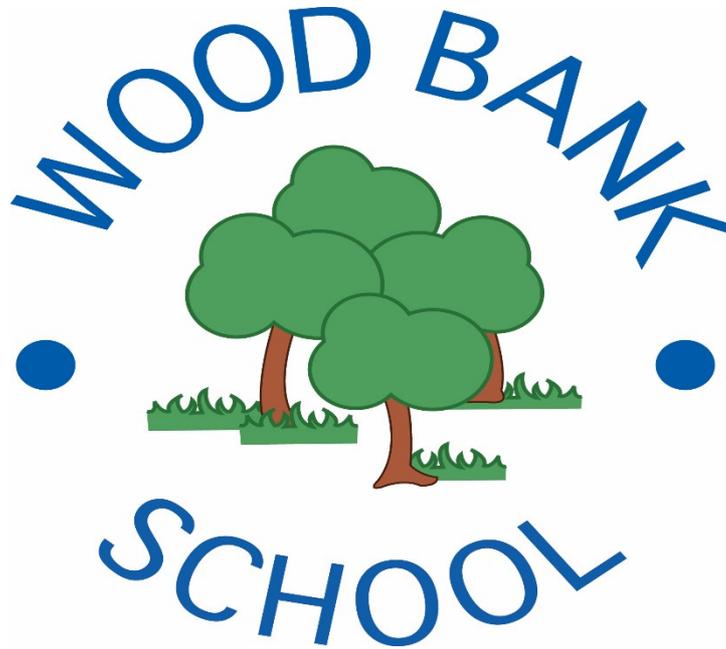


WOOD BANK SCHOOL



FINANCE POLICY

Policy created/updated	March 2019
Date to be reviewed	March 2020
Signed (Headteacher)	
Signed (Chair of Governors)	

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1. ANTI FRAUD AND CORRUPTION

DEFINITION

The definition of Fraud and Corruption is as follows:-

Fraud - "the intentional distortion of financial statements or other records by persons internal or external to the Council, which is carried out to conceal the misappropriation of assets or otherwise for gain".

Corruption - "the offering, giving, soliciting or acceptance of an inducement or reward which may influence the action of any person"

WHO DOES THE STRATEGY APPLY TO?

The Anti-Fraud and Corruption Strategy will apply to all Members and employees of the Council.

THE NEED FOR A STRATEGY

1. Calderdale Council is a large, complex organisation responsible for looking after millions of pounds of public money. Every year millions of pounds are received by and paid out by the Council through a whole variety of transactions. The Council owns millions of pounds worth of moveable assets, ranging from small items of stationery through to expensive items of plant and equipment.
2. The vast majority of the Council's employees are scrupulously honest. The vast majority of those people who receive money from the Council (members of the public, contractors, etc) are also honest citizens. The Council, however, receives and pays out large amounts of money, which involves an enormous number of supporting transactions. This makes the Council susceptible to the risk of dishonest people defrauding monies to which they are not entitled.
3. The Audit Commission has identified the following areas as being particularly vulnerable to fraud:-
 - a. Housing Benefit Claims
 - b. Student Grant Claims
 - c. Grants for Renovating Houses
4. These examples involve fraud by members of the public and contractors. There are also risks that money and assets will be misappropriated by dishonest Council employees - acting either alone or in collusion with others outside the Council. Dishonesty has many forms, ranging from taking money due to the Council, misusing or misappropriating assets, or putting in false claims for money payments.
5. In recent years there have been examples in Calderdale of all these kinds of fraud. The need to be alert to the possibility of dishonest behaviour requires the Council to develop a strategy aimed at preventing, detecting and investigating dishonest and fraudulent conduct which could cost the Council money. Every pound that is misappropriated means one pound less to spend on providing services to those people who genuinely need help from the Council.

OVERALL COUNCIL POLICY

1. Calderdale Council is committed to having an effective Anti-Fraud and Corruption Strategy. The details of the strategy are set out in the following sections of this document entitled:-
 - i. Prevention Detection Investigation
2. Council employees should report any concerns they may have regarding fraud and corruption, whether it relates to dishonest behaviour by Council employees or by others. The Council has set up a confidential fraud hotline (telephone 01422 393568) which is manned by the Internal Audit Section of the Directorate of Finance. Internal Audit staff will investigate all reports of suspected fraud and corruption made by employees.
3. Employees should be left in no doubt of the consequences, should they deviate from the standards expected and that the Council's Disciplinary Code clearly identifies the following as Gross Misconduct:-
 - i. Theft and Unauthorised Borrowing Fraud
 - ii. Dishonesty
 - iii. A Chief Officer (or other senior nominated officer where authorised) may dismiss an employee on the grounds of gross misconduct after following the recognised procedure.
4. In some instances the Council may decide to refer allegations of fraud and corruption to the Police. The decision to refer cases to the Police will be taken by the Director of Finance's Principal Assistant (Audit).
5. Calderdale Council will do all it can to recover monies or assets misappropriated by employees or others as a result of dishonest behaviour. (See Section 8 on "Recovery of Losses").
6. In order to protect the public purse all Calderdale Council employees need to know about:-
 - i. those activities where experience has shown there are significant risks of fraud and corruption;
 - ii. what individual employees can do to prevent fraud and corruption;
 - iii. what employees should do if they have suspicions that fraud or corruption is going on. All employees will be issued with a copy of the leaflet "What to do if you suspect Fraud or Dishonesty".

PREVENTION

1. There are many ways of preventing fraud and corruption happening in the first place. The Council has adopted the following preventative measures:-
 - a. The Council's Recruitment and Selection procedures require that references should always be taken up when recruiting posts within the Council. This is intended to prevent people with a history of dishonest behaviour being employed by the Council in positions of trust.

- b. The Council's Code of Conduct for Council Employees makes it clear that the conduct of its employees should be of the highest possible standard and that dishonest behaviour by employees will not be tolerated by the Council.
 - c. All Council employees will be issued with a copy of the leaflet "What to do if you suspect Fraud or Dishonesty" which advises on what should be done if a fraud is suspected.
2. High standards of financial administration are a key element in the prevention and detection of fraudulent activities. This can only be achieved if there is a strict control environment which is adhered to by both Officers and Management.
 3. The Control Environment as a whole, relies on other mechanisms within the Council such as:-
 - a. Contract Procedure Rules Financial Procedure Rules Section 151 Standards Code of Conduct
 4. Council Rules govern the way in which the Council operates whilst the Section 151 Standards identify the financial controls that should be in place within all systems and all Services of the Council.
 5. The Section 151 Standards must be complied with by Managers, as it is the basis upon which Internal Audit will review, evaluate and test those financial systems throughout all Services of the Council.
 6. It is the responsibility of each Chief Officer to ensure that their Service complies with all these rules and that sound financial controls do exist within their financial systems and procedures.
 7. The Internal Audit Section will carry out cyclical tests to ensure that all issues relating to the Control Environment are in place and are being operated correctly.
 8. The Council's overall arrangements for the prevention of fraud and corruption are reviewed annually by the External Auditor, who reports to the Council by way of a Management Letter.

DETECTION

Despite the best efforts of management and the Internal Audit Section and the existence of internal controls within all the systems of the Council, the determined perpetrator will invariably identify an area of weakness and attempt to exploit it.

In order that Managers can be clear on what fraud and corruption is, and how to identify it, the Council has produced a document called "Fraud and Corruption - Advice and Guidance to Managers". This gives clear advice and guidance on the highest risk areas, examples of what to look for, and guidance on what action to take having discovered a potential problem.

The Council has also produced a leaflet called "What to do if you suspect Fraud or Dishonesty" which is to be issued to all employees. This leaflet gives guidance to employees on what they should do if they have any suspicion of Fraud or Dishonesty.

In an attempt to eliminate fraud and corruption, the Council will continue to seek cost effective ways of identifying fraud and corruption and will act on all information and allegations received. This could include any of the following:-

- Tip offs from members of the public
- Information received from companies and other agencies.
- Referrals from Service Management.
- Information derived as a result of Internal Audit work.
- Concerns expressed by employees via the Fraud Hotline (See below).
- Data Matching (see below)

Fraud Hotline

The Fraud Hotline is a confidential telephone answering service based within the Internal Audit Section. This allows Council staff to raise any concerns they may have, anonymously should they so wish.

Data Matching

There has been a growth in recent years in the use of Information Technology to detect fraud. This invariably involves the comparison of information across different databases. This can be done internally within the Council or between any number of other Councils. Calderdale has already taken part in data matching initiatives and where it is felt to be beneficial will do so in the future.

INVESTIGATION

Each and every fraud investigation has different characteristics, and as such makes the imposition of a fixed system of investigation difficult or impossible. In general terms, however, investigations can be categorised as involving:-

- Claimants (eg Housing Benefits, Student Awards, Renovation Grants)
- Employees or Members of the Council.
- Third Parties (eg external suppliers or contractors).

Claimant Based Investigations

In view of the potential for high levels of Housing Benefit Fraud and Council Tax Benefit Fraud, the Council employs three Housing Benefit Investigations Officers. They have the benefit of specialist knowledge of the Housing Benefit rules and regulations, and are specifically employed to detect and investigate potential Housing Benefit Fraud cases. This covers both reactive work and proactive exercises.

All suspicions of Housing Benefit Fraud and Council Tax Benefit Fraud should be referred direct to the Housing Benefit Investigation Officers, who will undertake the investigation and take the appropriate action once the facts of the situation have been established.

All Other Investigations

All other cases involving claimants, employees, Elected Members of the Council and third parties should be referred to the Internal Audit Section, who have a designated Specialist Auditor (Management Auditor - Investigations).

These investigations can range from those that are relatively simple to those which are extremely complex. The procedures to be followed in these cases are as follows:-

- All cases of potential fraud should be immediately notified to the Internal Audit Section, who will record the referral.

- The Internal Audit Section and Service Management will discuss and agree the way in which the case will be progressed.
- The Principal Assistant (Audit) will decide whether or not the Internal Audit Section will be directly involved in the investigation or whether the Service Management should investigate the case.
- Where cases are to be investigated by Service Management, the Internal Audit Section will continue to monitor progress and record the ultimate outcome of the case and will always be available for the giving of professional advice and guidance throughout the investigation.
- All investigations will be carried out in complete confidentiality, with professional standards being strictly observed in the gathering and recording of evidence and the putting together of a case file, in order to comply with the provisions of the Police and Criminal Evidence Act of 1994.
- In cases of potential major fraud, the Principal Assistant (Audit) and Chief Officer of the Service concerned will, where deemed appropriate, report the matter to the Chief Executive and the Council.
- In instances where disciplinary action is deemed to be appropriate, the final decision will ultimately be made by the Service Chief Officer, who will then have to comply with the rules and regulations on Disciplinary Procedures. In these instances, the appropriateness of the employee being suspended should be considered at an early stage.
- If a case involves action against a third party, any action to be taken will be agreed between the Chief Officer, the Internal Audit Section, and where necessary the Law and Administration Service.
- In all cases where employees are suspected of fraud, corruption, theft or unauthorised borrowing, and there is sufficient evidence to support a criminal prosecution, serious consideration will be given to referring the case to the Police for further investigation.
- In such cases the decision to refer to the Police is ultimately the responsibility of the Principal Assistant (Audit) who will make that decision after consultation with the Chief Officer concerned.
- All cases involving the loss of third party monies (eg home care client) will be referred to the Police at the earliest opportunity under existing arrangements with West Yorkshire Police.
- All liaisons with the Police will be undertaken by the Management Auditor (investigations) on the basis that he has direct contact with a named Police Liaison Officer from whom early advice and guidance on case progression can be sought where necessary.

RECOVERY OF LOSSES

The Council's policy is that it will always seek to recover the losses incurred as a result of fraud and corruption.

As soon as the full extent of the loss has been established notification should be sent to the Council's Insurance Officer giving details of the case indicating that recovery is to be attempted in the first instance.

A Sundry Debtor Account should then be raised to ensure that:-

- The recovery attempt is not overlooked.
- All sums withheld or subsequently received by way of recovery/restitution are appropriately credited.
- Any balance of loss outstanding is dealt with through existing procedures (ie insurance claim or write off as appropriate).

Recovery of losses from employees can be pursued in a number of ways as follows:-

- From payments due to the employee (eg car allowance, travel and other expenses claims) - (where the employee gives permission).
- From salary/wages still due to be paid (with employees permission).
- From the employees superannuation entitlement. (Where the Council has suffered direct financial loss by reason of the offence).
- By way of written agreement with the employee to repay in one lump sum, or by an acceptable offer to pay by instalments.

It should be made clear that any monies offered will be accepted "without prejudice to any other action the Council may wish to take", and that acceptance is only in respect of losses identified to date and that the Council reserves the right to seek recovery of any further losses that may come to light in the future.

Claims under the Council's insurance arrangements in fraud and corruption cases should be regarded as a "last resort", and will only be instigated once all other avenues of recovery have been fully explored

2. BEST VALUE STATEMENT

INTRODUCTION

The Governing Body is accountable for the way in which the school's resources are allocated to meet the objectives set out in the school's plans. Governors need to secure the best possible outcome for pupils, in the most efficient and effective way, at a reasonable cost. This will lead to continuous improvement in the school's achievements and services

WHAT IS BEST VALUE?

Governors will apply the four principles of best value:

- Challenge - Is the school's performance high enough? Why and how is a service provided? Do we still need it? Can it be delivered differently? What do parents want?
- Compare - How does the school's pupil performance and financial performance compare with all schools? How does it compare with LA schools? How does it compare with similar schools?
- Consult - How does the school seek the views of stakeholders about the services the school provides?
- Compete - How does the school secure efficient and effective services? Are services of appropriate quality, economic?

The Governors of Wood Bank School are committed to achieving Best Value in all of the decisions we make. The principles of Best Value are applied to ensure that we secure continuous improvement for our school and as such we will:

- Regularly review the functions of the school, challenging how and why services are provided, set targets and performance indicators for improvement
- Monitor outcomes and compare performance with schools with pupils with similar needs through benchmarking projects
- Consult with our stakeholders when making major decisions
- Promote fair competition through obtaining quotations and using tendering to ensure that goods and services are secured in the most economic, efficient and effective way.

THE GOVERNORS' APPROACH

The Governors and school managers will apply the principles of best value when making decisions about:

- the allocation of resources to best promote the aims and values of the school.
- the targeting of resources to best improve standards and the quality of provision.
- the use of resources to best support the various educational needs of all pupils.

Governors, and the school managers, will:

- make comparisons with other/similar schools using data provided by the LA, Central Government and by participating in specific benchmarking projects e.g. quality of teaching & learning, levels of expenditure
- challenge proposals, examining them for effectiveness, efficiency, and cost, e.g. setting of annual review targets, IEP targets, etc.
- through our Service Level Agreement with Calderdale's Buildings, Design and Maintenance Team require suppliers to compete on grounds of cost, and quality/suitability of services/products/backup, etc.
- consult individuals and organisations on quality/suitability of service we provide to parents and pupils, and services we receive from providers

This will apply in particular to:

- staffing
- use of premises
- use of resources
- quality of teaching
- quality of learning
- purchasing
- pupils' welfare
- health and safety.

Governors and school managers:

- will not waste time and resources on investigating minor areas where few improvements can be achieved
- will not waste time and resources to make minor savings in costs
- will not waste time and resources by seeking tenders for minor supplies and services.

The pursuit of minor improvements or savings is not cost effective if the administration involves substantial time or costs. Time wasted on minor improvements or savings can also distract management from more important or valuable areas.

Staffing

Governors and school managers will deploy staff to provide best value in terms of quality of teaching, quality of learning, adult-pupil ratio, and curriculum management.

Use of Premises

Governors and school managers will consider the allocation and use of teaching areas, support areas and communal areas, to provide the best environment for teaching & learning, for support services, etc.

Use of Resources

Governors and school managers will deploy equipment, materials and services to provide pupils and staff with resources which support quality of teaching and quality of learning.

Teaching

Governors and school managers will review the quality of curriculum provision and quality of teaching, to provide parents and children with:

- a curriculum which meets the requirements of curriculum entitlement and special needs of our children
- teaching which builds on previous learning and has high expectations of children's achievement.

Learning

Governors and school managers will review the quality of children's learning, by cohort and individuals to provide teaching which enables children to achieve appropriate levels of progress, in line with their EHC plans.

Purchasing

Governors and school managers will develop procedures for assessing need, and obtaining goods and services which provide "best value" in terms of suitability, efficiency, time, and cost. Measures already in place include:

- competitive tendering procedures
- procedures for accepting "best value" quotes, which are not necessarily the cheapest (e.g. suitability for purpose and quality of workmanship)
- procedures which minimise office time by the purchase of goods or services under £1000 direct from known, reliable suppliers (e.g. stationery, small equipment).

Pupils' Welfare

Governors and school managers will review the quality of the school environment and the school ethos, in order to provide a supportive environment conducive to learning and recreation.

Health & Safety

Governors and school managers will review the quality of the school environment and equipment, carrying out risk assessments where appropriate, in order to provide a safe working environment for pupils, staff and visitors.

Safeguarding

Governors and school managers will review the quality of the school environment, safe recruitment of staff and volunteers, strategies and procedures to provide a learning environment where all children are safe.

Monitoring

These areas will be monitored for best value by:

- In-house monitoring by the Leadership Team and Subject Managers e.g. classroom practice, work sampling, monitoring of curriculum planning and individual plans
- Annual Reviews and termly target setting for individual children
- Annual Performance Management
- Annual Budget Planning
- Headteacher's financial reviews
- Monitoring for our School Improvement Partner
- Financial monitoring by our school bursar

- Tri-annual audits by the local authority
- Analysis of school and pupil performance data through CASPA (which incorporates B Squared assessment data.
- Ofsted Inspection reports
- Quality of Teaching monitoring cycle led by Senior Leadership Team
- Governors' committee meetings
- Governors' full meetings
- Governors' Annual Finance Review
- School Improvement Plan
- School Profile

The Governing Body will:

- hold an annual school improvement planning day with input from all stakeholders.
- review their "Best Value" statement annually.
- consider best value when arranging internal and external redecoration contracts, purchase of resources and services.

3. BUDGET CONTROL

INTRODUCTION

The Governors of Wood Bank School have delegated the responsibility for the day to day management of budgets under their control to the Head Teacher, with the exception that no order of more than £6,000 shall be placed without their prior permission. However, the Chair of Finance has the authority to authorise orders of more than £6,000 up to £10,000 without reference to the full Governing Body.

REGISTER OF PECUNIARY INTEREST

Upon their appointment to the Governing body and at the first subsequent meeting of each academic year, Governors will sign a declaration of Pecuniary Interest. Such a declaration will also be signed at the beginning of each academic year by the Head Teacher, Deputy Head Teacher, Administrator and all responsible for authorising orders will bear such interest in mind when placing orders.

BUDGET ALLOCATIONS

Allocations of money to the various budget headings will be made by the Governing Body after discussion with the Head Teacher, School Leadership Team and the staff in the case of Learning Resources.

The Budget will be agreed by the Governors at the first meeting after the money delegated to them by the LEA has been notified, although a draft budget may be prepared prior to this with reference to the School Improvement Plan (SDP).

BUDGET VIREMENT

Any Budget virement is delegated to the Headteacher who reports to the Governors via the Finance Sub-Committee. Any virement proposals are presented to the Finance Sub-committee by the Headteacher and taken to the Full Governing Body for approval.

EXPENDITURE DECISIONS

Spending from budget headings will be determined by curriculum co-ordinators/class teachers as agreed annually by the Leadership Team. All other expenditure from budgets delegated to the Governors will be decided by the Head Teacher.

ORDERING OF GOODS & SERVICES

Quotations, not estimates, for goods and services shall be obtained wherever possible and the best value accepted. The Calderdale Contract procedure rules have been adopted by the Governors. However, the school would only require 3 quotations from £10,000 to £59,999 with formal tendering above £60,000.

Orders will be placed by the Head, Deputy Head or School Administrator. They must always be authorised by the Head or Deputy. Orders will be authorised by a different person than the one who placed the order.

In the case of emergency building repairs, e.g. following a break-in, the Premises' Manager shall be permitted to contact a trade's person on the approved list to order such repairs as may be necessary to ensure the security of the building, e.g. the boarding up of broken windows.

Staff must not under any circumstances use official orders for personal purchases. Staff must not route any school income or expenditure through their own personal bank accounts.

RECEIPT OF GOODS/SERVICES

Goods received will normally be checked by the person who initiated the order against the delivery note and the original order. Any discrepancy or damages will be notified to the supplier by the senior administrator as soon as possible.

Building, maintenance or repair work done in school shall be checked by the Head, Deputy or Premises Manager upon its completion.

PAYMENT OF INVOICES

Invoices will be processed and entered in the Schools' Computer System by the Administrator or Head, having checked them against services or goods received.

Accounts will only be paid against invoices - not delivery notes or statements.

All cheques from the school budget account will be "payee only" except for cash cheques for reimbursing Petty Cash. Only manuscript signatures on cheques will be used.

CASH COLLECTIONS

Where goods are ordered through the School Budget but paid for by the school fund, therefore avoiding the payment of VAT:

Authorisation from the School Fund Committee/Friends Committee must be sought before any item is ordered. When the invoice is received a cheque for the total amount less VAT must be raised from the School Fund and paid into the School Budget.

RESOURCES

Back up of the Finance system is automated.

Blank cheques will not be signed.

All monies held in school will be clearly recorded (ie amount where it has come from and where it is going) and then locked in the school safe.

Only the Head, Deputy and Administrators will have access to this safe.

PETTY CASH

A Petty Cash "float" of £400 will be maintained. The Head/Administrator will be responsible for its accountancy.

Head or Deputy will check that the cash held matches the manual record on a regular basis, which will be signed to indicate reconciliation.

Personal cheques will not be cashed through the Petty Cash system.

INSURANCE PROCEDURES

The decision as to which insurance policies are to be taken out will be made by the Governors at the time of the budget approval, and such decisions will be minuted.

PAY-ROLL PROCEDURES

The Headteacher will be responsible for informing Calderdale Education Personnel and Pay roll Departments of any additions/deletions to staff and of their salary grades and scale points.

Monthly time sheets and supply staff claim forms will be authorised by one of the authorised signatories.

RECONCILIATION

Salaries/wages of staff and supply staff will be monitored from the computer sheet produced by the Authority each month.

ACCOUNTABILITY

All persons involved in financial matters - including the Governors - are accountable to the LEA and must adhere to LEA Financial Procedures.

The Governing Body shall ensure that expenditure for each financial year does not exceed the budget or planned deficit.

The Head is accountable to the Governors on all matters concerning Budgetary Control. The Head will present a Financial Report to the Governors at each scheduled Finance Sub-Committee meeting.

INVENTORY

Any item which has a value exceeding £500, or which is thought to be "attractive" to thieves, shall be entered in the Inventory.

The Inventory of each area of the school shall be checked annually by the person responsible for that area, who will sign and date the Inventory to signify that items are accounted for. The Head will check the Head's office and Administrator's office as she is responsible for the maintenance of the Inventory.

If an item of equipment is taken home by a member of staff this must be recorded on the chart in the office for that purpose.

If an item is "written off" then this will be done as outlined in the "Write off" policy and the Inventory will then be amended accordingly.

SCHOOL FUND

School Fund will be managed by the School Finance Committee and monitored by the Head or Deputy Head.

Expenditure from the School Fund will require the authorisation of the Head Teacher/Deputy Headteacher. Cheques will require the signatures of two designated persons.

Cash and cheques will be banked by the manager of the School Fund or the Administrator at least once a month.

The School Fund Cheque Book and paying-in book will be locked in a place of safety in the main school office.

A receipt will be issued for money or cheques received by the School Fund and the procedures followed for the accountancy of such monies.

These accounts will be audited annually before the Governors Annual Report to Parents by an Auditor from the LEA Finance Department or by auditors appointed by the Governors.

INCOME

Cash and cheques come into school on a regular basis eg school lunch money, money donated for trips, telephone calls, income for school budget from other schools. This should be dealt with as soon as possible:

- Make sure that all income is marked as to who it has come from and what it is for.
- If it cannot be sorted at once any cheques or cash should be put into the safe in the office. There is a procedure for putting money into safe – see "Cash Handling" policy.
- All cash should be counted preferably in the presence of more than one person.
- If money is to go to other parts of the school (eg, book club money) this needs to be given to the person dealing with it or to the class involved.
- Telephone money should be put in the telephone money jar and amounts entered on the slip provided. (All telephone call money is subject to VAT.)
- For money to be paid into School Budget Account, bank slips should be written out and the money secured in a paying-in envelope. Envelopes to be taken to the bank and deposited as soon as is possible after receipt. If income is to be kept on the premises overnight it should be locked in the safe.
- All income for school budget should be entered on SIMS FMS system as soon as possible and bank statements reconciled when they arrive.
- SCHOOL MEALS INCOME – a spreadsheet system is used for this. Specific instructions are given in the addendum (1) to this document.

INVESTMENT OF BUDGET SURPLUS

Any budget surplus will be invested to gain maximum risk-free return.

DEBT RECOVERY PROCEDURES

1. General requirements

The school will take all reasonable measures to collect debts as part of its management of public funds. A debt will be written off only after all reasonable measures (commensurate with the size and nature of the debt) have been taken to recover it.

The school's debt recovery policy will observe the relevant financial regulations and guidance set out in the Scheme for Financing Schools and any other legal requirements. In particular:

- the Governing Body will be informed of any debt belonging to the school which exceeds £250.
- a formal record of any debts written off will be maintained and this will be retained for 7 years (the form of this record is specified below).
- the school will consider taking legal action to recover debts, but will refer any debts which it has not been able to collect to an appropriate debt collection agency (unless a decision to write off the debt has been made by the Finance Committee).

In general payment for all goods and services supplied by the School should be collected in advance or 'at the point of sale'.

The procedures to secure the collection of all debts are outlined in paragraphs 3 to 2.4 and should be followed by all School staff.

2. Acceptable 'credit period'

The Finance Committee must determine the length of time they deem to be an acceptable 'credit settlement period' before the debt recovery procedures are applied.

The Finance Committee may consider that an 'acceptable' credit period may vary between different income generating activities;

- School lettings (in advance)
- School Meals (within 7 days in advance)

The Governors may have stipulated a maximum settlement period for school lettings in a separate 'Lettings policy'. However, in order to ensure a consistent approach and demonstrate transparency, the 'acceptable' period for each activity should be stipulated in this policy.

Debt recovery procedures should be applied in accordance with item 4 of this policy.

3. Reporting of outstanding debt levels

The Head teacher and School Business Manager will ensure that the level of outstanding debt is regularly monitored.

Suitable records will be maintained to detail individual debts and the total value of debt to the school in order that it can be determined at any time and reported to the Finance Committee.

The Headteacher/Finance Committee will review the level of outstanding debts every month/term to determine whether this level is acceptable and whether action to recover debts is effective.

Debt Recovery Procedures

Where payment from the parent/guardian has not been received in advance, or 'at the point of sale', the following process should be applied.

- a. An invoice should be issued for the full amount in order to officially set up the debt;

Where invoices are raised they should state the date by which payment is due date/month/year.

- b. In all other cases, such as:

- correspondence with parents, etc, the maximum period that the school regards as reasonable before payment is overdue should be clearly stated, for example contributions for a school trip should be received by date/month/year.
- Payment for items purchased should be sent to the school office by date/month/year.
- If payment is not forthcoming the process detailed in 4.1(a) should be applied.

- c. A record of all goods and services will be maintained detailing:

- type of good/services supplied;
- value;
- date(s) good/services supplied; and;
- the identity of the 'debtor', e.g. child, parent, hirer, etc.

Verbal and Written Reminders

Details of all reminders, whether verbal or in writing, should be maintained. Where a letter is issued, a copy must be retained on file.

It is therefore important that one invoice, sent 7 days after credit period has expired, and then one reminder is sent after a further 7 days prior to any further action being taken.

Failure to respond to reminders/settle a debt

If a response or payment is not received following the above actions, service will be withdrawn and the debt may be passed to the Finance Committee.

At the discretion of the Finance Committee the debtor may be advised that they will be required to pay in advance for all future supplies or the supply will no longer be available to them.

This decision and its basis will be recorded and reported to the Finance Committee.

Negotiation of repayment terms

If people are unable to pay:

The School may reduce or cancel a debt in certain circumstances. A sensitive approach to debt recovery will be carried out.

Debtors are expected to settle the amount owed by a single payment as soon as possible after receiving the first 'overdue payment' reminder. If a debtor requests for 'repayment terms' these may be negotiated at the discretion of the Finance Committee.

A record of all such agreements entered into will be retained.

In all cases, a letter will be issued to the debtor confirming the agreed terms for repayment.

The settlement period should be the shortest that is judged reasonable.

The Head teacher / Finance Committee will decide whether any debtor who has been granted extended settlement terms will not be offered any further 'credit' and will, in future, be required to pay in advance.

This decision and its basis will be recorded and reported to the Finance Committee

Costs of debt recovery

Where the school incurs material additional costs in recovering a debt then the Head teacher /Finance Committee will decide whether to seek to recover such costs from the debtor.

The debtor will be formally advised in writing that they will be required to pay the additional costs incurred by the school in recovering the debt.

This decision and its basis will be recorded and reported to the Finance Committee.

Bad debts

This debt recovery policy should be cross-referenced to the Scheme for Financing Schools.

Write-off of any debt requires the written approval of the Finance Committee.

A record of the write-off, the reason for it, and the approval for it, will be retained for 7 years.

WRITE OFF/DISPOSAL PROCEDURES

Items for write off/disposal should be listed on the write off/disposal authorisation form, detailing model and serial number, a brief description of the items and the reason for write off/disposal.

The form should be signed and dated by the member of staff requesting write off/disposal, and then passed to the Head Teacher for authorisation. The Head Teacher should be satisfied that the items are to be written off/disposed of and should then enter on the form the method of disposal (eg scrapped, sold/offered via the weekly newsletter, sold by tender (if usable – eg computers).

When authorised, the form should be returned to the administrator for filing with the Inventory. The Inventory and the insurance should be updated accordingly, and the items disposed of as authorised.

The Head Teacher should then inform Governors of the items written off/disposed of and this should be recorded in the minutes of the Governor's meeting, stating that Governors have ratified the decision. Details of the items should also be minuted. A copy of the authorised write off/disposal form attached to the minutes should suffice for this purpose.

ITEMS FOR WRITE OFF/DISPOSAL

Description	Model Number	Serial Number	Reason for Disposal	Method of Disposal

Requested by: _____

Authorised by: _____

Date: _____

Date: _____

3. CASH HANDLING POLICY

It is important that the school has a clear policy on handling cash in the interests of protecting all staff involved and allowing auditing to be carried out efficiently.

AUDITING

The school welcomes the auditing of all financial systems in operation and cash handling that happens in the school. Calderdale Council's Auditors complete a full audit every 2 years. The school's Senior Administrator and Headteacher will monitor and check on cash handling systems in the school regularly and as a minimum on a termly basis. All staff are expected to co-operate fully with any audit or checking of systems.

KEEPING RECORDS AND ISSUING RECEIPTS

Records must be kept of all monies received in school. All payments given to the school office will be entered onto a Cash Balance Sheet (see attached) by the office staff.

Running totals of all money is calculated on each Cash Balance Sheet.

Receipts will be issued for sums of money over £10 from a Central Receipt Book.

A TOTAL of the contents of the safe is recorded at the end of each day in the Office Safe Book.

REPORTING OF SHORTAGES

The Senior Administrator should be informed immediately any cash shortage is discovered.

BANKING

The safe must not be used as an alternative to banking. All cash in school must be banked on, at least, a weekly basis The Petty Cash is an exception – this money by its nature needs to be kept in school).

Where there are large sums of cash eg following a fundraising event, this must be banked on the first banking day following the event.

4. CREDIT CARDS IN SCHOOLS

GOVERNOR AUTHORISATION

Governors should authorise the acquisition of a credit card or additional cards.

Governors should agree the financial institution that the credit card is acquired from.

Governors should agree which member of staff should be the card holder.

Cards can be restricted so that certain “merchant” categories of goods can be omitted by the bank. (eg cash, leisure facilities) Individual purchase limits and monthly limits can be put on cards. Governors should determine restrictions on card use and any value limits required.

CARD SECURITY

It is important that ownership of the card is known at all times so that if there are any unidentified purchases on the statement, responsibility for the purchase can be determined.

Schools may feel that the best method of controlling the card would be for one member of staff to take control of the card, with all purchases being made by the cardholder, with authorised requests made by other members of staff as required. In this situation, responsibility for the security of the card is with the cardholder at all times. At no time should other staff members be given the card for use and the pin numbers would not be divulged to other staff by the cardholder.

An alternative arrangement would be for several authorised staff to use one card. This may be beneficial for school trips, for example. In this situation, a member of staff should be appointed to control the card and a signing out procedure should be put in place. This would allow the school to identify who has made purchases at any particular time when the statement is received.

A third option is for more than one member of staff at the school to be allocated a card. Purchases made would be separately identified on the credit card statement. Cardholders would be responsible for all purchases on their card.

ORDERING OF GOODS AND SERVICES

It is recommended that goods are only purchased using a credit card when the normal system is inappropriate. This may be for purchasing goods off the internet, or booking rail tickets by telephone.

Where a school has one credit card, requests for purchases using the card should be submitted to the card holder on a standard form and authorised by a member of staff who is authorised to sign orders. These should be retained by the card holder.

Internet Purchases

Internet purchases should only be used where the school is using a secure browser, such as Microsoft Explorer. A secure browser shows whether or not the web site visited is secure when card details are being entered. Microsoft's Internet Explorer uses a locked padlock to denote a secure site. If the site is not protected, the padlock is open. Goods should only be purchased from secure web sites and preferably sites that are known to the school. Another indication is that the address of secure sites start with https, rather than http.

Where a supplier is unknown to the school, it is advisable to gain some background information before purchasing. It would be sensible to check that the company's registration details are shown on the homepage and determine if there is any sort of accreditation (eg Which?) on the web site that can be verified.

Where a site requires a user name and password, the password should be kept secure.

The delivery/returns policy should be reviewed before making a purchase to ensure that they are acceptable.

Private sellers (eg on E bay) should be avoided as the school's legal rights may not be the same should there be a problem.

Payment of Credit Card Bills

Schools can pay the credit card bills by cheque or direct debit. Where payment is made by cheque, arrangements should be put in place to ensure that the credit cards statements are paid on time so that interest charges are not incurred. This is particularly important at holiday times.

Receipts/invoices should be obtained for all credit card purchases. They should be attached to the credit card statement in order to support the cheque or direct debit payment made to the bank.

Credit card requisitions must be authorised by a cheque signatory. Statements should be reconciled and signed off by the Senior Administrator. It must not be the cardholder.

Card purchases should be recorded on a log that can be compared to the statement when it is received. The log should show when delivery of the goods was received, and the accounting code to which the expenditure is to be charged. It should be signed by the cardholder and submitted with the receipts to the authorising member of staff when the statement is received for payment. It is important that this process is in operation even when payment is by direct debit and no cheque is required.

5. LETTINGS

GENERAL STATEMENT

The school's facilities will be allocated, in the first instance, for school use and then in the following priority order: -

- 1 Educational activities by other LEA groups (including schools and services).
- 2 Leisure Services.
- 3 Wider community use including Sport/Arts.
- 4 Other approved/appropriate use.

Charges will be made by the governing body for the use of school premises by organisations or groups other than Wood Bank School.

Conditions and Charges are set out below.

USE OF SCHOOL AFTER NORMAL HOURS

The governors have delegated responsibility for the planning and timetabling of school activities to the headteacher.

The Governing body aims to maximize the use of school facilities by the community.

Organisations wishing to hire Wood Bank School's premises will not be discriminated against on the grounds of gender, sexual orientation, colour, race, religion, nationality, ethnic or national origin.

CONDITIONS OF HIRE

1. All organisations wishing to hire the school premises must have clear systems which ensure that the school's Child Protection and Health and Safety Policies and Procedures are upheld.
2. Events to be held in the school hall will be limited to attendance of 100
3. Events in classrooms will be limited to attendance of 15
4. Events in the Training and Resource Centre will be limited to 25
5. Events using the specialist rooms in school i.e. Soft Play, Sensory Room will be subject to agreement by the headteacher on proposed numbers, levels of supervision, capability of adults in charge
6. Wood Bank School is a non-smoking environment and smoking is banned in all areas of the school including the Training and Resource Centre
7. Wood Bank School does not hold a license for the sale of alcohol and, therefore, the sale of alcohol is not allowed by any organisations hiring the school facilities
8. Priority will be given to school functions and any maintenance work which needs to be carried out on the school – lettings may be cancelled at any time for this reason
9. If an event is deemed by the governing body to be unsuitable or contravene the Booking Contract they retain the power to cancel the booking without liability for any contingency or to pay any compensation arising
10. Deposits will be refunded in full for any events cancelled due to maintenance work on the school

11. Hirers cancelling events or failing to take up any booked period of hire will be required to pay the charges in full
12. The hirer shall be entirely responsible for parking arrangements for vehicles and indemnify the governing body against any damage or loss
13. The hirer shall acquaint him or herself with Fire, Health and Safety Procedures including all emergency exits (which must not be obstructed by the hirer), fire alarms and firefighting equipment, their position, use and operation.
14. It is the responsibility of the hirer to inform users of the location of emergency exits and procedures.
15. The hirer is responsible for the efficient supervision of the hired premises
16. No dangerous articles, inflammable materials or articles of a dangerous, offensive character may be brought onto the premises being hired
17. It is the responsibility of the hirer to leave all areas clean and tidy and to return all equipment to the proper place
18. Breakages must be reported and the hirers will be responsible for the cost of the replacement
19. The Governing Body of Wood Bank School will not accept responsibility or liability in respect of any damage or loss of property or articles placed or left on the premises by the hirer
20. The hirer is responsible for ensuring that persons using the school premises during their letting conduct themselves properly. It is the responsibility of the hirer to take the necessary action to deal with any person acting in such a manner that causes annoyance to other persons
21. The hirer must not use the premises for any purpose other than that as set out in the Booking Contract
22. The hirer shall not drive any nails, screws or other fastenings into the walls, floor, ceilings or furniture or use any chalk, polish or other materials on the floors
23. Suitable footwear must be worn at all times
24. The hirer will be responsible for the full expense of making good any damage to the buildings, furniture, fittings or grounds. The governing body shall be the sole judges of the expense thereof
25. Furniture or equipment can only be brought onto the school premises by prior arrangement.
26. It is the responsibility of the hirer to have systems in place for the reporting of any accidents, incidents or dangerous occurrence which occurs during the period of hire and to report these to the headteacher or her representative
27. The hirer will be responsible for any property owned by the school which is lost or goes missing during or in connection with any engagement
28. Electrical fittings or appliance must not be altered, removed or interfered with and no additional fittings or appliances installed
29. Animals are not permitted on the premises except properly trained guide dogs
30. The school is insured under the Council's Insurance Package. Hirers may wish to take out their own additional personal accident insurance cover

ADMINISTRATIVE PROCEDURE FOR HIRING SCHOOL

- 1 On enquiry, organisations will receive a PROVISIONAL BOOKING FORM
- 2 Completed Booking Forms should be returned to the school administrator as far in advance of the event as possible (a minimum of 14 days' notice is required for proposed hire)
- 3 Organisations will be notified of acceptance as soon as possible and usually within 5 days.
- 4 A BOOKING CONTRACT will be sent to the hirer with the cost and payment details
- 5 An invoice will be issued within 1 week for single bookings and must be paid within 28 days.
- 6 Repeat bookings e.g. weekly over several weeks or months will need to be paid on a monthly basis and will be reviewed at the beginning of each term.
- 7 Wood Bank School reserves the right to cancel any bookings

NB School will be available for hire on Sunday and Bank Holiday at the discretion of the governing body.

WHAT IS AVAILABLE FOR HIRE

- 1 The hall.
- 2 The playground.
- 3 Individual classrooms.
- 4 Training and Resource Centre.
- 5 Specialist rooms – subject to the conditions identified above.

LETTING CHARGES

Training and Resource Centre	£8 per hour 8.00 a.m. – 5.00 p.m. £10 per hour 5.00 p.m. – 10.00 p.m.
Hall	£18 per hour 8.00 a.m. – 5.00 p.m. £20 per hour 5.00 p.m. – 10.00 p.m.
Classrooms	not available 8.00 a.m. – 5.00 p.m. £10 per hour 5.00 p.m. – 10.00 p.m.

Flipchart, felt tip pens and OHP screen included in above price.

Other equipment available for hire – OHP, Digital Projector, Laptop, CD Player, TV and Video – any combination of these £10 (total) per booking

Tea, Coffee and Biscuits £1 per person
Tea, Coffee and Pastries £1.25 per person
Sandwiches, Cakes and Fruit for Lunch £4 per person

BOOKING FORM

Please return to: - Petra Watson
 Senior Administrator
 Wood Bank School, Dene View, Luddenden, Halifax HX2 6PB
 Tel: - 01422 884170, Fax: - 01422 884671

Name of proposed user: -	Contact Address: -	
Facilities required: -	Telephone No: -	
Date and times:-	Purpose of Letting: -	
Catering Required <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Sandwiches/cakes/fruit for lunch (time and for how many) ▪ Tea/Coffee and biscuits (time and for how many) ▪ Tea/Coffee and pastries (time and for how many) 	Office Use Only	
	Price per session/hour	Total

6. STATEMENT OF INTERNAL CONTROL

This statement relates to the Consistent Financial Reporting (CFR) Return for the Wood Bank School for the 12 months from September 2016 to August 2017. The governing body is responsible for ensuring that the school:

- Keeps proper accounting records during the year which will disclose, with reasonable accuracy and at any time, the financial position of the school, have been drawn up in accordance with the DfES' (CFR) guidelines, and will enable it to prepare an annual income and expenditure statement that complies with DfES guidelines.
- Maintains and operates an effective system of internal control to safeguard all the resources delegated, granted or otherwise entrusted to the school and ensure they are used cost effectively.

The system of internal control has been developed and is coordinated by the headteacher. It aims to provide as much assurance as is reasonably possible (not absolute assurance) that assets are safeguarded, transactions are properly authorised and recorded and that material errors or irregularities are either prevented or can be detected promptly.

Our review of the effectiveness of the systems of internal control is informed by:

- our regular scrutiny of financial and other performance monitoring data
- regular reports from the head teacher and other managers to the governing body
- the most recent report of the school's internal auditor dated (*insert date of last report*)
- our most recent self-evaluation of the internal controls undertaken (*insert date*)

We are, therefore, satisfied that the internal control systems in operation at the school during the year were adequate and effective except for (*list any notable weaknesses here i.e. those rated as requiring remedial action as a high priority*)

We propose over the coming year to take the following steps to address the weaknesses noted above. (*This paragraph should provide either brief details of the action taken, or proposed, to rectify weaknesses in the system of internal control, or a short explanation of why corrective action has not been considered necessary.*)

By order of the Governing Body of (Name) School

(Signed) _____ Dated _____
(Head Teacher)

(Signed) _____ Dated _____
(Chair of Governing Body)

(Signed) _____ Dated _____
(Chair of Finance Committee of the Governing Body)

Note: The sections in brackets and (Bold / italics) need tailoring to reflect the schools particular circumstances