



SCHOOL FINANCE POLICY

MY SCHOOLS TOGETHER



MY Schools Together

FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT AND ADMINISTRATION POLICIES

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This policy has been written with reference to the Schools financial value standard (SFVS), and in accordance with the Oldham Scheme for Financing Schools. It is envisaged that it will provide the framework of accountability for governors and staff within the school and will form the basis for more detailed financial system and process notes for school staff.

Policy adopted by Full Governing Body

Date. 11 March 2025

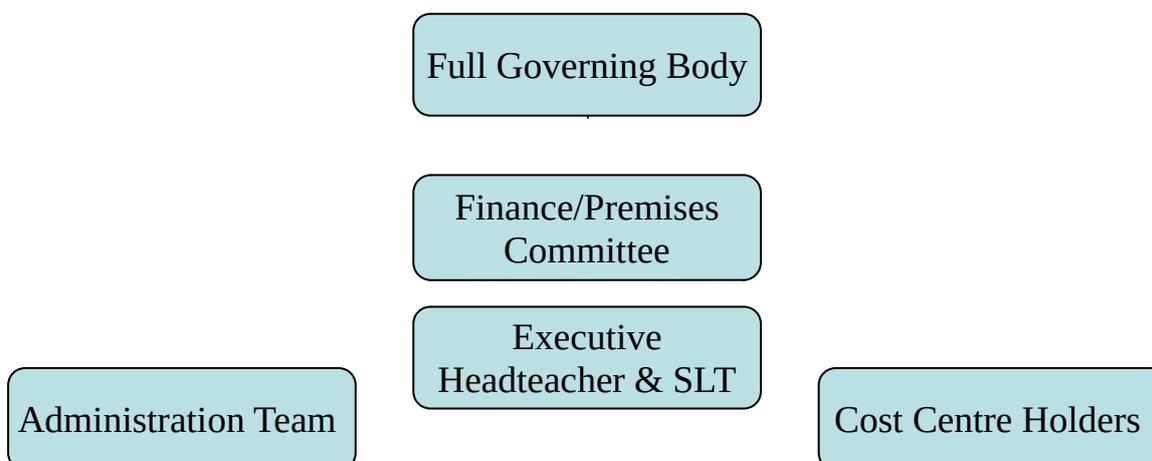
Signed (Chair).....

Print Name.....

Date of next review: April 2026

INTRODUCTION

THE SCHOOL'S FINANCIAL ORGANISATION CHART



The school has the following Committee structure:

COMMITTEE STRUCTURE

- Finance & Premises Committee
- Subject Leadership Groups

The frequency of Governing Body/Committee meetings will be reviewed *each term* or *annually* by the Executive Headteacher and Chairs of the Committees and a timetable produced. (See *Appendix 1*) The Finance Committee will also consider any recommendations with financial implications from other Committees, prior to them being presented to the full Governing Body.

Reports to the Governing Body will include a section if they are impacting on the financial implication recommendations contained in the report.

The full Governing Body will meet once a term or more frequently as required.

The Chairs of the Committees will receive, for information purposes, copies of the agendas and adequately detailed minutes, including appending relevant submissions, in order to support policy decisions taken from **all** the Committees.

Minutes of all Governors and committee meetings need to meet the requirements of the new Schools Financial Value Standard (SFVS).

1.0 Organisation of Financial Responsibility and Accountability

1.1 FULL GOVERNING BODY

Composition as at April 2025

<i>Mrs S Gibson (Chair)</i>	<i>Mrs M Buckley (Executive Headteacher)</i>
<i>Mr J Ryan</i>	<i>Mrs J Salway</i>
<i>Mr I Mason</i>	<i>Mr C Sonczak</i>
<i>Mr C Rajagopala</i>	<i>Mrs S A Brown</i>
<i>Mr Lee Keen</i>	<i>Mrs N Hamilton</i>
<i>Mr M Rybczynski (Vice)</i>	<i>Mr A Zakariya</i>
<i>Mrs C Spence</i>	<i>Ms M Quincey</i>
<i>Mr A Farrad</i>	

Role:

- To provide a strategic view of how the school will effectively use the financial resources under its control to raise standards of achievement and promote effective teaching and learning.
- To oversee that procedures are in place which ensure accountability for and the proper stewardship of the public money delegated to the school(s).

Responsibilities:

- To discharge statutory responsibility for the oversight of financial management in the school(s).
- To monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of the school's financial management procedures and ensure that the school's financial arrangements comply with Oldham Council's Financial Framework and the Local Authority's "Scheme for Financing Schools Revised Oct 2019".
- To require all governors and members of staff to declare any links they have with firms from which the school might wish to buy goods or services; and/or to declare any personal relationship which could be a conflict or interest. To ensure that a register of such interests is maintained by the Executive Headteacher or Business Manager on behalf of the Governing Body and is open to inspection and reviewed on an annual basis and is published on a publicly accessible website. All governor meetings must give an opportunity for any interest not previously declared to be made at the beginning of each meeting; this must be recorded in the minutes.
- To ensure the school has a written statement of its aims and objectives (School Improvement Plan) in sufficient detail to provide the basis for constructing budget plans. Budget plans must be seen as the financial expression of the School Plan.

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- To ensure both schools have a medium term educational and budget plan (covering 3 - 5 years) indicating the intended use of resources in achieving its educational goals and reflecting the school improvement plan.
 - To ensure that both schools have a statement setting out the steps they will take to ensure expenditure reflects the principles of best value.
 - To approve both schools' annual spending plans or delegate to the relevant committee.
 - To consider and sign the Statement of Internal Control (SIC) annually.

Delegated Authority:

- The full Governing Body has elected to delegate responsibility for the financial administration of the school budget including the overseeing of its preparation, monitoring its implementation and controlling expenditure against it to the Finance Committee. This must be ratified at Full Governing Body Meeting.
- The statutory responsibility for the oversight of financial management in the school remains with the full Governing Body.

Reporting Arrangements:

- The Finance Committee is accountable to the full Governing Body, which will consider the minutes of the Committee and endorse their recommendations where appropriate. The decisions made by the full Governing Body and the Finance Committee under its delegated powers are binding on all governors. Reports from Committees should include a section on the financial implications of any decisions or recommendations.

FINANCE COMMITTEE

Composition as at April 2025

Committee Members: *Mrs M Buckley, Mr J Ryan, Mrs J Salway,
Mr M Rybczynski & Mrs S Gibson*

Observers: *Mr S D Mould & Mr R Bhatti*

Chair to be appointed at the beginning of the meeting

Role:

To ensure proper financial administration arrangements are in place that enables the Governing Body to fulfil its statutory responsibilities for financial management and to ensure that the school adheres to the principals of the New Schools Financial Value Standard (SFVS)

To oversee the management of both schools' finances within the framework established by the Oldham Scheme for Financing Schools and Oldham Council's Financial Framework.

Responsibilities:

- To ensure the budget reflects the school's prioritised educational objectives as detailed in the School Plan, seeks to achieve best value and is subject to regular effective monitoring.
- To establish formal documented procedures and a timetable for planning the budget to ensure that all relevant factors are considered.
- To ensure that planned expenditure for each year does not exceed the available resources.
- To ensure that ring fenced grants are spent in accordance with the terms and conditions of the grant.
- To monitor the amount of each budget allocation in the light of known activity and to take decisions on the virement of funds between budget heads, subject to the advice of the Executive Headteacher, Head of Schools and Business Manager and in the interests of the school achieving its overall aims and objectives.
- To provide the LA with a written statement on or around 1 July, 1 October, 1 January and 1 March in line with the requirement 2.1.2 in the Oldham Scheme for Financing Schools to show the current & profiled budget, committed/invoiced / actual expenditure and the year-end out turn forecast.
- To ensure that the school has sound internal financial controls in place which safeguard the probity of its financial transactions and the reliability and accuracy of its financial records.
- The Finance Committee will ensure that there are written descriptions of financial systems and procedures, that they are kept up to date and that all appropriate staff are trained in their use. Where necessary, the Finance Committee will ensure that the school obtains satisfactory support services.
- To formally approve in year revisions to the Spending Plan (where delegated authority has been granted).

Reporting Arrangements:

The Committee will receive:

- An annual report on the school's long term financial plans.
- Reports on the annual school budget process and proposed spending plan.
- Termly monitoring reports showing spending and receipts, including sums committed but not yet paid for against the school's approved budget; explanation of material variances; details of corrective action taken; and a forecast of the expected year end outturn, discussion of which should be

formally minuted to a standard to conform to section A, Question 3, of The Schools Financial Value Standard (SFVS)

- Final year-end report including a review of the school's performance and an assessment of progress against objectives in the school improvement / action plan.

Delegated Authority:

The Finance committee has authority to make decisions on behalf of the full Governing Body to enable it to fulfil the responsibilities shown above. Decisions or recommendations will be reported to the full Governing Body for ratification.

THE EXECUTIVE HEADTEACHER/LEADERSHIP TEAM

Composition as at April 2025

Executive Headteacher:	Martine R Buckley
Deputy Executive Headteacher:	Rais Bhatti
Head of School:	Sally Brown
Deputy Head:	Caroline Spence
Head of School:	David Moore
Assistant Head:	Christopher Sonzcak
Assistant Head:	Rheia Gresham
Assistant Head:	Paul Cockson
Business Manager:	Stephen Mould

Role:

The Executive Headteacher/Leadership Team is responsible to the Governing Body for:

- ensuring that sound systems of internal control and financial administration are in place that enable the proper processing of the school's transactions and activities.
- ensuring that the school properly discharges its responsibilities as set down in the Oldham Scheme for Financing Schools.

Responsibilities:

- To prepare estimates of expenditure and income sufficiently in advance of each financial year to allow for consideration and approval by the Governing Body.
- To forward details of the approved budget and any subsequent budget changes to the Local Authority as required.
- To profile the budget and forecast cash flow to take account of likely spending patterns.

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- To provide termly written reports to the Governing Body on spending compared with the approved budget and other monitoring information as requested by the Governing Body, including documented explanations of major variances and details of management action and/or recommendations.
 - To ensure that where parts of the budget are delegated to a cost centre / departmental level the responsibility for controlling these budgets is matched by the level of accountability (i.e. budget managers are accountable only for items they can directly control.)
 - To consult periodically with the Governing Body and staff to ensure that the financial and management information they receive is relevant, accurate, timely, and user friendly.
 - To report to the Governing Body any proposals for policy changes which significantly affect the school's expenditure or income budgets.
 - To provide the LA with a written statement on or around 1 July, 1 October, 1 January and 1 March in line with the requirement 2.1.2 in the Oldham Scheme for Financing Schools to show the current & profiled budget, committed/invoiced / actual expenditure and the year-end out turn forecast.
 - To ensure that sound systems of financial control are in place and arrangements made to maintain control in the absence of key staff.
 - To maintain and update on an annual basis a register of business interests and conflicts of interest for both governors and members of staff on behalf of the Governing Body and to publish this register on a publicly accessible website.

Reporting Arrangements:

- The Executive Headteacher/Leadership Team will report to the Finance Committee and full Governing Body in accordance with the reporting timetable shown in *Appendix 1*.
- The Executive Headteacher/Leadership Team will receive *monthly* expenditure reports so that the overall budget position and those funds delegated to members of staff can be monitored.

Delegated Authority:

The Executive Headteacher in consultation with the Leadership Team may nominate members of staff as budget managers for curriculum areas of the budget and may allow them to spend funds in these areas as sanctioned by

the Executive Headteacher and Leadership Team. (Details held in Appendix 2)

1.4 THE ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICER/ADMINISTRATIVE TEAM

Composition as at: April 2025

Business Manager	<i>Stephen Mould</i>
School Administrative Officers	<i>Sonia Molloy & Michelle Pitt</i>
Admin Assistants	<i>Nasish Bibi</i>
Petty Cash Fund Holder	<i>Rais Bhatti & Sally Brown</i>

Role:

- To maintain and develop the school's systems of internal control and financial administration in order to enable the proper processing of the school's transactions and activities.
- To assist the Executive Headteacher in ensuring that the Oldham Scheme for Financing Schools information requirements are complied with.

Responsibilities:

- To assist the Executive Headteacher and Deputy Executive Headteacher in preparing estimates of expenditure and income and to maintain relevant budget working papers and records.
- To monitor the cash flow position of the school and report to the Executive Headteacher on a regular basis.
- To assist the Executive Headteacher in providing termly reports of actual income and expenditure as compared to the approved budget and other monitoring information as requested by the Governing Body.
- To provide monthly monitoring information to the Executive Headteacher, Leadership Team and cost centre budget holders.
- To prepare and maintain the financial accounts, reports and records of the school in accordance with Oldham Council's Financial Framework and the financial policy and procedures required by the Governing Body. These should be on an accrual's basis.
- To review the effectiveness of internal control procedures and where necessary make proposals to the Executive Headteacher and Finance & Premises Committee for improvements.

1.5 COST CENTRE MANAGERS/BUDGET HOLDERS

Role:

- To manage efficiently and effectively, and to be accountable for the resources delegated to them by the Executive Headteacher/Leadership Team.

Responsibilities:

- The day-to-day monitoring and control of delegated budgets.
- To ensure goods/services purchased from the delegated budget are in accordance with the school's aims and objectives.
- To ensure goods/services purchased are done so in line with Oldham Council's Financial Framework and giving due consideration to Best Value.

2.0 Financial Systems and Processes

2.1 FINANCIAL PLANNING AND THE BUDGET

2.1.1 The Executive Headteacher and Leadership Team will prepare a draft financial plan for the school during the autumn term for discussion and approval by the Finance Committee. The plan will cover the ensuing financial year and at least the following two financial years. The plan should demonstrate in financial terms how the school intends to use its resources to achieve the aims and objectives stated in the School Improvement Plan. The plan should be the financial expression of the school improvement plan.

2.1.2 The draft financial plan will be an integral part of the budget process and forms the link between the School Plan and the school budget; the medium-term financial plan will be reviewed annually.

2.1.3 A draft budget will be presented to the Finance Committee in May. The Deputy Executive Headteacher & Business Manager will be responsible for the preparation of the draft budget costed out using zero based budgeting principles where applicable. The principles and calculations used in preparing the budget should be documented and retained for future use. It may be necessary to review the financial plan and the improvement plan objectives to reflect final budget decisions that are made once actual resources are known.

2.1.4 The Governing Body will consider the draft budget. This consideration should include use of the benchmarking website to compare the school's performance with that of other schools. The principles of Value for Money should also be considered and a statement showing how this is to be achieved should be forwarded to the LA with the Budget Plan. The Governing Body will either approve it or return it to the Finance Committee for amendment. The Executive Headteacher will forward an approved budget plan(s) to the Local Authority by the 31st May each year.

Spending plans will be broken down sufficiently into appropriate cost centres to promote effective financial control.

2.1.5 Each month the Executive Headteacher & Deputy will receive financial statements from the school's accounting system produced by the Business Manager so that the overall budget and school bank account position can be monitored and reported to the Full Governing Body on a termly basis. The Business Manager will ensure that financial statements are provided to members of staff who have been designated as budget managers so that delegated funds are also monitored.

2.1.6 In the summer term governors will undertake a documented review of progress in implementing the provisions of the current improvement plan and

review the management of the previous year's budget. The Deputy Executive Headteacher will indicate where any proposal or policy change would significantly affect costs in the future.

Records will be kept showing how budgets have been built up enabling officers responsible for the allocation of expenditure or income to identify from which areas expenditure is to be funded.

Expenditure will only be made against available budget resources.

2.2 BUDGET MONITORING AND CONTROL

2.2.1 The Executive Headteacher will ensure that the process of monitoring actual expenditure against the budget is continuous. The Executive Headteacher, in consultation with the Leadership Team, will nominate members of staff and the Leadership Team as budget holders for specific curriculum and non-curriculum cost centres. (Details of the approved budget holders and the budgets they are responsible for are shown in Appendix 2). A note detailing the responsibilities of budget holders, the method used to allocate curriculum budgets and the rules to be applied to the carry forward of any under or overspends will be prepared by the Executive Headteacher and Leadership Team and circulated to each budget holder and the Finance Committee.

2.2.2 The Executive Headteacher is authorised to vire resources between detailed budget heads, provided that such virements shall not exceed £5,000 on any item and an aggregate of £10,000 in one financial year; virements in excess of £5,000 must have the approval of the Finance Committee. The Executive Headteacher is responsible for ensuring that the school's budget and finance systems are updated to reflect all virements and changes to the budget.

2.2.3 Day to day responsibility for monitoring and control lies with each budget holder who must obtain the prior written approval of the Executive Headteacher or Deputy Executive Headteacher if they wish to exceed their budget allocation.

2.2.4 The Business Manager will be responsible for co-ordinating the day-to-day monitoring process; the Executive Headteacher and Leadership Team will review the monitoring position monthly.

2.2.5 The Business Manager will issue monthly reports to each budget holder detailing budgeted and committed and actual expenditure for their area of responsibility. The Executive Headteacher will be provided with monthly reports detailing the overall monitoring position and a summary of spending by cost centre.

2.2.6 The Executive Headteacher or responsible officer will present to the Finance Committee on a termly of the school's actual and committed spending compared with the budget, with written explanations of any significant variances

and a forecast of the school's expected year end position. A report showing the school's current and forecast cash flow position will also be reported to the Finance Committee on a quarterly basis.

2.2.7 The Executive Headteacher or responsible officer will ensure that proper commitment accounting records are maintained.

3.0 Internal Control Procedures

- 3.1 In order to ensure that transactions will be properly processed or that errors will be detected promptly, as far as possible the duties of staff concerned with financial transactions will be distributed so that at least two people are involved in processing receipts and payments. The work of one person should act as a check or balance on the work of the other and any such checks or balances will be documented as being carried out. **There should be a written summary of financial procedures that is kept up to date.**
- 3.2 Alterations to documents must be made in indelible ink; correcting fluid or erasures must **not** be used.
- 3.3 Signatures on documents must be original and in indelible ink and will be sufficient to identify the signatory concerned (i.e. ticks, rubber stamps or scanned signatures are **not** acceptable)
- 3.4 Accounting records will be properly maintained and held securely. Financial documents will be retained in accordance with the arrangements laid down in the Local Authority's Manual of Guidance for Schools (See Appendix 3). The Executive Headteacher will specify who is authorised to access the records and documentation.
- 3.5 Destruction of accounting records, including reports and schedules, draft reports and draft schedules must be conducted taking into account the provisions of the Data Protection Act and The Freedom of Information Act. Documents should be shredded.

4.0 Insurance

- 4.1 The Executive Headteacher will liaise with the Local Authority to effect insurance arrangements.
- 4.2 The Finance Committee will review insurance arrangements annually to ensure they are commensurate with risks and to determine whether to insure risks not covered by the Local Authority. Arrangements will cover the use of school property e.g. musical instruments, computers, when off the premises.
- 4.3 The Executive Headteacher will ensure where lettings of School Premises are undertaken that the lessee has sufficient public liability cover. Where

this is not the case, the school can opt for this additional cover under the Local Authority's Insurance Policy and charge the lessee accordingly. (For contact numbers please refer to the Risk Management and Insurance Handbook for Schools.)

- 4.4 The consideration of claims for loss of or damage to personal property of employees, which are not covered by the Balance of Risks Policy up to the value of £160 will be delegated to the Executive Headteacher.

5.0 Computer systems

- 5.1 Where the school maintains accounting records and information on computerised systems, the Executive Headteacher must ensure that the school is registered in accordance with the Data Protection Act 1998.
- 5.2 The Executive Headteacher must ensure that there are effective back-up procedures in place for the financial data held by the school. Back up discs must be stored in a fireproof location, with a second set held off site.
- 5.3 The Executive Headteacher must ensure that only authorised staff have access to computer hardware and software used for school management. Passwords must not be disclosed and should be changed at least termly.
- 5.4 Anti-virus software must be used on all systems.
- 5.5 Wherever possible access levels should be restricted to re-enforce the principles of internal control set out in Section 3 above. Access rights to systems and programs should be denied immediately a member of staff leaves.

6.0 Purchasing Procedures

- 6.1 Before placing an order the person responsible for making it will ensure that the school is obtaining best value for money and that the budget remaining is sufficient to meet the proposed order value.
- 6.2 In accordance with the schools current Authorised Signature List the signing of orders for goods, works or services not exceeding £10,000 are delegated to the Executive Headteacher anything above must have the approval of the Governing Body. (As per Financial Regulation 3 and 7)
- 6.3 If the estimated cost of an item is less than £5,000, one verbal quote is sufficient before placing the order. In the case of contracts with a value between £5,000 and £15,000 there will be three verbal quotations. For contracts with a value between £15,000 and £50,000 there will be three written quotations. For contracts over £40,000 and up OMBC tendering process must be operated. For WTO Thresholds and above an WTO procurement procedure must take place for which schools should seek advice from Corporate Procurement who can be contacted on ce.procurement@oldham.gov.uk

Where it is not practical to obtain the minimum number of quotations or if the lowest price is not accepted, the Executive Headteacher will document the reasons and formally report this to Governors in case such action is ever questioned.

- 6.4 In the case of contracts with a value less than £15,000 the Governing Body has delegated the decision on which quotation to accept to the Executive Headteacher.
- 6.5 In the case of contracts with a value over £15,000 the decision on which quotation to accept will be referred to the Governing Body. (As per Financial Regulation 9 & Contracts Procedure Rules)
- 6.6 The authorisation of the variation of the financial terms of a building or civil engineering contract is delegated to the Executive Headteacher provided that when the cumulative estimated value of all such variation does not exceed £10,000 or 10% of the contract sum, whichever is the lesser, these and all future variations as they occur, shall be reported to the next meeting of the Governing Body for confirmation.
- 6.7 Where the proposed works would fall within the Construction Industry Scheme (CIS) the Executive Headteacher will obtain the appropriate CIS documentation from contractors at the quotation stage; contractors not complying with CIS regulations will be not contracted to do work. (Waiting clarification from HMRC on when school expenditure falls within CIS. Further guidance to follow from Schools Finance Team)
- 6.8 If the estimated cost of a contract exceeds £40,000, then the tendering procedures laid down in Oldham Council's Contract Procedural Rules must be adhered to. The implications of T.U.P.E. (The Transfer of Undertakings (Protection of Employment) Regulations 2006) must be considered. These regulations protect the rights of employees in a transfer situation.
- 6.9 All orders for goods and services will be printed on official stationery and will make reference to the school being part of Oldham Council.
- 6.10 Documents supporting purchases/contracts (i.e. specifications, quotes, tenders and correspondence) will be retained. The rationale for the chosen quote will be documented.
- 6.11 Usually the ordering of goods and services by telephone will **not** be undertaken unless supported by an official order.
- 6.12 Usually orders will be issued for all goods and services, except for utilities (energy costs, telephone bills, rates etc.), agency staff and petty cash purchases, and purchases for which a written contract is signed. In these cases, orders should be issued on a call down basis.

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- 6.13 As well as showing details of the goods or service required, the order will also show the estimated or agreed price including any delivery charge, net of VAT (where VAT is recoverable).
 - 6.14 The order will be authorised by the Executive Headteacher or by persons to whom this function has been delegated by the Executive Headteacher with the approval of the Finance Committee. All such persons will be budget holders, and all names will be maintained on a list held by the school's finance staff. (See appendix 2)
 - 6.15 Orders must be used only for goods and services provided to the school. Individuals must not use official orders to obtain goods and services for their private use. Only staff approved by the Governing Body (or finance Committee) or Executive Headteacher may authorise orders.
 - 6.16 The names and signatures of staff authorised to sign orders, certify invoices, sign cheques, etc, are recorded in Appendix 4.
 - 6.17 The person receiving the goods or services must make careful checks, to ensure that they are in accordance with the order; the check will be recorded on the delivery note and/or invoice and include the initials of the checking officer and passed to the member of staff responsible for maintaining the school's financial records. Payments will not be authorised until all necessary checks have been made, including prices, discounts, delivery charges and the VAT accounting checks. Payment will only be made against an official invoice.
 - 6.18 Officers authorising/certifying invoices for payment must be satisfied that those payments comply with the appropriate tax regulations.
 - 6.19 Blank order sheets will be held securely, with access to them restricted. Similarly, access to cheque books/stock of blank cheques will be controlled. The holding of excessive stocks of order sheets or cheques should be avoided.

7.0 Personnel

- 7.1 All appointments, terminations and salary levels will be formally approved by the Governing Body and notified to the HR section of the Local Authority.
- 7.2 Appointments and amendments to payroll will only be authorised by the Executive Headteacher or the Deputy Executive Headteacher unless the amendment affects the Executive Headteacher in which case the Chair of Governors will certify the documents.
- 7.3 The Executive Headteacher must ensure that all the financial and administrative processes concerning employment in the school are checked, and that the school records agree with those of the Local Authority, which administers the payroll.

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- 7.4 Payroll and personnel records must be treated as confidential and retained in a secure place i.e. in a locked filing cabinet.
 - 7.5 Destruction of personal records, including reports and schedules, draft reports and draft schedules must be conducted taking into account the provisions of the Data Protection Act and The Freedom of Information Act. Documents should be shredded.
 - 7.6 Payroll transactions will usually be processed through the payroll system; any payments to individuals who have worked for the school on a “one off” or casual basis will always be made through the payroll system.
 - 7.7 Any contractor claiming to be self-employed will automatically be paid through the payroll as a temporary employee, unless proof of official tax status is provided.

8.0 Security of Stock and Other Property

- 8.1 The Executive Headteacher is responsible to the Governing Body for the safe custody and control of cash and property belonging to the school.
- 8.2 An inventory will be maintained of all attractive and portable items, with details of make, model, serial number and purchase value. A documented check of the inventory will be undertaken annually against actual items. Items with a purchase value of over £500 that are missing will be reported to the Finance Committee who will include it in its reports to the full Governing Body.
- 8.3 Items will be recorded in the inventory promptly (i.e. at the point of purchase). The inventory will have sufficient detail to identify individual assets (i.e. make, model, serial no., location etc). The record will be on sequentially numbered sheets and held in a fireproof location.
- 8.4 Obsolete items to be written off or items to be sold with a value up to £1,000 will be delegated to the Executive Headteacher. Any items above this amount must be reported to the Finance Committee for approval and then clearly recorded in the inventory records.
- 8.5 Safes and secure cupboards must be kept locked, the keys removed and held securely by the person designated by the Executive Headteacher. The loss of any keys will be reported immediately to the Executive Headteacher.

9.0 Income

- 9.1 The Governing Body through its Finance & Premises Committee and subject to the recommendations of the Executive Headteacher will establish a charging policy for the supply of goods and services by the school.

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- 9.2 The Executive Headteacher is responsible to the Governing Body for accounting for all income due and cash collected as set out in the charging policy.
- 9.3 The charging policy will be reviewed annually by the Governing Body to ensure that levels of charges fall in line with school policy and at least cover the cost of the service provision.
- 9.4 Where invoices are required, they must be issued within seven days by the Business Manager where possible the school will obtain money in advance of supplying goods or services to improve the school's cash flow and avoid the time and cost of administering debts.
- 9.5 Receipts and banking's will be cross-referenced to debtors by the administrative staff.
- 9.6 Bad debts up to £1,500 will only be written off with the formal minuted approval of the full Governing Body. In the case of larger debts, the school must seek written approval from the Local Authority as laid out in the Scheme for Financing Schools.
- 9.7 The administrative staff will issue receipts for income collected except where formal records (e.g. class sales book) are maintained. All receipts, vouchers and other income records will be securely retained. Personal cheques should not be cashed.
- 9.8 The accounting and debtor records will be properly and promptly updated and all income and VAT due to the school identified. Cash collected will be receipted and banked as soon as possible. Cash held on school premises will be kept to a minimum and in a lockable receptacle in a locked safe or cabinet and will not be above the cash holding limits stipulated by the Authority's insurers (See Appendix 6).
- 9.9 The responsibility for identifying money due to the school will, as far as is practicable, be kept separate from the responsibility for collecting and banking the money.

Cash income must be kept separate from petty cash and school private fund money.

- 9.10 Staff and governors must not use their personal bank accounts or the school private fund account for any payment or receipt relating to the school's budget.

10.0 Banking Arrangements

- 10.1 The Executive Headteacher is responsible on behalf of the Governing Body for ensuring that the school complies with the requirements for school's bank accounts as set out in Oldham's Scheme for Financing Schools.

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- 10.2 Cheques must not be signed unless all details are fully completed. Blank cheques must not be signed.
 - 10.3 For cheque book schools a bank reconciliation (FIN 2) will be completed by the Business Manager on a monthly basis to prove that balances are correct and to provide assurance that the underlying accounts of the school have been properly compiled and are accurate.
 - 10.4 Where practicable, staff responsible for undertaking bank reconciliations should not be responsible for the processing of payments or receipts.
 - 10.5 The Governing Body will review its banking arrangements annually and document as such to ensure they provide the best value for money. They will also review the authorised signatories annually.
 - 10.6 The school's cash flow will be monitored regularly by the Business Manager to ensure that the school's account does not go overdrawn; the cash flow information will also be used to identify funds surplus to immediate requirements that can be invested to optimal effect.

11.0 Petty Cash

- 11.1 The Executive Headteacher and Business manager is authorised to decide the amounts of petty cash (Mather Street £500 limit & Yew Tree £1000 limit) that is held in the school. The person holding the cash must sign to accept responsibility for it, the Executive Headteacher will be responsible for the total amount in the school. The Executive Headteacher will ensure that the cash sums held are covered by insurance and for security reasons do not exceed the Cash Holding Limits set down in Appendix 6.
- 11.2 Petty cash floats will be reconciled on a monthly basis or more frequently as required by the administrative staff.
- 11.3 Staff authorised to hold petty cash are responsible for: -
Obtaining proper vouchers and receipts for all cash payments made.
The petty cash amounts will only be reimbursed from the school bank account. Cash income from other sources must not be used to reimburse petty cash.
- 11.4 The use of petty cash will be limited to minor items for which there is proper authority and provision in the budget. Petty cash must not be used for paying regular suppliers, mileage claims by staff or for the purchase of items in excess of £250. Where items exceed £250 and it is not practicable to issue an official order, then any payment in excess of £250 from petty cash will require the prior approval of the Executive Headteacher.

12.0 School Private Funds

- 12.1 Accounting procedures for the school fund will reflect the standards required for accounting for public money.

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- 12.2 There will be a proper separation of the voluntary funds and related accounting records from those for the school's budget.
 - 12.3 The school fund should be reconciled to the Bank Statement and Cash Balance held on a monthly basis. All transactions should be recorded immediately and recorded in indelible ink. Pencil, erasers and correction fluid should not be used.
 - 12.4 The Governing Body requires that there is an annual audit of the private funds. This audit should be completed within three months of the end of each financial year by someone independent of the management of the school and approved by the Governing Body.

Appendix 1

Timetable of Governing Body/Committee Meetings For For Financial Year 25/26

FULL GOVERNING BODY

TERM	DATE
Summer	June 2025
Autumn	October 2025
Spring	March 2026

FINANCE & PREMISES COMMITTEE

TERM	DATE
Summer	June 2025
Autumn	December 2025

Appendix 2

Cost Centre Managers / Budget Holders

For Financial Year 2025/26

NAME	POSITION	COST CENTRE
	<u>Teachers</u>	<u>Year Group Budgets</u>
	<u>Teachers</u>	<u>Leadership Groups</u>
	<u>Pastoral Support</u>	<u>Rewards & Pastoral</u>
	<u>SENCO</u>	<u>Special Education Needs</u>
	<u>Site Staff</u>	<u>Caretaking Materials</u>
	<u>Head of Schools</u>	<u>Petty Cash</u>

Appendix 3

Accounting Records

Supplementary to details in the Manual of Guidance for schools (Sections 10.2.1 – 10.2.2)

The school should properly maintain accounting records, only allow access by authorised staff and hold all records in a secure place. Financial documents must be retained in accordance with the following arrangements:

- (i) To comply with the requirements of both the Inland Revenue and the Department of Social Security it is necessary to keep relevant payroll and other related financial records, for at least 6 complete financial years plus the current year.
- (ii) VAT regulations require that business records must be preserved for 6 years - these are deemed to include invoices, income records, orders, delivery notes, bank statements, paying in slips, annual accounts and relevant business correspondence.
- (iii) Contract documents should be retained for 6 years after the contract has expired or 12 years if they have been signed under the Council's Common Seal.

All financial transactions should be traceable from the original documentation to the accounting records and vice versa.

Appendix 4

Names & Signatures of staff authorised to sign orders:

For Financial Year 2025/26

NAME	SIGNATURE
Martine R Buckley	
Rais Bhatti	
Sally Brown	
Caroline Spence (Leaves Aug 2025)	
Paul Cockson	
Stephen Mould	
David Moore	

Names & Signatures of staff authorised to certify invoices:

NAME	SIGNATURE
Martine R Buckley	
Rais Bhatti	
Sally Brown	
Caroline Spence (Leaves Aug 2025)	
Paul Cockson	
Rhiewa Gresham	
Christopher Sonzcek	
Stephen Mould	
David Moore	

Names & Signatures of staff authorised to sign cheques, authorise BACS payments and payroll claims:

NAME	SIGNATURE
Martine R Buckley	
Rais Bhatti	
Sally Brown	
Caroline Spence (Leaves Aug 2025)	
James Peck	
Stephen Mould	

Appendix 5

Checklist of task completion:

ITEM	RESPONSIBILITY	LAST REVIEWED	DATE OF NEXT REVIEW
Committee timetable	Business Manager	April 2025	April 2026
List of Cost Centre Managers/Budget Holders	Business Manager	April 2025	April 2026
List of authorised signatories	Business Manager	April 2025	April 2026
Review of financial procedure documentation	SLT	April 2025	April 2026
Annual report on long term financial plans	SLT	July 2024	July 2025
Benchmarking review	Business Manager	December 2024	December 2025
Annual budget plan approved to LA	Governors	June 2024	June 2025
Register of Business & personal interests	Business Manager	Sept 2024	Sept 2025
Data protection register	Business Manager	Nov 2024	Nov 2025
Inventory check and report	Business Manager	Sept 2024	Sept 2025
Charging Policy review	SLT	March 2025	April 2026
Finance Policy Review	SLT & Governors	March 2025	April 2026
Best Value Review	SLT & Governors	March 2025	April 2026
Whistle Blowing Policy	SLT & Governors	Sept 2024	Sept 2025
Banking arrangements and cheque signatories review	SLT	Dec 2024	Dec 2025
Private funds account audit	Business Manager	June 2024	June 2025
Performance against Schools Development Plan reviewed and reported	SLT & Governors	Sept 2024	July 2025
Budget position report to LA 1 July	Business Manager & Heads of School	July 2025	
Budget position report to LA 1 October	Business Manager & Heads of School	October 2025	
Budget Position report to LA 1 January	Business Manager & Heads of School	January 2026	
Budget position report to LA 1 March	Business Manager & Heads of School	March 2026	
Financial Risk Assessment and Statement of Internal Control	Business Manager	April 2025	April 2026
Business Continuity/Disaster Recovery Plan Review	SLT		
School Utilisation of Balances Approved to LA	SLT & Governors	June 2025	June 2026

Asset Management Plan Review			
Staffing Structure Review	SLT & Governors	June 2025	June 2026

APPENDIX 6

OLDHAM MBC - OVERNIGHT CASH HOLDING LIMITS

	Description	Premises	Limit any one in
These general basic cash holding limits apply to all Departments as follows. Amounts held in excess of these limits will not be covered unless you have sought and obtained written agreements eg. higher limits, in respect of specific safes which have been declared to the insurers. All safe limits are conditional upon the safes being installed in accordance with the manufacturer's recommendations.		All Departments	£1,000
	insurers upon receipt of full details [manufacture/model/serial number] for safes situated in premises substantially constructed of brick, stone, concrete and not in isolated situations. Security features such as alarm protection will also expected to be present.		
2.	Wall safes [built into wall] There are very few exceptions to the maximum £500. Full details would need to be supplied before cover was agreed above the standard limit.	All Departments	£500
3.	Floor safes [sunken into floor] Yew Tree x2 Mather St x1	All Departments	£1,000
3a.	Floor safes [sunken into floor] – with deposit facility if no baffle plate fitted	All Departments	£500
	For these safes the standard and method of installation is of vital importance and the following criteria should be followed: - the installation must be carried out by the manufacturer or an appointed agent in accordance with the manufacturer's recommendations. a certificate of installation must be obtained from the installer and should be available from the installer upon request. all floor safes should be maintained and serviced in accordance with the manufacturer's recommendations		
4.	Locked receptacles e.g. locked filing cabinet, drawer, fire-resisting cabinets etc. [list is not exhaustive refer to Risk and Insurance Section for guidance]	All Departments	£250
5.	Locked Portastores	Education premises only	£750

Schools should contact the Risk and Insurance Team for clarification upon their individual safe cash holding limits.