). In order to record commitment in a timely and accurate manner, Purchase Orders will be raised irrespective of whether the order is being placed verbally (telephone orders e.g. emergency repairs), online, sent by mail or email or via e-procurement (direct from FMS).
- 6.2.2 In the case of a more complex transaction the advice of suitably qualified persons must be obtained in order that all considerations regarding pricing, specification, health and safety, etc. can be taken into account.
- 6.2.3 Copies of all orders and supporting documentation will be kept and recorded promptly in the school's accounts. A monthly check of outstanding orders will be made and any long outstanding orders investigated and cancelled if appropriate.
- 6.2.4 For amounts up to £100, minor reimbursements may be made for staff purchases with prior authority from the Headteacher. This should be limited to those occasions when

direct staff purchase is the only practical option. Where goods are to be delivered they must be delivered to the school, received and checked by someone other than the purchaser (if possible). All reimbursement requests must have full appropriate invoices or receipts attached evidencing purchase and so that VAT can be reclaimed whenever possible. Staff or pupil personal purchases cannot be processed through the school's accounts nor can personal cheques be cashed. Schools are encouraged to make use of the Procurement Card facility (see Section 6.5 below) which will largely replace the need for staff reimbursements.

6.3 Receipt of Goods/Services

6.3.1 In the interests of probity and to ensure separation of duties, goods/services received in schools will be checked/verified by an appropriate member of staff other than the person who authorised the order (if possible), which should be evidenced on documentation.

6.4 Invoices and payment

6.4.1 Invoices for payment must be originals/electronic from suppliers or certified copies and fulfil VAT requirements. They will be processed and authorised for payment in accordance with the table in Section 5.1 above.

6.4.2 Invoices will be checked against the original requisition, purchase order and goods received/delivery note to avoid the possibility of duplicates or faulty/returned goods being paid for.

6.4.3 Invoices will be checked for arithmetical accuracy. No invoice should be paid whose value exceeds 100% more than the original order price without reference to the budget holder. Service, contract and utility invoices should be checked against preceding payments to ensure periodic continuity without overlap.

6.4.4 Paid invoices will be marked as paid and filed appropriately with supporting documentation (either as hard copy or electronically).

6.4.5 The payment of invoices will be made in a timely fashion according to the terms stated by the supplier and not less than monthly.

6.4.6 Payments will be made by direct debit, BACS or cheque as appropriate.

6.4.7 If cheques (rarely used) are used instead of BACS, two authorised signatories will compare the FMS payment schedule (Cheque Run Report printed from FMS) and the payment documentation (i.e. invoice, order and requisition) for each payment and will sign the BACS Run Report to confirm that the payment information agrees. The same two authorising signatories will sign the cheque(s).

6.5 Procurement Card

6.5.1 The Governing Body is required to authorise the Approval to Apply for a Procurement Card form which is submitted to WBC Head of Finance for final approval. The Governing Body, via its financial policy and procedures, is responsible for ensuring that adequate controls are in place over the use of the cards. See also Procurement Card Register of Authorising Officers (Appendix 2).

6.5.2 The monthly billing limit is determined by the school – as a guide this should be no greater than half of the school's notional Imprest advance or £5,000 for a nursery school, whichever is lower. The monthly billing limit for this school is £2,500.

6.5.3 The individual cardholder limits for monthly spend and single item spend are

determined by the school. The total of the individual limits cannot exceed the monthly billing limit. The Chair of Governors will approve the agreed limits which will be recorded on the Procurement Card Register of Authorising Officers and retained in school (current copy appended below).

- 6.5.4 Merchant/retailer types can be blocked per card to prevent expenditure on non-approved items – there are 34 categories available to choose from on the New Billing Unit (School) Application Form
- 6.5.5 No cash withdrawals will be permitted. Personal items may not be purchased using this card.
- 6.5.6 Access to the cards will be restricted and PIN(s) will be kept secure. Only the main contacts of Headteacher/SBM has access to information on the account via the use of passwords.
- 6.5.7 Purchases must relate to official funds for school activities only and must be supplied and delivered to the school.
- 6.5.8 For purchases over the value of £500, an appropriately authorised internal requisition will be passed to the relevant cardholder who will complete the purchase. For items of lesser value, the cardholder may make the purchase and pass all the documentation to the HT/SBM/Finance Officer. Orders are NOT recorded on the schools FMS. A valid invoice/receipt from each supplier with VAT details is required for each purchase and must be attached to the requisition order
- 6.5.9 Requisitions and purchases for which the Procurement Card has been used are recorded on a spreadsheet allowing monitoring of monthly expenditure within set limits and providing a commitment figure for the purposes of budget monitoring and forecasting.
- 6.5.10 Upon receipt of the monthly card statement it will be checked and reconciled against the requisition/goods received spreadsheet by SBM & FO. There is a period of 7 days before the payment date to raise any queries with the bank (and to notify of any fraudulent activity). The reconciled statement and supporting documents will be signed by the Headteacher for completeness, accuracy and timeliness.
- 6.5.11 The full outstanding balance will be paid by direct debit on or before 20th of each month and the cashbook journal will be posted on FMS on or before the monthly payment date to ensure it is included in that month's Imprest claim (if possible depending on Imprest dates).
- 6.5.12 There will be a clear segregation of duties between the requisitioning/ordering & card purchasing processes, and the reconciliation of the monthly statement & settlement payments. Where the Finance Officer has a Procurement Card and is also responsible for reconciliation the Headteacher should review each entry on the FO's individual procurement card statement and sign and date the statement to record that they are satisfied that the transactions were properly authorised and for the purposes of the school.

6.6 BACS

- 6.6.1 The Governing Body delegates the Headteacher who is required to authorise the Approval to Apply for Bankline access which is submitted to WBC Head of Finance for final approval. WBC Schools Accountancy will progress the application with NatWest/RBS and the school will complete the registration forms when required. The Governing Body, via its

financial policy and procedures, is responsible for ensuring that adequate controls are in place over the use of Bankline.

- 6.6.2 Only Bankline roles defined by the WBC Schools Accountancy Bankline administration may be used by the school. Allocation of individual Bankline roles should be approved by the Governing Body and recorded in the table of responsibilities in Section 5.1 above. These approvals may relate to posts or to named individuals.
- 6.6.3 A paper record will be kept of all suppliers' bank details. These details should be taken from an earlier invoice which has been paid by BACS and verified by a phone call to the supplier (using original phone numbers) as this is a recognised fraud risk. Once checked the details can be entered into FMS. These should be entered by one member of staff and verified by another member of staff, each will initial and date the document after entering the details. These details will then be used to pay the supplier.
- 6.6.4 Any changes to suppliers BACS details should be received on an official letterhead from the supplier but will also be verified by a phone call to the supplier (using original phone numbers) as this is a recognised fraud risk. When these changes have been made in FMS, the document will be initialled and dated together with a record of the steps taken to verify the change.
- 6.6.5 School staff requiring reimbursement by BACS for non-payroll expenditure will complete a bank details form and submit to the school's Bankline administrator.
- 6.6.6 Only payments which have been generated through FMS can be made on Bankline.
- 6.6.7 A second authorised signatory will compare the FMS payment schedule (BACS Run Report printed from FMS) and the Bankline payment schedule (BACS Bulk List Payment pdf printed from Bankline screen) for each payment run and will sign both documents to confirm that the schedules agree, prior to authorising the payments on Bankline.
- 6.6.8 Bankline payments will be subject to dual authorisation which means that BACS payments will only be released when the second Authoriser has authorised. This is the equivalent of a second signature on a cheque.
- 6.6.9 All Bankline payments reflected on the bank statements will be reconciled to the invoices received and any receipts obtained.
- 6.6.10 School staff may only log into Bankline from within the school and not from remote locations except SBM/HT via a remote connection (to PC in School) in exceptional circumstances/emergency and this access must be made using school owned PCs or laptops.
- 6.6.11 Bankline users will not share user names or PIN numbers to ensure the separation of duties and that no one individual can both make a payment and approve a payment in the Bankline system except in very exceptional situations as very small team of Finance staff.
- 6.6.12 All Bankline cards will be kept securely locked away except when in immediate use.
- 6.6.13 Any member of staff who leaves the employment of the school will have their Bankline access removed immediately and must return all cards to the school for destroying prior to their last day on site.

7 BANK ACCOUNTS, INCOME AND BANKING (OFFICIAL)

- 7.1** Copies of all bank mandates (Imprest account, Direct Debits, BACs etc.) and Registers of Authorising Officers will be held in a secure location (locked in Finance filing cabinet in Finance Room). Old mandates will be secured in locked cupboards/held electronically on H drive in Nursery.
- 7.2** Bank accounts will be reconciled promptly on receipt and no less than monthly. The reconciled statement and supporting documents will be checked and signed by the Headteacher.
- 7.3** Imprest returns to reclaim the principle sum (less any income received) and net VAT paid/received will be prepared and submitted to WBC Schools Accountancy no less than monthly (April & August optional) and in line with the published deadlines. The Imprest account should not be allowed to go overdraw and its level reviewed regularly to ensure that it meets the school's cash flow needs. Any exceptional overdraft request and WBC confirmation must be properly recorded.
- 7.4** All collections of income by cheque, cash or otherwise shall be recorded in FMS, immediately receipted (subject to 7.6 below) and stored in a secure location (locked in Finance filing cabinet in Finance Room). Old mandates will be secured in locked cupboards in Finance room/held electronically.
- 7.5** All cash received will be counted and confirmed by two people.
- 7.6** Receipts will be issued for ad hoc cash for extra clubs booked at last minute.
- 7.7** Invoices (for lettings, club payments etc.), internal transfers and other claims for funding will be issued/raised promptly and payment chased 1 days after the expiry of the stated payment term (usually 'on receipt') if any.
- 7.8** All cheques and cash will be banked within 4 weeks of receipt and not less than monthly, subject to the maximum allowed for cash (including private funds) held on site, set by the school's insurer. Banking will always be completed before school holidays. No monies due to the main school budget (including lettings income) may be banked into staff or other third party (including school fund) bank accounts under any circumstances.
- 7.9** The writing off of any amounts due to the school and unpaid shall only be made with the formal consent of the Governing Body and in line with WBC regulations (Scheme for Financing Schools 2024).
- 7.10** A copy of each contract and insurance schedule relating to lettings income should be available on site.

8 BUDGET MANAGEMENT AND MONITORING

- 8.1** The SBM will monitor the budget and on a monthly basis will post on FMS staff salaries and non-payroll transactions appearing on the monthly Agresso reports supplied by WBC.
- 8.2** The SBM will perform a monthly reconciliation for all funds in use and resolve any unreconciled items.
- 8.3** The SBM will close reconciled periods and perform the annually closure of the expired financial year on FMS on a timely basis ensuring that carry forward figures correctly match Agresso.

8.4 The SBM will prepare budget monitoring (from Period 3) and forecasting (from Period 6) reports and will meet with the Headteacher at least monthly to review the budget and forecast position in detail (ledger code level), including variances, and/or participate in relevant financial discussions. BMFs will be signed by Headteacher.

8.5 The SBM will prepare budget monitoring and forecasting reports with accompanying commentary for the Governors' Finance Committee at CFR level. These reports will be prepared in time to be circulated with each meeting's agenda at least a week in advance. The Committee need to be informed of the forecast of the school's outturn positions for the financial year, robustly based on information held to date, in order to make any necessary consequent strategic budget management decisions. Nb. *Current SFVS guidance (April 2024) is that Governors should review the budget position at least 6 times a year.*

8.6 The SBM will provide regular (at least termly) FMS reports to Governors to inform them of the budget position. The SBM will provide guidance on the interpretation of the reports, as required.

9 SECURITY

9.1 No more than a combined total of £500 public funds/private funds will be held in school (in line with the limits set by the school's insurers).

9.2 All cheque books and secure boxes will be stored in a secure location (School safe in Finance Room) which will be kept locked except when in immediate use.

9.3 Hard copy financial records and vouchers will be kept in a secure location (locked in Finance Room) and be clearly identifiable.

9.4 Safe key holders are the Headteacher, SBM & FO. In the absence of one of these key holders, a spare key may be held for periods of less than 24 hours by an appropriate deputy/Assistant.

9.5 All portable and valuable items over the value of £500 will be security coded using *[Smartwater asset marking system]*.

9.6 The Headteacher will ensure that effective, secure and timely backup procedures are in place *[WBC backup our data at midnight every day in 2 secure locations as part of our buy-back]*

9.7 Access to school management computer systems will be limited to authorised staff. These staff will use passwords which will not be disclosed and will be changed regularly. To prevent the import of computer viruses only authorised software will be used. Staff will only have access to those modules appropriate to their duties. **Corporate Family Hub staff (that were part of Victoria Park Nursery School will have temporary use of our network printer until WBC corporate have secured their own printer).**

10 OVERSPENDS

10.1 The approval of overspends by a budget holder can only be given by the Headteacher (or the Chair of Governors/Finance Committee where the Headteacher is the budget holder).

11 INVENTORIES- THE RECORDING OF ASSETS

11.1 The SBM/FO will maintain an inventory of all electrical items and some furniture with a value in excess of £500 as determined by FHRC AND all portable and desirable items of lesser value. The inventory will be regularly updated with the acquisition of new items. Details recorded will include asset type, make, model, serial number, date acquired, date disposed of, purchase cost and location in school.

11.2 The SBM/FO will also maintain a register of items taken and returned by staff, e.g. gazebos. The taking of any school property recorded on inventories off site must be approved by the Headteacher. This requirement excludes staff loan laptops/tablets, which will be covered by a loan agreement (see 11.3 below).

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Review: Annually

Review Date: September 2026



- 11.3** Laptop computers/tablets on loan to staff must be appropriately recorded and supported by a loan agreement form signed by the member of staff.
- 11.4** An inventory check will be completed annually (usually July) by Headteacher/SBM/FO and a report of acquisitions/disposals prepared for the Governing Body by the SBM/FO. Any unaccounted items must be referred to the Governing Body for appropriate action.
- 11.5** The disposal of any assets must be authorised by the Headteacher in accordance with LA regulations. (The format of the inventory should enable evidence that such authorisation was given)

12 MANAGEMENT OF POLICY

- 12.1** School: This policy is implemented and managed by the Headteacher with reference to the SLT and any other interested parties as necessary. It will be circulated to all staff with financial responsibility on an annual basis who will sign a checklist to confirm that they have read and understood the policy and procedures. This checklist should be presented to the Finance & HR Committee and minuted.
- 12.2** Governing Body: The Governors' Finance & HR Committee reviews this policy on an annual basis and recommends amendments to the Governing Body for final decision.
- 12.3** Approval: Approved by the Governing Body on 25.09.25
- 12.4** Next review due: September 2026

Appendix 1: Register of Authorising Officers

v6 **WEST BERKSHIRE COUNCIL – REGISTER OF AUTHORISING OFFICERS – SCHOOLS**

SCHOOL NAME: Victoria Park Nursery School COST CENTRES: 98300, 98330, 98354, 98376

This register records each member of staff and school governor who is authorised to sign instructions to West Berkshire Council for school financial transactions to be processed centrally by Schools Accountancy. Limits should reflect the practice and procedures stated in the school's Financial Management Policy.

SURNAME	INITIALS	POSITION	SIGNATURE	VIREMENTS	INTERNAL TRANSFERS	JOURNALS	OVERDRAFT	IMPREST CLAIMS
				Changes or corrections to original budget to be processed by WBC Schools Accountancy	Expenditure used to transfer WBC resources to be processed by WBC Schools Accountancy	Request to transfer expenditure between school bank codes to be processed by Schools Accountancy	Maximum value of overdraft on school's general Bank Account that individual can request	Please refer to full signed staff handbook when authorised to sign. *Debit card is used for imprest claims in this form as more appropriate than an imprest book.
				£	£	£	£	✓
Shepherd	L	Headteacher	<i>L. Shepherd</i>	10000	10000	10000	10000*	✓
Griffiths	M	Assistant Headteacher	<i>M. Griffiths</i>	10000	10000	10000*	10000	✓
Wyles	S	SBM	<i>S. Wyles</i>	5000	5000	5000	5000	
Cooper	D	Chair of Governors	<i>D. Cooper</i>	Unlimited	Unlimited	Unlimited	Unlimited	N/A
Keshari	A	Chair of Finance	<i>A. Keshari</i>	Unlimited	Unlimited	Unlimited	Unlimited	N/A

Chair of Governors and/or Chair of Finance is a signatory with unlimited authority as long as any instruction is counter signed by the Headteacher

Notes - please read the Good Practice Guide 25, Register of Authorising Officers Guide before completing this form
 Assistance in its completion can be obtained from WBC Schools Accountancy
 Any change to staff, staff roles or financial limits/imprest account must be notified through the submission of a new form
 N/A should be written in any box not applicable to that person

Discussed and agreed at Full Governors / Finance Committee Meeting (delete as applicable) held on				Date
Confirmed by (signatures)	<i>L. Shepherd</i>	10.07.2025	<i>D. Cooper</i>	10.7.2025
	Headteacher	Date	Chair of Governors	Date

On completion, please scan and email to schoolsaccountancy@westberks.gov.uk. The signed original should be retained in school.

Current Policy Date: September 2025

Review: Annually

Review Date: September 2026



Appendix 2: Register of Authorising Officers – Procurement Card

WEST BERKSHIRE COUNCIL – PROCUREMENT CARD REGISTER OF AUTHORISING OFFICERS

School: VICTORIA PARK NURSERY SCHOOL Cost Centre 98300, 98330, 98354, 98376

This register records each member of staff and school governor who is authorised to use a procurement card for purchases. The card is issued by Nat West for use through the school's IMPREST Account. It is subject to West Berkshire Council and the banks terms and conditions and code of conduct. Its use should be approved by the governing body. The responsibility for its management rests with the Headteacher. Limits should reflect the practice and procedures stated in the school's Financial Management Policy. N/A should be written in any cell not applicable to that person.

Surname	Initials	Position	Signature	Monthly Orders limit *(£)	Single Transaction Limit (£)	Merchant/Retailer Type	Account Administrators
Fagan	G	Finance & HR Officer		1500.00	1500.00	Natwest Credit Card	S Wyles, L Shepherd

* Authorisation by the Chairman of Governors/Finance Committee is acceptable above the limit stated and would be communicated by means of a letter signed by the Chairman and Headteacher submitted together with supporting evidence noting the appropriate minute number referencing full Governing Body approval.

Confirmed by (Headteacher) (Chair of Governors) Date; 12/6/25

A copy of this form should be sent to Schools Accountancy. Any change to personnel or financial limits of the procurement card must also be notified through the submission of a revised form alongside Bank Form 8 to make the amendment.