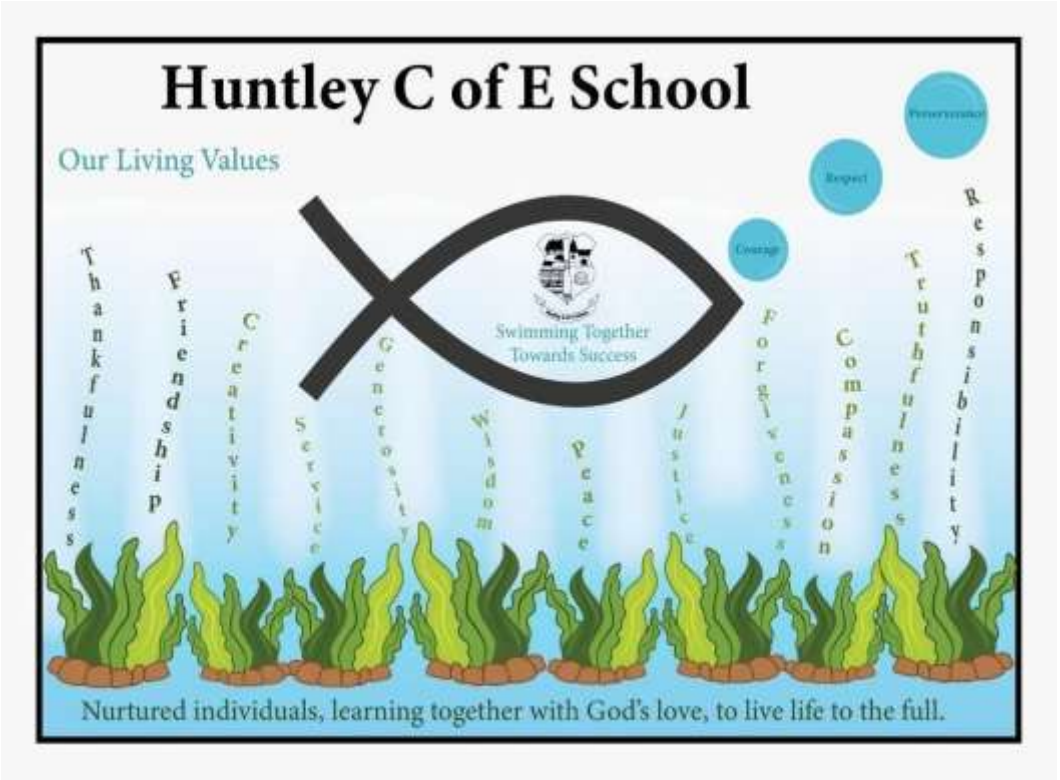
Huntley C of E Primary School

Finance Policy

March 2026

Please read in conjunction with:
Charging and Remissions Policy
Gloucestershire County Council Guidance



Gloucestershire COUNTY COUNCIL

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Document Reviews and Amendments

Amendment Date	Change to Document	Date of Approval
January 2014	Scheduled review	16/04/14 FGM
April 2017	Updated to reflect current approach and change of format.	04/05/17 Finance
February 2019	Scheduled review	FGM
January 2020	Change of format.	
June 2021	Review policy and ratify in FGB	
March 2022	Review policy and ratify in FGB, new Logo and Expenses Policy removed from title page, page numbers amended, 'Head' (1.2) & 'Mrs Mason' (2.1) changed to 'Finance Officer', SAP info amended (2.1)	31/03/22 FGM
March 2023	Scheduled Review. 2.2 pg. 2 changed to Claim Forms 5.4 pg. 2 changed to Remissions and Charging Policy. Some formatting, spacing changes.	
March 2024	Scheduled Review. Consistent use of Charging & Remissions & School Business Manager 1.1 pg. 4 SIP changed to SDP 2.2 pg. 5 changed to: 'on date specified by School Business Manager' 3.2 pg. 6 added /Senior Leader 4.1 pg. 7 changed in line with current practice	
March 2025	Scheduled Review	
March 2026	Scheduled review 1;1 para one This is also completed with the support of the school finance office. (addition) 4.1 Para 5-reword The inventory shall be checked against the actual assets by the Head on an annual basis. Any discrepancies shall be investigated and if necessary the Governors or police shall be informed. The check shall be evidenced by the checker signing and dating the inventory.	

Section 1: Budgets

1.1. Budget construction

The Finance Officer and Head Teacher are responsible for the detailed preparation of an annual school budget which addresses the strategic aims and targets established by the Governing Body. In constructing the budget, the Head must take account of priorities identified in the School Development Plan, incorporating costs as detailed in the plan. In producing the budget, the Head should consult with other members of staff as appropriate to ascertain detailed requirements and cost pressures for the coming the year. This is also completed with the support of the school finance office.

The Finance Committee should meet in the Autumn term to consider a broad budget strategy. In order to determine appropriate expenditure levels, the committee should consider the overall level of income expected from local authority budget, grants and school generated income, together with any anticipated balance to be carried forward into the following financial year.

Detailed formulation of the budget should take place in Spring term, and the Finance Committee should approve the detailed budget plan following receipt of the final local authority budget allocation issued in mid to late March. The full Governing Body must subsequently approve the full budget, and minute this approval. The approved Governors Budget Plan spreadsheet template must then be submitted to the Schools Finance Team, along with a signed statement by the Chair of Governors, by the required mid-May deadline.

Total budgeted expenditure should not exceed the total anticipated in-year income plus or minus any balance brought forward from the previous year. If it appears that a deficit position cannot be avoided, the Head and Chair of Governors must inform the Schools Finance Team immediately as the local authority must approve a Deficit Repayment Agreement (DRA) involving an appropriate recovery plan.

In constructing the detailed budget, factors for consideration include:-

- current and previous year's expenditure levels on individual budget headings
- staff pay awards and increments, and known changes
- anticipated price inflation
- changes in the supply of services and contracts (traded services, utilities etc.).
- changing School Development Plan priorities
- any anticipated changes in pupil numbers
- the resulting impact on staffing structures

1.2. Budgetary control and monitoring

The Head is responsible for regular, detailed control of the school budget and this role will require appropriate monthly reports from the school's accounting system. The Head may assign budgetary control of individual budget headings to other members of staff, however the Head remains ultimately accountable to the Governing Body for these budget headings. Financial reports to the Head and other budget holders, where applicable, should include the following information for each agreed budget heading:-

- total budget for year
- total expenditure and commitments to date
- projected variance

Payroll expenditure data, as notified by local authority payroll prints, must be entered promptly on to the school's accounting system each month by the appropriate finance officer (i.e. finance administrator, bursar or business manager).

Other, non-pay expenditure, as notified by monthly on-line reports for central schools, must be reconciled promptly to the school's accounting system by the school finance officer.

It may be appropriate to action adjustments to the original budget (virements) during the year, for example as a result of additional income, new costs or changing national priorities etc. The Head should therefore be empowered to respond to changes to address variances by effecting virements between individual budget headings.

Where new or unplanned expenditure is necessary, the following individual virement authorisation limits are recommended:-

- up to £1,000 Head (and subsequently reported to full Governing Body)
- £1,000 - £2,999 Chair of Governors
- £3,000 - £4,999 Finance Committee
- £5,000 and over Full Governing Body

Virements, once approved, must be promptly recorded in the school's accounting system to keep the approved budget up to date.

The Finance Officer should present detailed budget monitoring statements to the Finance Committee on at least a termly basis. The Finance Committee should then consider and challenge these statements as necessary, with the Head/Finance Officer providing explanations for any significant variances identified. The Chair of the Finance Committee should then report termly to the full Governing Body, identifying any significant budgetary issues and any remedial action taken or needed, and any policy decisions needed.

When the accounts for each financial year are closed, a final statement from the school's accounting system must be presented to the next meeting of the Finance Committee.

Section 2: Payroll

Huntley school use GCC payroll and HR services should refer to the Business Service Centre schoolsnet pages for general information and guidance

2.1. Starters/variations/leavers

The relevant forms for the following on schoolsnet:

- setting up new employees on the payroll (starters)
- effecting variations to pay
- taking existing employees off the payroll (leavers)

Forms should be completed by the Finance Officer and authorised by the Head. Completed forms must be sent via SAP, within payroll cut off times.

2.2. Claim Forms

For relevant staff, submitted claim forms must be checked initially by the school finance officer, and then authorised by the Head. Authorised time sheets must be submitted directly to the relevant pay and conditions team contact, and never handed back to the employee. They need to be handed into the office on the date specified by the School Business Manager.

2.3. Checking of payroll data

Payroll data received monthly from Shire Hall must be scrutinised by:

- the Head, to ensure all employees are recognised, and pay appears reasonable (no detailed check)

- the school finance officer, to check accuracy of salary and expense payments.

2.4. Pay-related expenses

All pay-related expenses must be processed through the payroll system. Pay-related expenses must never be paid via petty cash, or by the creditor payment system. If any doubt exists about whether an item should be processed via the payroll system, the BSC Financial Administration section should be contacted for advice.

2.5. Supply teachers

The Governing Body will decide, on the basis of advice from the Head, whether supply insurance cover shall be taken out, and the extent of the cover. All claims submitted by supply teachers must be authorised (signed) by the Head, Reimbursement claims must be submitted on a monthly basis by the school finance officer. The school finance officer must check on a monthly basis that correct amounts have been charged using the monthly expenditure printout.

Section 3: School Fund

3.1 Accounts

The accounts of the school Fund are to be maintained on a day to day basis by the school administrator. All income and expenditure will be entered promptly in the accounts. A bank reconciliation will be performed monthly when bank statements are received, between the balance as per the accounting record and the balance as per bank statements.

3.2 Signatories

The following are allowed to sign cheques on the bank account:-

- Head
  Senior teacher
- Chair of Governors
- Chair of Finance Committee

There must be two signatures on each cheque.

3.3 Final accounts and audit

Final accounts are prepared at the end of the School Fund financial year by the school administrator. The accounts will be audited by an auditor appointed by the full Governing Body. The auditor will not be a member of the Governing Body. In appointing an auditor and operating the Fund, the Governors will follow the instructions laid down in the County Council's Manual on Unofficial Funds.

The audited accounts should be presented to the full Governing Body for approval. Governors' approval must be recorded in the minutes of the meeting. Once approved, the Clerk to the Governing Body will return the requested FN12 form (see link) to the Schools Finance Team.

School Fund monies must be kept, and recorded, separately from the school's capitation monies and securely held.

Section 4: Assets

4.1 Inventory

The portable, desirable, attractive assets of the school, as well as any assets of intrinsic value (e.g. antiques) will be recorded in the school's inventory. Asset description, location and approximate value shall be recorded.

The school business manager is responsible for keeping the inventory up to date by adding new items when they are received into school.

Items up to a value of £50 may be sold or written out of the inventory on the authority of the Head. Over this limit, the Governing Body must authorise and details recorded in the minutes. Reasons must be recorded in the inventory, together with the Head's signature (up to £50) or the Governors' minute reference (£50 and over). An official receipt for sales income must be issued to the purchaser.

Inventories shall cover all areas of the school, and be arranged on a room-by-room basis. A separate inventory will be maintained to include items which are not allocated to a specific room.

The inventory shall be checked against the actual assets by the Head on an annual basis. Any discrepancies shall be investigated and if necessary the Governors or police shall be informed. The check shall be evidenced by the checker signing and dating the inventory.

All inventory items should be security marked:

- invisibly with an ultra-violet pen,

4.2 Off-site register

Any inventory items taken off-site by members of staff for official purposes must be recorded in a register. The date borrowed, and the signature of the borrower, must be recorded. On the return of the item the date of return will be recorded.

Section 5: Income

5.1 Credit income

Where payment for goods/services provided by the school is made after the provision takes place;

An official invoice must be raised by the school business manager in all cases and sent to the debtor as soon as possible after the provision of the goods/service, and no later than one week after the provision.

A file of copy invoices will be maintained by the secretary; this will be arranged into 'paid' and 'unpaid' invoices. The copies of unpaid invoices will act as a control record for the sending of reminders and the chasing of unpaid debts.

Reminders will be sent after the following periods if the debt remains outstanding:-

1st reminder 28 days

2nd reminder 56 days

If after 84 days the debt remains unpaid, consideration will be given by the Head and/or Governors to writing the debt off in accordance with the following limits:-

- up to £50 - Head may authorise write-off
- up to £100 - Chair of Governors may authorise write-off
- £100 and over - Full Governing Body may authorise write-off.

In each case, the possibility of taking legal action to recover the debt must be considered by Head, Chair, and Governors as appropriate.

As well as sending formal reminders, efforts must be made by the school to contact the debtor in order to secure recovery of the debt. If payment has not been received after 28 days of raising the invoice, no further goods or services must be provided until the outstanding debt is settled.

When an invoice is paid, details of the payment must be written on the copy invoice, and this transferred to the 'paid' section of the file. An official receipt should be issued to the debtor and the receipt number written on the copy invoice; a duplicate copy of the receipt must be retained at school.

5.2 Cash income (i.e. where payment is received at the time goods/services are provided).

An official receipt must be issued to the payer at the time the payment takes place, and a duplicate copy retained at the school.

5.3 Banking

All income received (cash or cheque) must be banked promptly and intact. No payments may be made out of income collected. A record to evidence the banking must be kept (e.g. stamped paying- in slip).

5.4 Charging and Remissions policy

The full Governing Body will set a charging policy to cover:-

- lettings
- school trips
- music tuition
- private photocopying
- private telephone calls

The Remissions and Charging policy will be reviewed annually by the Governing Body. Charges levied by the school will be in line with this policy.

5.5 Donations

Donations from any sources must be acknowledged by the issue of an official receipt to the payer. All donations must be banked promptly and intact.

5.6 Official Capitation and School Fund income

All income used to offset expenditure incurred on the capitation budget (e.g. lettings, photocopying, telephone calls, music tuition, sales of work) must be paid into the official County Fund and coded to an appropriate income code. Monies received from any sales of school equipment must similarly be paid into the County Fund.

Donations may be paid into the County Fund, School Fund or PTFA Fund dependent upon the wishes of the donor which must be ascertained beforehand.

5.7 Cash received from pupils

Cash received from pupils in class must be recorded by the class teacher. Cash collected must be handed over to the secretary frequently. The school business manager will issue an official receipt for the income which will be handed to the class teacher who will retain it with the income record.

5.8 Security of receipt books and tickets

All unused receipts and tickets to be used to acknowledge receipt of income, must be held securely in the school office.

Section 6: Purchasing

6.1 Ordering

School procedures for purchasing should ensure that purchases are as required and are for bone-fide purposes.

Orders should be processed by the school secretary after initial approval by budget holders has been sought and given. The official order produced from the computer system must be signed by the budget holder before it is sent to the supplier. If an order has been placed over the telephone an official confirmatory order must be sent.

Official orders must not be used to procure goods for private purposes. Official

order stationery must be held in a secure location.

Copies of all official orders placed must be retained on file at the school by the secretary.

When placing orders it is the responsibility of the initiator to ensure that Gloucestershire County Council Financial Regulations and Standing Orders are adhered to.

6.2 Quotations/tenders

Financial Regulations - for orders for goods/services under £50,000:

- £1,000 - £5,000 - at least three prices to be examined and retained, these prices may be taken from suppliers' written or verbal quotations or catalogues/price lists.
- £5,001 - £50,000 - independent written evidence of at least three prices should be obtained and retained.

Independent written evidence means quotations provided on suppliers' headed notepaper.

Standing Orders - for orders for goods/services over £50,000.

Tenders should be invited in one of three ways, and in accordance with specific Standing Orders.

- from at least three contractors included on a standing list - SO49; or where no standing list exists
- from at least three appropriate contractors - SO.5O, or
- by open competition by advertisement in local newspaper or appropriate journal -SO.51.

6.3 Governor involvement

As well as ensuring that the above have been adhered to, it is the responsibility of the Headteacher to ensure that Governors are consulted in the following circumstances:-

On purchasing decisions when the estimated cost of one item exceeds £1,000 Review of

quotations obtained where estimated costs exceed £5,000.

Review of quotations when the lowest quote is not the most suitable or the pre- requisite number of quotes could not be obtained. In such circumstances the Governors should formally authorise a waiver of the regulations, either prior to the purchase or retrospectively, if necessary.

6.4 Receipt of goods

Once items ordered have been received, the school business manager must ensure that items delivered correspond to details contained in the delivery note. Upon examination of goods the secretary must ensure that both quality and quantity are appropriate.

6.5 Invoice check and authorisation

Invoices received must be checked to both copy orders and delivery notes to ensure that invoices relate to goods ordered and delivered. Invoices should also be checked for arithmetical correctness. All invoices must be certified for payment by the headteacher before being passed for payment (or in the Head's absence, the Deputy Head).

Invoices passed for payment must be recorded promptly in the school's accounting system by the secretary.

6.6 Petty Cash

Day to day operation of the petty cash account is the responsibility of the school business manager.

All petty cash expenditure, and reimbursement income, must be promptly recorded in the petty cash record.

Reimbursement must be claimed monthly or when one-half of the imprest advance has been used. The Head (or Deputy Head in the Head's absence) must certify the reimbursement claim.

Each time a reimbursement claim is submitted, the secretary must complete a reconciliation ensuring that cash expended, plus cash in hand or at bank, plus stamps held, equals the amount of the advance.

All members of staff who wish to purchase items from the petty cash account must obtain prior approval from the Head. Vouchers (receipts, paid invoices etc.) to evidence the payment must be presented to the secretary by members of staff when reclaiming cash from the account. These vouchers must be retained by the secretary and returned with the reimbursement claim.

In normal circumstances individual purchases from petty cash must not exceed £50. In exceptional circumstances payments up to £100 may be made, with the express prior approval of the Head. Such payments should be for emergencies only and should not simply result from a lack of planning.

All cash and cheque books held must be retained securely.

Section 7: Register of Pecuniary and Other Interests

It is a requirement for all schools to maintain such a Register.

7.1 Persons to be included:-

1. All Governors
2. Headteacher
3. All senior staff (e.g. Deputy Head, Assistant Heads, Heads of Departments, senior administrative staff e.g. bursar)

7.2 Interests to be recorded

The basic principle to be followed is that any interest should be recorded which could be seen to improperly influence any decisions taken, pecuniary or otherwise, regarding the operation of the school.

Examples of such improper influence might be:-

- to purchase goods or materials from a company in which a Governor/senior member of staff has a financial interest without going through the correct procedures re. obtaining competitive prices;

- promoting member of staff who has close personal relationship (spouse, partner, son, daughter etc.) with Governor/senior member of staff, without going through correct procedures re. recruitment and selection.

There can never be a definitive, comprehensive list of the interests which should be recorded, but the following is intended to give some guidance:

- having a financial, or other, interest in an organisation which could feasibly be in a position to supply goods/services to the school e.g.

- building contractors
- plumbing contractors
- electrical contractors
- audio/visual goods suppliers (e.g. T.V.s, video recorders, hi-fi etc.)
- repair/maintenance of equipment (electrical and other)
- suppliers of computer hardware and software
- suppliers of stationery
- suppliers of educational equipment (e.g. P.E. equipment)
- suppliers of furniture, fittings, carpets, curtains etc.
- decorating contractors
- catering contractors
- suppliers of provisions
- suppliers of clothing
- suppliers of building materials
- suppliers of catering equipment suppliers of fuel
- suppliers of vehicles
- suppliers of books
- grounds maintenance contractors
- gardening contractors
- suppliers of grounds/garden maintenance equipment
- suppliers of plants, trees, seeds etc.
- suppliers of heating equipment

- suppliers of lighting equipment
- suppliers of musical instruments
- suppliers of insurance
- consultants (e.g. legal, financial, training, property)
- suppliers of security services and supplies
- suppliers of art materials
- suppliers of telecommunications equipment
- suppliers of photographic equipment
- transport contractors (e.g. coaches, taxis etc.)
- holiday/travel operators
- suppliers of supply teaching cover
- suppliers of peripatetic teaching
- suppliers of banking services
- suppliers of workshops etc. (e.g. drama, music)

the interest in the above 'supplying organisations may, for example, be:-

- as a director
- as an employee
- as a major shareholder
- as a major investor
- as a major debtor/creditor
- having a close personal relationship (spouse, partner, son, daughter, parent etc.) with a person in the above categories
- being in a position to potentially influence decisions made about the school,

e.g. as:-

- member of local council (County Council, District Council, Parish Council)
- officer of Local Education Authority in a senior capacity
- Member of Parliament
- OFSTED Inspector
- officer of local council (District Council, Parish Council) in a senior capacity
- having a close personal relationship (as described above) with any person falling into the above categories
- having a close personal relationship with a Governor or member of staff (employed on a full-time, part-time, permanent, or temporary basis).