

The Devonshire Hill Nursery & Primary School Finance Policy & Procedures

Statement of Intent

The Devonshire Hill Nursery & Primary School recognises that well-managed finances can maximise outcomes for pupils' education. We are dedicated to undertaking fair and reasonable financial planning for the benefit of the school as a whole. Under no circumstances will an individual benefit personally from the school's budget.

To ensure that no individual benefits personally from decisions made by spending public money, and to protect members of staff and governors from allegations of impropriety, members of staff and governors will always adhere to the stipulations of this policy and procedures.

Appendix 1 - Resource Committee Terms of Reference

Appendix 2 - Internal Scheme of Financial Delegation

Appendix 3 - Best Value Statement

Appendix 4 - Procurement Procedures flowchart

Appendix 5 - Petty Cash Procedures

Appendix 6 - Staff and Visitor Subsistence, Travel and Hospitality Policy

Appendix 7 - Debt Management Policy

Appendix 8 - Disposal of Assets Policy

Ratification date: 12 th October 2020	Review date: October 2021
<p>We will monitor the effectiveness of this and all of our policies and procedures. This policy will be reviewed annually and updated as appropriate. Any changes made to this policy will be communicated to relevant members of staff.</p> <p>Our monitoring and review will include looking at how our policies and procedures are working in practice to reduce the risks posed to the School.</p>	
Headteacher	Chair of Governors

Responsibilities

1. The Governing Body is responsible for:
 - Ensuring clarity of vision, ethos and strategic direction
 - Overseeing the financial performance of the school and making sure its money is well spent.
 - Holding the Headteacher to account for the educational performance of the school and its pupils, and the performance management of staff.
2. The Governing Body delegates day-to-day strategic and financial decision-making to the headteacher as outlined in the Internal Scheme of Financial Delegation- Appendix 2, which is reviewed annually by the Resource Committee and ratified by the Full Governing Body.
3. The Governing Body delegates responsibilities to the Resource Committee as detailed in its Terms of Reference – Appendix 1 and Scheme of Financial Delegation – Appendix 2.
4. To enable the School to carry out these responsibilities, the financial procedures detailed below must be followed at all times by all governors and staff.
5. A copy of this policy and procedures will be circulated to all members of the Resource Committee, and made available to all relevant governors, staff and volunteers.
6. The policy and procedures will be reviewed annually by the Resource Committee and revised as necessary.

Financial Procedures

The Governing Body approve the use of the following documents to inform its financial policies and procedures:

- Scheme for Financing Schools
- Haringey Schools Financial Manual
- Consistent Financial Reporting (CFR) Framework

1. Bank Accounts

- a) All bank accounts must be in the name of the School.
- b) No account may ever be opened in the name of an individual or individuals.
- c) New accounts may only be opened by a decision of the Full Governing Body, which must be minuted.
- d) Changes to the bank mandates may only be approved by the FGB upon the recommendation of the Resource Committee, which must be minuted.
- e) Two people should be involved in counting cash receipts.
- f) All cheques and electronic payments must be signed/approved by two signatories.
- g) The signatories are responsible for examining the payment(s) for accuracy and completeness.
- h) The School Business Manager is responsible for ensuring accuracy and completeness of payments prior to transmission.
- i) The signatories are responsible for examining the payment documentation (purchase order, invoice etc.) prior to signing the cheque or authorising an online transfer.
- j) Blank cheques must never be signed.

2. Signatories to the accounts:

i) Name:Julie D'Abreu.....

Role/Job Title:Headteacher.....

ii) Name:Anoria Simmons

Role/Job Title:Assistant Headteacher.....

iii) Name:Rachel Bates.....

Role/Job Title:Assistant Headteacher.....

iv) Name:Tina Georgiades.....

Role/Job Title:Assistant Headteacher.....

3. Annual Budget

- a) An annual budget, setting out the school's financial plan for the year, will be prepared so that the Resource Committee can scrutinise it at the start of each financial year.
- b) The Resource Committee will recommend a budget for ratification by the FGB before 31st May each year.
- c) The draft budget will be prepared by the School Business Manager in consultation with the Headteacher.

4. Financial Reports

- a) A Budget Update will be prepared for every Resource Committee meeting.
- b) The update will consist of:
 - Budget vs Actual report
 - Year-end statement
 - Variance Report
- c) The Budget Update will be circulated to all Resource Committee members for discussion at the following Resource Committee meeting.
- d) The reports will be prepared by the School Business Manager.

5. Accounting and other financial records

The School maintains a computerised accounting system (RM Finance) which records:

- Cheques, cash and electronic payments received and banked
- Cheques, cash and electronic payments paid from school bank accounts.

- a) Every transaction will be entered into RM Finance and will include:
 - The date of the transaction

- The name of the organisation/person money was received from or paid to and the full amount
 - The appropriate CFR code and budget heading for monitoring purposes.
 - VAT added, in order that the school may reclaim amounts from HMRC.
- b) Staff permitted to enter transactions on RM Finance are:
- Finance Officer
 - School Business Manager
- c) The Finance Officer is responsible for entering day-to-day income and expenditure transactions.
- d) Documents relating to BACS payments will be filed alphabetically by supplier i.e. invoices, delivery notes and authorised purchase order forms.
- e) All electronic payments made to the school must be paid into the main bank account, either directly or via a third party service such as ParentMail. Remittance advice and school issued invoices will be filed with bank statements as part of the bank reconciliation process.
- f) Two members of staff must be involved in cash and cheque counting. Such payments must be recorded in the bank paying in book.
- g) Month end reports are to be saved electronically on the school network, in addition to physical copies inspected by the School Business Manager and approved by the Headteacher.
- h) The Finance Officer is responsible to ensuring the monthly VAT claim is scanned and emailed to the Local Authority.

6. Authorisation and Payment

- a) Purchases must not be made without an authorised purchase order.
- b) Exceptions to the above are agency staff bookings and food orders for the canteen, where assessment of need and monitoring of costs will be carried out by the SLT and SBM.
- c) All purchase orders must be recorded in the purchase order folder and allocated the next sequential number.
- d) The purchase order number must be given to the supplier and quoted on their invoice.
- e) Budget-holders must comply with the *Procurement Procedures - Appendix 3*. Orders must not be placed without appropriate authorisation.
- f) The Headteacher, in accordance with the Internal Scheme of Financial Delegation, must approve the purchase of any item between £2,000 and £15,000.
- g) No staff member may authorise payment to themselves, their partner or relatives. Any reimbursements to the headteacher must be approved by the Chair of the Governing Body.
- h) Invoices should be matched and checked against the Purchase Order book before payment is authorised. All goods received must be checked for completeness and signed for before payment.
- i) Before cheques or BACS payments must be approved by two authorised signatories, in accordance with the Internal Scheme of Financial Delegation.
- j) The School Business Manager is the bank account administrator responsible for user and payment management, but to maintain separation of duties should not be an authorised signatory.

- k) For all Charge Card orders, the headteacher must additionally sign the relevant section of the purchase order form. See section 10 for further detail.

7. Payroll

- a) The School uses Strictly Education as its third party payroll administrator. Only the School Business Manager and Headteacher currently have access to enter and amend data.
- b) Payroll calculations will be made by Strictly Education and scrutinised by the School Business Manager.
- c) Contractual changes must be authorised by the headteacher and supported by relevant documentation.
- d) Additional hours or overtime must be agreed by the headteacher in advance and timesheets completed and authorised before payment. The School Business Manager has delegated authority to approve timesheets for cleaning and premises staff. All other timesheets must be authorised by the Headteacher.
- e) Notification of contractual changes; sickness and maternity pay; and claims for additional payment will be made by the School Business Manager via the Payroll Portal or directly to the Payroll Officer as appropriate in line issued payroll deadlines.
- f) Submission of timesheets and notification of other variations outside of deadlines will result in delayed payment.
- g) All employees must complete the HMRC starter checklist for to PAYE set-up. Employees cannot be paid without this.
- h) Under IR35 regulations, the school has a responsibility for ensuring off-payroll workers are paying the correct amount of tax and national insurance. Staff assessment as following within this category will be paid via payroll, but this does not confer any employment rights.

8. Insurance and Inventory

- a) The School is included in the Local Authority's Insurance Policy to cover:
 - Employee Liability and Fidelity Guarantee
 - Combined Liability
 - Buildings and Contents
 - School Trip Insurance
 - Cash in Transit
- b) An inventory of all physical assets will be kept and regularly updated. The Business Manager is responsibility for overseeing the maintenance and accuracy of the inventory of electronic assets. The Site Manager is responsibility for overseeing the maintenance and accuracy for other assets i.e. furniture
- c) The School uses the cloud-based asset management software, Parago.
- d) The disposal of electronic assets must be approved and minuted by the Resource Committee

9. Petty Cash & Staff Reimbursement

Please refer to the *Petty Cash and Staff Reimbursement Procedures - Appendix 4* and the *Staff and Visitors Expenses Policy - Appendix 5* for full details.

General procedures relating to petty cash are as follows:

- Petty cash payments are a payment of last resort where payment using usual purchasing procedures is unfeasible or impractical.
- Payments from petty cash can only be made on production of a till receipt or other certification that payment has been made and must not exceed £25 in value.
- The petty cash float, which should not exceed £200, is kept in the safe when not in use.
- The School Business Manager may authorise petty cash payments and electronic staff reimbursement up to £25.
- The Headteacher may authorise petty cash payments in excess of £25 in exceptional circumstances.

General procedures relating to staff reimbursement and expenses are as follows:

- Staff Reimbursement Vouchers in excess of £25 must be authorised by the Headteacher.
- Staff expenses claims of any value must be authorised by the Headteacher.
- Reimbursement vouchers submitted by the headteacher must be authorised by the Chair of Governors.

10. Charge Card

The primary method of payment is invoicing and this shall generally be used in preference to card purchases where such is offered by the supplier. The Governing Body however acknowledges that there are occasions where immediate payment is required or suppliers do not allow credit accounts.

- a) The school has a charge card under the Headteacher's name.
- b) Only the School Business Manager, Finance Officer and the PA to the Head have delegated authority to use the charge card.
- c) Before any charge card order can be placed, a purchase order form must be authorised in accordance with the scheme of delegation AND the charge card section signed by the Headteacher to indicate authorisation for approved staff to place the order with the card.
- d) The card, PIN number and other documentation relating to the charge card are securely stored in the safe when not in use. Only the Finance Officer and School Business Manager have access to the safe.
- e) Should the card be lost or stolen the loss shall be reported by to the Headteacher immediately and the bank and police contacted as required.
- f) Should fraud or misuse be suspected, the bank should be informed immediately so that the appropriate action can be taken.

Terms of Reference Resources Committee

- Membership** : At least three governors plus the Headteacher (who is a governor and counts as such in terms of being quorate). In addition, the governing body may appoint associate members to the Committee in order to draw on expertise and experience from both inside and outside the school.
- Quorum** : Any three governors
- Chair** : To be appointed by the governing body at its first meeting in the Autumn term, to continue in office until the first meeting of the Governing Body in the following Autumn term.
- Clerk** : A named individual, who can be a governor (including the Committee Chair) but not the Headteacher, will be appointed by the Governing Body at its first meeting in the Autumn Term.
- Voting** : All governors have voting rights. Associate members may vote in a subcommittee if the full governing body have given them this right and have minuted this decision. They may be excluded from any part of a committee meeting when the item of business concerns an individual member of staff or a pupil. The chair shall have the casting vote.
- Confidentiality** : Absolute confidentiality must be maintained in respect of any item concerning individuals
- Meetings** : A minimum of one per term in advance of the main governing body meeting, with additional meetings as necessary.
- Reporting back** : A written report will be made to the next ordinary meeting of the Governing Body. This will include decisions made under delegated powers by the Committee and recommendations where there is no delegation.

Remit

- To receive reports from members of staff about matters relating to any of the issues listed in their terms of reference;
- To contribute to, monitor and evaluate relevant parts of the school development plan and the policies allocated to them, reporting or making recommendations to the full governing body;
- To consider recommendations from relevant external reviews for example audit, Ofsted or local authority review, to agree the actions needed to address any issues identified and to monitor and evaluate regularly the implementation of any plan agreed, reporting or making recommendations to the full governing body;
- To consider the views of students when making strategic decisions that will impact on them;

- To consider the impact on equality, referencing the protected characteristics, when making recommendations and when reviewing/drafting policies. To take appropriate action on any other relevant matter referred by the governing body;
- Have oversight of finance, staffing and premises;
- Ensure that the school operates within the financial regulations of the local authority and complies with any DfE and SFVS requirements, responding to any issues arising from the audit of the school's accounts or SFVS review and ensuring value for money;
- Keep under review the scheme of delegation in financial matters including the level of delegation to the Headteacher for the day-to-day financial management of the school and present to the governing body any recommendations for change;
- Prepare and present to the governing body for ratification an annual budget reflecting priorities in the School Improvement Plan;
- Monitor the budget (and any other devolved funds) and ensure a termly report to the governing body with an evaluation of the use of resources and any appropriate recommendations;
- Monitor and evaluate staffing policies and procedures, ensuring that all principles of good and fair employment practice are adhered to, that staff and trade unions are consulted and legal requirements fulfilled;
- Agree the staffing establishment and structure (teaching and non-teaching) at least annually in relation to the budget and the school development plan;
- Recommend to the governing body the procedure for filling vacancies and making staff appointments below the Leadership Group;
- Ensure that the school complies with the General Equality Duty in relation to staff;
- Ensure the school complies with all requirements in relation to safer recruitment;
- Monitor and evaluate the impact of the budget for continuing professional development;
- Draw up medium and long term plans relating to the repair, maintenance and development of premises and recommend action to the governing body;
- Agree the lettings and charges policy for the use of school premises;
- Monitor and evaluate health and safety and emergency procedures ensuring that necessary checks and risk assessments are carried out and action points are implemented.

INTERNAL SCHEME OF FINANCIAL DELEGATIONS - OCTOBER 2020

Requirements for obtaining Quotes and Tenders for Purchases of goods and Services			
Level for 2 quotes	£5000	Headteacher has delegated powers to review and approve quotations and subsequently authorise expenditure within delegated powers. Contract value for £25K and above – see Haringey Financial Procedures	
Level for 3 quotes	£5000 to £25,000		
Level for tenders	£25000+		
Purchase Orders	Delegated Powers for the Purchase of Goods and Services	Authorised Limit	Additional Notes
Follow the financial procedures for ordering of goods and services. All orders over £2,000 must carry the Headteacher's signature.	Budget Holders (Delegated by Headteacher)	Signatory Only	Limit of Budget Delegation
	School Business Manager (Assistant Headteachers in the absence of School Business Manager)	£2000	Limit applies to total value of an order
	Headteacher	£15000	
	Resource Committee	£15K – £25K	
	Full Governing Body	£ 25K and above	
Invoices	Delegated Powers for authorising Invoices ready for payment	Authorised Limit	Additional Notes
Follow the financial procedures before authorising invoices for payment.	School Business Manager	£2000	Limit applies to the total value of the invoice
	Headteacher	£15000	
	Resource Committee	£15K - £25K	
	Full Governing Body	£25K and over	
Payments	Delegated Powers for authorising Invoices ready for payment	Authorised Limit	Additional Notes
BACS & Cheque Payments	TWO AUTHORISED SIGNATORIES / APPROVALS REQUIRED - Headteacher must sign/approve ALL - 2 AHTs to sign only in Head's absence - AHT approval should be rotated for additional transparency.	£50,000	List of signatories detailed in Finance Policy
Cheque Card Payments Usual procedures and authorisation for ordering goods and services apply.	PRIOR AUTHORISATION FROM HEADTEACHER ONLY (indicated on relevant section of Purchase Order form)	Usual purchase limits apply	
Petty Cash Payments and Staff Reimbursement Preferred method for reimbursement is BACS	PRIOR APPROVAL REQUIRED School Business Manager up to £25 Headteacher above £25	Refer to separate guideline	Headteacher may authorise Petty Cash claims over £25.
Staff and Visitor Expenses	Prior approval by Headteacher or Chair required. Reimbursement by Petty Cash or BACS - authorisation as above	Refer to separate guideline	
Item	Authorised Person	Authorised Limit	Additional Notes
Virements	Headteacher	£5000	
	Resource Committee	£10000	
	Full Governing Body	£25000	
Inventory Write Offs and Sales	Headteacher	£500	
	Resource Committee	£1000	
	Full Governing Body	£5000	
Bad Debt Write Offs	Headteacher	£500	
	Finance Committee	£1000	
	Full Governing Body	£5000	
Approval by Full Governing Body			

Best Value Statement

Introduction

The governing body is accountable for the way in which school's resources are allocated to meet the objectives set out in the school's improvement plan. Governors need to secure the best possible outcome for pupils, in the most efficient and effective way, at 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. These are:

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' Approach

The Governors and school leaders 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; and
- The use of resources to best support the various educational needs of all pupils.

Governors and school leaders will:

- Make comparisons with other/similar schools using data provided by the LA and the Government, quality of teaching and learning, levels of expenditure;
- Challenge proposals, examining them for effectiveness, efficiency and cost – e.g. setting up annual pupil achievement targets, pupil ratios, staff ratios;
- Require suppliers to compete on grounds of cost, and quality/suitability of services/products/backup. E.g. provision of computer suite, redecoration; and
- Consult individuals and organisations on quality/suitability of service we provide to parents and pupils, and services we receive from providers – e.g. SIP.

This will apply in particular to:

- Staffing;
- Use of Premises;
- Use of Resources;

- Quality of Teaching;
- Quality of Learning;
- Purchasing;
- Pupils' Welfare; and
- Health and Safety.

Governors and school leaders:

- 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; and
- 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 leaders will deploy staff to provide BEST VALUE in terms of quality of teaching, quality of learning, adult pupil ratio and curriculum management and administration.

Use of Premises

Governors and school leaders will consider the allocation and use of teaching areas, support areas and communal areas to provide the best environment for teaching and learning, for support services and for communal access to central resources – e.g. library, sports hall etc.

Use of Resources

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

Teaching

Governors and school leaders will review the quality of curriculum provision and quality of teaching to provide parents and pupils with:

- A curriculum that meets the requirements of the National Curriculum, the LA agreed RE Syllabus and the needs of pupils; and
- Teaching which builds on previous learning and has high expectations of children's achievement.

Learning

Governors and school leaders will review the quality of children's learning, by cohort, by class and group to provide teaching which enables children to achieve nationally expected progress. E.g. setting of pupil achievement targets.

Purchasing

Governors and school leaders 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 (e.g. for goods and services above £25,000)
- Procedures for accepting 'best value' quotes, which are not necessarily the cheapest (e.g. suitability for purpose and quality of workmanship)
- Procurement procedure flowchart available to all staff
- Internal Scheme of Financial Delegation
- Finance Policy

Pupil's Welfare

Governors and school leaders 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 and Safety

Governors and school leaders 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.

Monitoring

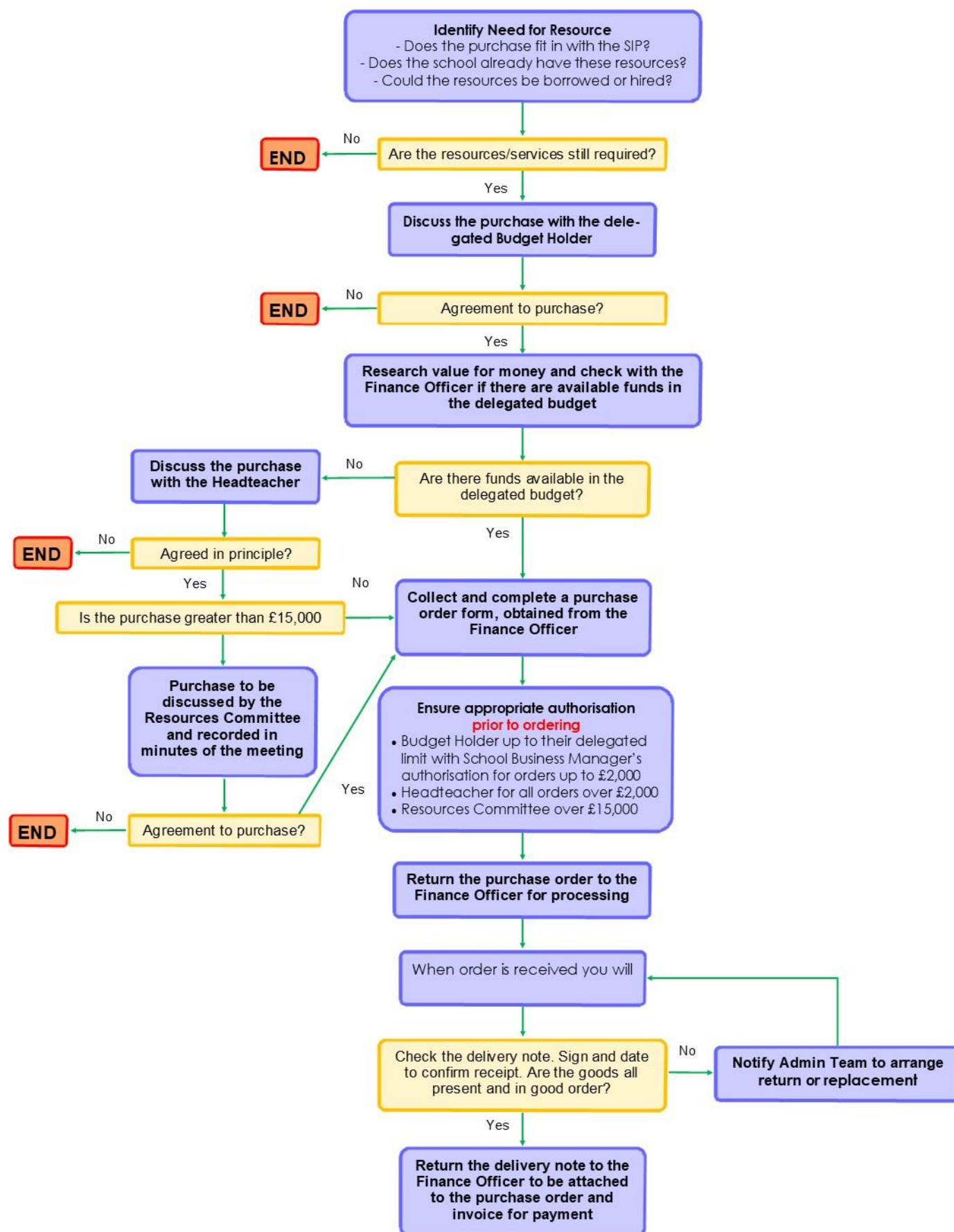
These areas will be monitored for best value by:

1. In house monitoring by the Headteacher, Senior Leadership Team, Business Manager and budget-holders e.g. classroom practice, work sampling;
2. Annual Performance Management;
3. Annual Budget Planning;
4. Termly visits by SIP;
5. Analysis of school pupil performance data – e.g. SATS results, standardised test results, RAISEOnline;
6. Analysis of LA and DfE pupil performance data;
7. Analysis of LA financial data – e.g. benchmark data for all schools, LA schools, similar schools;
8. OFSTED inspection reports;
9. Governor's termly committee meetings;
10. Governor's full termly meetings;
11. Governor's Annual Finance Review;
12. Governor's Annual Curriculum/Pupil target setting meeting; and
13. Governor's Annual Development Plan Meeting.

In the next three years the Governing Body will:

- Hold regular Performance Plan meeting to set targets for improving pupil achievement.
- Regularly discuss the School Development Plan.
- Discuss 'Best Value' at each Autumn term meeting of the Resources Committee.
- Review their 'Best Value' statement at each Autumn term meeting.

Procurement Procedures



Petty Cash & Staff Reimbursement Procedures

Purpose

Schools will from time to time need to make small value payments using cash (e.g. for the payment of parcel postage). The purpose of petty cash is to enable members of staff to pay cash for minor expenditure where it is **unfeasible or impractical** to use normal purchasing means, not as a method to bypass the school's purchasing systems.

These procedures do not apply to staff travel and subsistence. Claimants should refer to the *Staff and Visitor Subsistence, Travel and Hospitality Policy*.

Petty cash payment is a payment method of last resort; staff are therefore reminded to plan ahead for specific activities. Generally, such payments should not exceed £25, above which normal BACS or cheque processing arrangements and controls should be used.

It is however the school's preference that staff reimbursement for amounts below £25 are also processed by BACS as these are subject to stronger internal controls, but claimants may choose either method.

General Guidelines

The school follows *Haringey School's Financial Manual* and *Schools' Financial Regulations*.

The *Governing Body* agrees an appropriate level of cash to be held on the school's premises. The level is based on the amount likely to be required in a set period and to give consideration to the administration of replenishing the float. As a guideline, the amount will be no more than £200.

The petty cash advance will be drawn and replenished from the school's main bank account and be subject to all the school's normal controls surrounding cheque payments. The total amount of the advance will not normally be allowed to exceed that approved by the *Governing Body*.

All proposed payments from petty cash must be approved *in advance* by the School Business Manager or Headteacher, as stated in the school's Internal Scheme of Financial Delegations.

The *Headteacher* may approve emergency exceptions to the agreed limit. The Petty Cash balance will be returned to its normal amount as soon as possible. The insurance position regarding cash holdings will be taken into account before any emergency increase is agreed.

Petty cash will be stored in a secure place, which shall be in accordance with insurance limits and requirements. A named individual, the *Finance Officer*, will be responsible for the security of the petty cash and be the approved 'key holder'. Only authorised persons, named in the *Internal Scheme of Financial Delegations*, will be allowed to authorise an advance.

Reimbursement from Petty Cash

- The staff member will complete a petty cash voucher stating the amount required. Requests should not exceed £25 and receipts must be retained for reimbursement. Please allow sufficient time for requests to be processed.
- On receipt of the reimbursement, the petty cash voucher should be signed and dated to acknowledge receipt of cash.
- All payments from Petty Cash must be supported by receipts and a payment voucher evidencing the following:
 - Date
 - Description
 - Payee
 - Amount paid
 - VAT elements
 - Signed approval for payment
 - Cost code
 - Acknowledgement of receipt of reimbursement
- Proper records must be maintained for all payments in and out of Petty Cash and entered in a onto the school's finance system in a timely fashion.
- Petty cash must not be used to cash personal cheques or to pay for personal purchases.
- Salaries and wages must not be paid through petty cash.

Staff Reimbursements by BACS

- The staff member will complete a *Staff Reimbursement Voucher* and provide receipts corresponding to the items and costs claimed.
- All claims for reimbursement must be supported by receipts and a payment voucher evidencing the following:
 - Date
 - Description
 - Payee
 - Amount paid
 - VAT elements
 - Signed approval for payment
 - Cost code
- Payment will be made by BACS directly into the employee's bank account in accordance with the Internal Scheme of Financial Delegations.

Deviations from Procedures

Unless specifically approved by the Governing Body, any deviation from these procedures is strictly prohibited. Any deviation from or non-compliance with these procedures will be reported to the Headteacher.

Staff and Visitor Subsistence, Travel and Hospitality Policy Statement

General Principles

The School has an obligation to ensure effective use of the school budget.

It is the policy of the school to refund only costs which are unavoidably incurred wholly and necessarily in relation to school business.

The school aims to ensure sufficient internal controls are in place to ensure appropriate levels of authorisation are obtained in respect of reimbursed expenditure, that it achieves value for money and that budgetary guidelines have not been breached. At the same time, it is expected that representatives will be aware of the need to minimise the costs of travel and subsistence to the school, but in a way consistent with its ethos and strong support for staff well-being.

Public money is not, under any circumstances, to be used to fund alcohol and/or leaving gifts. In very exceptional circumstances and where prior agreement has been sought from the Chair of Governors, expenses could be requested from locally raised income only.

Staff Travel

Staff will be fully reimbursed for the cost of travel undertaken by train, tube and bus for offsite meetings, courses, conferences and training where approved in advance by the Headteacher (or Chair of Governors where the Headteacher is the potential claimant).

Unless prior approval is given by the Headteacher only the cost of a standard class fare (evidenced by a ticket or receipt) will be reimbursed by the school. It should be noted that savings can be achieved by booking rail journeys in advance and this should be done wherever possible.

The reimbursement of car expenses will be limited to the mileage undertaken for school purposes at the mileage allowance rate prevailing at the time the journey was made. The reclaimable amount for car and fare expenses will be based on the lesser of the miles from the representative's place of work to their destination or their home address to their destination. Rates of mileage allowances are currently paid at 46.9p (451-999cc) and 52.2p (1000cc and above) mile.

The use of a car must be approved in writing in advance of a school journey by the Headteacher. The use of a car will only be granted, subject to a current certificate of motor insurance and valid driving licence being provided before the use of the vehicle is granted.

It is the responsibility of the staff member to ensure that they have adequate insurance cover to cover the use of their motor vehicle for official business.

Taxis and mini cab costs will not be reimbursed unless the Headteacher (or Chair of Governors for Headteacher travel) is satisfied that there was no practical alternative or where their use resulted in savings for the school, e.g. because a group was travelling together. Receipts should always be obtained. Taxis will not be reimbursed without a receipt.

Staff Subsistence

Subsistence is defined as accommodation and food costs.

On site meals and refreshments - Hot drinks such as tea and coffee are not provided by the school.

Meals and refreshments over and above normal provision will not be provided for staff during the school day, unless this is a contractual entitlement. The only exceptions to this are lunch on Inset (TAD) days, meals for class teachers during parents' evenings and for those attending work at the Headteacher's discretion, for example Senior Leadership Team extended meetings or during inspection preparation.

The Governing Body has agreed to support school funded meals for staff who sit in the dining hall with children. The expectation is for staff to sit (one adult per table) and actively engage with children to extend vocabulary. This arrangement will be reviewed annually by the Governing Body.

Offsite meals and refreshments

The school does not normally support offsite meetings and will not reimburse any subsistence costs in relation to offsite events without the prior agreement of the Headteacher or Chair of Governors where the Headteacher is the potential claimant. Where approved in advance, any such claims must be made with a valid receipt.

Where staff are away from the school e.g. to attend courses then they are expected to consume meals and refreshments included in the course fee – there will be no further reimbursement of additional expenditure.

Accommodation

Where approved in advance by the Headteacher (or Chair of Governors where the Headteacher is the potential claimant) the School will reimburse its staff for expenditure incurred on accommodation in respect of journeys on School business. Wherever possible, staff must return on the day of their business activity, but when this is deemed impractical due to the length of the journey or the need to attend meetings they should book into a 'local to venue' hotel.

In instances where staff have an over-riding requirement to attend a certain hotel, i.e. conferences, events, etc., then the booking must be placed with the organiser of the event, unless a cheaper rate can be negotiated.

Costs relating to partners or guests will not be reimbursed. Costs related to the extension of trips for personal reasons will not be reimbursed.

Visitor Hospitality

Refreshments during and outside of the school day

Tea, coffee, biscuits and fresh fruit can be provided, at the discretion of the Headteacher, either in advance or during meetings with external visitors likely to be in excess of one hour. Where staff are involved in such meetings hospitality will be provided for them also.

Meals during the school day

At the discretion of the Headteacher, lunch may be provided for visitors during the school day e.g. Ofsted inspectors, school governors on governor open morning or for parents invited for a specific purpose e.g. to support the take up of school meals. Staff may also

partake of this hospitality where they are part of the event and cannot benefit from their usual arrangements.

Procedures

The objective of the procedures adopted by the School is to ensure representatives are reimbursed for their approved expenditure on travel and subsistence. Furthermore, it is necessary to ensure that guidelines in respect of the authorisation of such expenditure have been strictly adhered to and the School complies with statutory regulations in the reporting of such expenditure, i.e. taxation rules.

1. Prior Approval of Expenditure

Staff are required to obtain prior approval from the Headteacher in respect of expenditure to be incurred on the items listed above.

Where the Headteacher is the potential claimant then prior approval must be obtained from the Chair of Governors.

Expenditure relating to alcohol, leaving gifts and staff events must receive prior approval from BOTH the Headteacher and Chair of Governors.

Such approval must be in writing, email authorisation is acceptable.

2. Expense Claim Approval

Staff must fill in either a 'Staff Reimbursement Voucher' (available from the Finance Officer) or 'Car Mileage Claim Form' (in respect of expenditure to be reimbursed with supporting documents including detailed VAT receipt attached to substantiate expenditure where appropriate, and the written pre-approval where relevant. For small payments (typically below £10), reimbursement can be made using the petty cash procedures, but this will also require prior approval.

The claim must always be made by the most senior member of staff present.

Claims should be presented within 2 weeks of the expenditure being incurred.

Expense claim forms must be signed by the Headteacher, or in respect of the Headteacher, the Chair of Governors

Checklist

Claimants should check the following to ensure they are meeting the policy and procedures of the School.

- Is the claim necessary and wholly and exclusively for school purposes?
- Has prior approval been obtained where necessary?
- Has the representative checked to ensure adequate insurance arrangements are in place for car travel?
- Has the representative referred to nominated agents of the School or purchasing schemes/organisations for which the School is a member to ensure value for money is being achieved?
- Have you obtained a VAT receipt?

Debt Recovery Policy

Statement of intent

The Devonshire Hill Nursery & Primary School is committed to ensuring equal opportunities for all pupils, regardless of financial circumstances, and has established policies and procedures to ensure that no child is discriminated against by our offering of school trips, activities and educational extras.

While this is the case, the School must have a policy in place to ensure the repayment and recuperation of any outstanding debts incurred by the school on behalf of a pupil. The school will take all reasonable measures to vigorously 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.

Each case is to be treated individually and the circumstances that have led to the outstanding debt will be taken into account to determine the best course of action and whether it is fair and reasonable to pursue the debt in its entirety if at all. The School is committed to adhering to legal requirements regarding charging for school food, activities and materials, and meeting all statutory guidance provided by the DfE.

1. Legal framework

1.1. This policy will adhere to the relevant legislation and statutory guidance surrounding school payments and debt recovery, including the following:

- DfE (2014) 'Charging for school activities'
- DfE (2015) 'Schemes for financing schools'
- DfE (2017) 'Governance handbook'

2. Roles and responsibilities

2.1. As a general rule, to avoid incurring debts, payments for materials and services provided by the school should be collected in advance or at the point of sale.

2.2. Any person(s) involved in the monitoring, recording and pursuing of debts owed to the school must formally record any information gathered and actions taken – data which is to be kept by the school for a period of seven years.

2.3. The school's Resource Committee:

- Will regularly review details of its debts and what recovery action is needed.
- Must be consulted if legal services are required for debt recovery.
- Will adhere to the privacy rights of pupils and their guardians in all cases.
- May decide to leave a case of debt recovery to the decision of headteacher.

2.4. The Headteacher will ensure:

- Debt reminders are recorded and those records maintained for a period of seven years – dates and times of letters, phone calls, emails, conversations or any other correspondence.

- Instances of debt are judged on an individual basis, with consideration of the nature of the debt and the circumstances of the family involved.
- The privacy of the pupil and their family will be protected by all staff.
- The level of outstanding debt owed to the school can be determined at short notice.

3. **Acceptable 'credit period'**

- 3.1. In the case of a debt, the Resource Committee should agree upon a 'credit period' within which the debtor can pay the outstanding sum before debt recovery procedures are exercised. This period of time may vary, at the discretion of the Resource Committee, dependent on the nature and size of the debt.

4. **Declaring outstanding debt levels**

- 4.1. The headteacher and Resource Committee will review the level of outstanding debts every term to determine whether current debt levels are acceptable and whether current methods and procedures to recover debts are effective.
- 4.2. Any individual cases of debt that are deemed to require intervention will then be pursued by the procedure starting from section five of this policy.

5. **Debt recovery procedures**

- 5.1. Where there is an outstanding payment yet to be received and the acceptable credit period has been surpassed, an official invoice should be created outlining the value and reason for the debt, as well as the debtor's identity.
- 5.2. Upon creating the invoice and stipulating a date on which it must be paid by, there is acknowledgement from the school that the debt has been set up.

6. **Verbal and written overdue payment reminders**

- 6.1. **First formal written reminder** – an official, dated letter addressed to the debtor should be sent if the debt level is above the acceptable level(s) agreed by the Resource Committee.
- 6.2. **Verbal reminder** – informal in-person/telephone/email correspondence reminding parent/carer of debt (date and time should be officially recorded) and warning of withdrawal of service if payment is not made.
- 6.3. **Second formal written reminder** – this should come one week after the second reminder, citing the details of the previous reminder and stating that concerted efforts have been made to make the person aware that an outstanding debt is overdue.

7. **Failure to respond**

- 7.1. If these reminders are not responded to, another letter will be sent to the debtor advising them that the case has been referred to Resource Committee

and the school's legal advisors. It is then for these parties to agree on a time frame for a repayment or, if necessary, a payment plan for separate instalments.

8. Negotiation of debt repayment

- 8.1. It is expected that the debt should be repaid as soon as possible, particularly after repeated reminders; however, this can be negotiated at the discretion of the Resource Committee, particularly if the circumstances in section nine of this policy apply.
- 8.2. If there is a case where the debtor is deemed to be refusing to pay without sufficient reason, the school may consider involving LAs and the council's legal services to resolve the issue and recuperate owed funds.

9. Exceptional circumstances and remissions

- 9.1. The School has a thorough process for checking eligibility of pupils for Free School Meals(FSM)/Pupil Premium and supporting parents/carers to check/renew their FSM status.
- 9.2. The school ensures that parents/carers of pupils are aware of the help the school can extend to those in financial difficulty. Parents/carers who may be eligible for remissions are those in receipt of any of the following benefits:
 - Universal Credit
 - Income Support
 - Income Based Jobseekers Allowance
 - Support under part VI of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999
 - Child Tax Credit, provided that Working Tax Credit is not also received and the family's income (as assessed by Her Majesty's Revenue and Customs) did not exceed £16,190 in the previous financial year
 - The guarantee element of State Pension Credit
 - An income related employment and support allowance
- 9.3. In a case where there is, or it is suspected that there is, an overdue debt from a family who may qualify for remissions, details of the different types of bursary available should be sent to the debtor in question.
- 9.4. The Resource Committee is not guaranteed to, but may decide to waive or reduce the outstanding debt in these circumstances.

10. Debt recovery costs

- 10.1. In addition to the remission allowances outlined in section nine, it may be advisable to waive or partially waive debts where it is deemed that it does not make financial sense to continue allocating time and resources to pursuing.
- 10.2. The Resource Committee will review any case where a debt may be waived, and come to a final decision based on the value of costs versus value of the debt.

Disposal of Assets Policy

Introduction

The governing body is responsible for ensuring that assets are disposed of in an appropriate manner (purchase of assets is in accordance with the School's Scheme of Financial Delegation, which is reviewed annually by the Resource Committee and ratified by the Full Governing Body).

This policy sets out a framework to identify who has the authority to declare items to be obsolete, surplus to requirement or damaged beyond repair, and the means of disposal.

Where items are to be sold, efforts must be made to ensure the best price for is achieved.

Asset Register

- The School keeps an electronic Asset Register.
- All items of electronic equipment and furniture above the de minimis amount of £200 as to be included on the Asset Register.
- The IT and site management teams, under the direction of the School Business Manager, are responsible for ensuring the accuracy of the asset register.
- No items may be removed from the Asset Register without the authorisation specified within this policy.

Disposal of Assets

- Assets are accounted for as expenditure items rather than capitalised as assets in the year-end balance sheet.
- The disposal or "write-off" of assets refers to items disposed of without receipt of income.
- Where possible and appropriate, attempts should be made to sell or donate reusable items for the benefit of other schools or community organisation.
- The Headteacher may authorise the disposal of any furniture items.
- Disposal of electronic equipment on the Asset Register must be approved by the Resource Committee. This must be minuted as a record of the decision.
- Disposal of electronic equipment must be done in compliance with relevant legislation and data destroyed by a certified organisation.