Purchasing Policy 2023-2024

Key Information

Title	Purchasing Policy 2023-2024	
Prepared By:	Adam Sheldon, School Business Manager, & Shelley Weeks, Finance Manager	22.01.2024
Approved By:	Governors' Finance and Premises Committee	06.02.2024
Next Document Update:	Policy to be reviewed Annually. Next review due February 2025	

Version History

Date	Amendments
22.01.24	Revised and reformatted version of 2021-22 Policy
18.01.22	Revised and reformatted version of 2020-21 Policy
20.10.20	Revised and reformatted version of 2019-20 Policy
23.10.19	Revised and reformatted version of 2018-19 Policy
22.01.2024	Reviewed and amended by School Business Manager

Authorised Signatories at Saint Gregory's, Bath as at January 2024:

Mr A Sheldon   School Business Manager
Mrs S Weeks   Finance Manager
Mr G Cross   Premises & ICT Manager

Mechanism for Authorisation of Spending

The following proposals are intended to cover all spending on equipment, materials and services for the school and follow the LA's Contract Standing Orders for Schools as agreed by B&NES Council on 22.11.07. Whilst this document has not been updated for schools there is a current version of Supplier's Guide to Selling to the Council which was updated by the Council's procurement team in 2015 that can be accessed using the following link https://www.bathnes.gov.uk/services/business/selling-council/selling-council-guide Whilst the latter is designed specifically for the council it does give us a framework to consider and will be taken into account as required.

However, particular care should be taken where items of expenditure have not been budgeted for and are not included in the School Development Plan (SDP). It should also be noted that, when dealing with specialised equipment, it may not be prudent to purchase the cheapest option in which case the matter will be referred to the Headteacher, Finance and Premises Committee or Full Governing Body as appropriate.

1) Authorisation

(a)   All proposals for expenditure must be referred to the Headteacher/SBM or Budget holder for approval, or in their absence, to one of the other authorised signatories.

(b)   Decisions on expenditure in relation to individual Departmental Budgets must be authorised by the Department Budget Holder concerned up to the value of £5,000. However, if the purchases will result in an overspend in the respective budget area, this should be discussed and agreed with the Headteacher/School Business Manager prior to commitment.

(c)   Proposals for items of expenditure between £5,000 and £25,000 should be referred to the Headteacher for approval.

(d)   Proposals for expenditure in excess of £25,000 should be referred to the Finance and Premises Committee for information and approval.

(e)   Proposals for expenditure in excess of £75,000 should be referred to the Full Governing Body for information and approval.

The agreed Division of Duties/Responsibilities is included as an Appendix to this Policy.

2) Tendering for Contracts and Equipment

(a)   If the anticipated value of a contract or purchase does not exceed £5,000, then the budget holder must demonstrate value for money, normally by obtaining a minimum of three online or telephone quotations or looking at catalogue prices.

(b)   If the anticipated value of a contract or purchase is between £5,000 and £25,000 at least two competitive written quotes must be invited from suitable suppliers. If it is not practical to do so this must be recorded in the minutes of the Finance and Premises Committee. These quotes must be kept on file for reference.

(c)   If the anticipated value of a contract or purchase is between £25,000 and £75,000 at least three competitive written quotes must be invited from suitable suppliers. If it is not practical to do so this must be recorded in the minutes of the Finance and Premises Committee. These quotes must be kept on file for reference.

(d)   If the value of the contract is between £75,000 and Public contracts regulations (PCR) threshold it must be in the form of a tender. This tendering process must give at least 10 days' notice in two newspapers, one of which should be local, stating the latest time and the place for receipt of tenders.

(e)   If the value of the contract exceeds the PCR threshold of £214,904 (updated Dec 23), then the tender must be structured to follow the processes set out within the Regulations.

(f)   The school is advised to discuss with the Children's Services, Schools' Strategic Finance Section before entering into leases although there is no legal requirement to do so.

Supporting Guidance Notes:

i.   Quotation and tender financial limits are based on the whole life cost of a contract or lease. Therefore if a lease is entered into for five years at £750 per quarter the whole life cost is £15,000 and would require a minimum of two quotes (see 2b above) and would need to be approved by the Headteacher (see 1c above).

ii.   Records Retention 1 – the school must retain on a Contracts & Leases file details (e.g. agreements or specific contracts) of all contracts and leases in operation including those with specific Council services. The appropriate approval details should also be retained with each agreement, i.e. the specific minute of a Governors meeting where this was approved.

iii.   Records Retention 2 – unsuccessful quotations and tenders should be retained for at least two years plus the current year.

DIVISON OF DUTIES / RESPONSIBILITIES

Task	LA	Full Governing Body	Finance and Premises Committee	Head Teacher	Business Manager	Premises & ICT Manager	Four other SLT Signatories	Finance Manager	Finance Assistant	Budget Holder
Authorise /sign staff reimbursement claims				✓	✓	✓	✓			
Authorise virement up to £5000				✓	✓	✓				
Authorise virement over £5000			✓							
Action virements following approval					✓			✓		
Prepare financial reports					✓			✓		
Complete weekly bank reconciliation								✓		
Administer School Fund								✓	✓	
Collection of Income								✓	✓	
Recording of income on Access Finance								✓		
Banking of income								✓	✓	
Monitor Budgets:			✓	✓	✓	✓				
Curriculum / class budgets					✓					✓
Provide adequate and effective internal audit	✓									
Ensure that adequate financial procedures and controls exist		✓	✓							
Looking after staff and other resources		✓	✓	✓	✓					
Looking after Premises and ICT		✓	✓	✓		✓				
Authorisation of expenditure up to £5000				✓	✓					✓
Authorisation of expenditure over £5000				✓						
Authorisation of expenditure over £25000			✓							
Authorisation of expenditure over £75000		✓								
Operational Risk Management			✓	✓	✓	✓				

DIVISON OF DUTIES / RESPONSIBILITIES

Task	LA	Full Governing Body	Finance and Premises Committee	Head Teacher	Business Manager	Premises & ICT Manager	**Four other SLT Signatories**	**Finance Manager**	Finance Assistant	Budget Holder
Publishing Budget Share	✓									
Prepare initial budget					✓					
Approve budgets		✓	✓							
Enter BACs runs								✓	✓	
Authorise BACs runs					✓	✓		✓		
Requisition orders				✓	✓	✓	✓			✓
Ensuring that an up-to-date and accurate inventory is maintained					✓	✓				
Process orders on Access Finance								✓	✓	
Authorise orders				✓	✓		✓	✓		✓
Check delivery note to order and sign									✓	✓
Authorise invoices and sign				✓	✓		✓			✓
Signatories on cheques (2 of 3)					✓	✓		✓		