
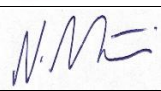




# Finance Policy

## Joy Lane Primary School

Draft Prepared:	1 <sup>st</sup> March 2026
Date Agreed:	17 <sup>th</sup> March 2026
Signed by Executive Headteacher: <i>Ms D Hines</i>	
Signed by Chair of Governors: <i>Mrs N Mattin</i>	
Date Policy to be Reviewed:	March 2027

## 1. Introduction

The Governors of Joy Lane Primary Foundation School are committed to providing sound financial controls, to achieving value for money and to being worthy custodians of public money. To achieve these aims the Executive Headteacher and the Governing Body have drawn up this Finance Policy to provide the guiding principles for which all Governors and staff will operate within.

This Policy has been drawn up in accordance with the Local Authority's (LA) Scheme for Financing Schools.

## 2. Principles

Our Finance Policy adheres to the following principles;

- The responsibilities of the Governing Body, its committees, the Executive Headteacher and staff will be clearly defined, and limits of delegated authority established, where applicable.

The Governing Body is responsible for taking steps to ensure that expenditure reflects best value principles. This is done by;

- Using both performance data and financial benchmarking to compare to similar schools locally and nationally.
- Using the information gained to challenge performance and set new targets
- Using fair competition through quotations and tenders, ensuring resources and contracts for services are secured in the most economic, efficient, and effective way.
- Consulting parents/carers on policy development and major changes in the use of resources

The school will establish sound internal financial controls, based on the LA's Financial Controls to ensure the reliability and accuracy of its financial transactions.

The budget will reflect the school's prioritised educational objectives through its links to the School Development/Improvement Plan, which indicates the resource implications of each priority.

The budget will be subject to effective monitoring, allowing the Governors, Executive Headteacher and staff to maintain financial control in line with the Balance Control Mechanism by reviewing the current position and taking any remedial action necessary.

The school will be adequately insured against exposure to risk.

The school will ensure that:

- The Budget Share is spent for the purpose of the school only.
- Purchasing arrangements achieve value for money.
- There are sound procedures for the administration of personnel matters.
- There are sound procedures for the administration of payroll matters.
- Stocks, stores and assets are recorded and adequately safeguarded against loss or theft.
- All income due is identified and all collections received, recorded and banked promptly.
- The operation of the bank account and the reconciliation of bank balances with the accounting records is properly controlled by the Finance team.
- The use of a NatWest “**Onecard**” is strictly receipted, recorded and controlled.
- \*The School Voluntary Fund and any other non-public funds are administered as rigorously as public funds.
- Any suspected irregularity will be reported immediately to the LA’s Head of Internal Audit by the Executive Headteacher.
- The school will adhere to current GDPR and Data Protection legislation.
- Appropriate training in financial administration will be provided to always enable staff cover.

### **3. Putting Policy into Practice**

#### **3.1 Delegated Authority**

The Full Governing Body has overall responsibility for the management of all of the school’s finances covering the revenue budget, other budgets delegated or devolved by the LA and other funds (\*Note: Joy Lane Primary Foundation School does not have a School Voluntary Fund).

The Full Governing Body will ensure the annual detailed report of the Schools Financial Value Standard (SFVS) is provided to them and the Chair of governors will sign the completed form prior to sending a

copy to the Local Authority.

The Finance Committee is delegated responsibility by the Full Governing Body for the following aspects of financial management:

- Evaluate and recommend the three-year budget plan, which shows clear links to the School Development/Improvement Plan, for approval by the Full Governing Body
- \*To review the Finance Policy and agree levels of delegation for approval by the Full Governing Body
- To review the Charges and Remissions Policy for approval by the Full Governing Body
- To review the Pay Policy for approval by the Full Governing Body
- To make decisions in respect of service agreements and insurance
- To advise the Full Governing Body of any consultations to change the LA Scheme for Financing Schools, to allow the school to respond to any consultation.
- To report monitoring and the outturn position to the Full Governing Body, highlighting any significant variances
- Evaluate any proposed virements.
- Evaluate and report on Tenders for Contract Services to the Full Governing Body
- Keeping in-school financial procedures under review
- Benchmark the school's financial performance and report to the Full Governing Body

The Executive Headteacher is responsible for implementing the decisions of the Governing Body and for the operational management of the school. The general administration of financial procedures may be delegated to other members of staff at the discretion of the Executive Headteacher and this delegation should be documented in the Finance Policy.

### **3.2 Internal Financial Controls**

The internal financial controls operated by Joy Lane Primary Foundation School follow the financial controls set out in the LA's Scheme for Financing Schools.

### **3.3 Financial Links to the School Improvement Plan**

The School Development/Improvement Plan has sufficient scope and depth of the financial implications, and it is reflected in the school's three-year budget plan.

### **3.4 Monitoring and Virements**

The school recognises that the regular monitoring of income and expenditure against the agreed budget is central to effective financial management. To this end, the Executive Headteacher carries out a monthly internal monitoring procedure, copied to the Chair of the Finance Committee. A monitoring report is taken to all meetings of the Finance Committee which reports, if required, to the Full Governing Body. Monitoring reports are submitted to the LA in accordance with its timetable. Governors should ensure their meetings are timed to see all monitoring submitted to the LA either prior to submission or soon after. This will ensure they have an up-to-date position of the school's finances.

On occasions, virements may need to be carried out. Virements to the approved budget are minuted appropriately and require the following authorisation:

Virements up to £10,000 - The Executive Headteacher, reported to the Finance Committee

Virements from £10,001 to £15,000 – The Finance Committee

Virements over £15,001 – The Full Governing Body

*(Note: Levels should be determined at school level)*

### **3.5 Insurance**

Joy Lane Primary Foundation School Insurance is held through the Kent County Council (KCC) 'Safe Hands' Scheme with relevant cover, as identified by the schedule received from the LA's Insurance section.

KCC Insurance Number: **Y143005QBE0126A**

Validity: **01/01/26 to 31/12/26**

Joy Lane Primary Foundation School does purchase Money Cover through the Safe Hands scheme and therefore cash is insured.

### **3.6 Gift and Hospitality**

Schools should have a policy and register in relation to the acceptance of gifts, hospitality, awards, prizes or other benefits that might compromise their judgement or integrity and should ensure all staff are aware of it. School funds devolved by the Local Authority should not be used for providing hospitality or meals for staff.

A pool of refreshments such as tea, coffee, milk and sugar for consumption by staff and visitors to the school is permitted (agreed by governors) and the purchase of these items can be made through the school Budget. If meetings with visitors to the school extend through the lunchtime period, it is acceptable to provide sandwiches or a finger buffet and non-alcoholic drinks, all of which may be purchased through the school Budget.

If more than light refreshments are required, this should be agreed in advance by the Governing Body with reasons for granting approval.

Under no circumstances should alcohol be purchased using School Funds.

It may be reasonable to provide refreshments and a light meal on School premises at staff training days / twilight events or as part of a development activity.

Food on such occasions should ideally be provided via the school kitchen, but should this be unavailable, alternative arrangements can be made with Governing Body approval.

School staff need to understand the acceptance of any gift or hospitality could be regarded by a third party as compromising the integrity of a public servant. If in doubt, the offer should be declined. A modest gift of promotional nature given to a wide range of people and not to an individual may be deemed as acceptable and not recorded in the Gifts and Hospitality register.

When making gifts, the school must ensure the value is reasonable, is within its scheme of delegation, the decision is documented and achieves propriety and regularity in the use of public funds.

Schools' budgets should not be used to purchase gifts for staff, and this includes spa days, bouquets of flowers and gift vouchers. Where schools would like to reward staff, for example for long service, staff may be awarded with a certificate or a collection from staff can be held in the school.

The Governing Body agree to the provision for refreshment and on occasion, a small meal from left over to training delegates as a gesture of goodwill through the training budget.

### **3.7 Purchasing, Tendering and Contracting**

At Joy Lane Primary Foundation School, budgets are delegated to key stage co-ordinators and class teachers. Budget holders prepare a 'needs budget' for their area of responsibility, which is approved by the Executive Headteacher in line with the priority needs of the school and the School Development/Improvement Plan.

All staff adhere to the school procedures for purchasing items, as laid down in the School's Staff Handbook, always paying regard to value for money. The Executive Headteacher or designated deputy authorises all orders and invoices prior to payment.

Joy Lane Primary Foundation School abide by the Authority's Financial Regulations [KCC-Financial-Regulations.pdf \(kelsi.org.uk\)](#) in purchasing, tendering and contracting matters. Schools should refer to the current guidance included in KCC's Schools Financial Controls.

<https://www.kelsi.org.uk/school-finance/financial-support-and-planning/financial-control>

In summary:

- For orders up to £25,000 a minimum of one written quotation is required
- For orders over £25,000, up to £49,999 three written quotations are obtained and submitted to the Finance Committee for approval and reported to the Full Governing Body
- For orders of £50,000 or over up to £999,999, no fewer than three competitive tenders are sought and submitted to the Full Governing Body for approval that follows Council defined procedures and/or regulatory procedures where thresholds for these are met excluding works procurements.
- In emergency, the Chair of Governors can approve urgent work cost up to £25000 with one quote.
- For orders over £1,000,000 a competitive tendering process that follows council defined procedures and/or regulatory procedures where thresholds for these are met.

As a matter of good practice, KCC recommend all orders under £24,999 have one written quotation

All the above will be minuted at the appropriate committee/Governing Body meeting to ensure that the school is seen to be always obtaining value for money.

The school must assess in advance the professional competence of any contractors in areas such as compliance with health and safety regulations, safeguarding practices and so on, taking account of the local authority's policies and procedures. Schools must keep a record of their reasons for assessing and selecting particular contractors. This is not only considered good practice under best value but will also provide essential evidence to safeguard schools and the Authority from litigation claims.

Any section of the financial regulations and standing orders will not apply if it requires schools:

- to do anything incompatible with any of the provisions of this scheme, or any statutory provision.
- to seek LA officer countersignature for any contracts for goods or services for a value over £60,000 in any one year.

All procurements for goods, services and works above the financial thresholds are covered by the legislation (Public Contract Regulations 2015).

Joy Lane Primary Foundation School will continue to maintain and agree their own Finance Policies agreed through their own Governing Bodies. The limits within this scheme should be viewed as upper limits and therefore schools may agree to have a lower set of limits for obtaining three quotes or for when they go out to tender for example: in line with DfE best practice.

The school does not enter into any Hire Purchase agreements, Finance agreements or Finance Leases as this constitutes borrowing which is not permitted.

### **3.8 Personnel Matters**

At the start of every financial year the Executive Headteacher uses a financial planning tool to calculate the salary costs of all members of staff, including increments, where applicable. These details are used by the Finance Committee for incorporation into the school budget planning process.

The Performance Management Committee undertakes an annual review of the Executive Headteacher's salary, and recommends enhancements, if applicable, to the Full Governing Body for approval.

The Executive Headteacher undertakes an annual review of all other staff, in accordance with the Governors' Pay Policy and reports to the Full Governing Body.

The school use Independent External consultants for all SLT Appraisals, this provides transparency and a clear process.

Details of all salaries are recorded as a confidential item in the minutes.

### **3.9 Payroll Matters**

Our payroll provider is HR Connect-Intepay who provides payroll services to the specification laid down by the LA. The Executive Headteacher, or designated deputy, signs off the monthly payroll reports once they have been checked for accuracy.

### **3.10 Safeguard of Stocks, Stores and Assets**

All staff are responsible for the security of school assets. Co-ordinators, subject leaders and class teachers safeguard their assets and maintain asset registers, which are checked at least on an annual basis and certified by the Executive Headteacher. All school assets are recorded on a general asset register, maintained and updated by the school IT Support, Curriculum Leaders and School Business Manager.

Items of value are held in a locked cupboard/cabinet, wherever possible and all items are visibly security marked to deter theft.

Where assets are to be written off and disposed of, the Finance Committee agrees this on behalf of the Full Governing Body and the agreement is minuted.

Where school assets are loaned to staff or pupils, a loans book is completed and signed by the borrower in agreement by the School Business Manager when borrowing the item and again when the item is returned.

### **3.11 Income**

The Lettings Policy is reviewed and approved by the Governing Body.

Where debts are required to be written off, after every effort has been made by the School Business Manager on behalf of the Executive Headteacher and Governors to recoup the monies, the Full Governing Body will approve up to £1,000. Approval to write off debts over £1,000 is required in writing from the LA Finance Business Partner CYPE. ([schoolfunding@kent.gov.uk](mailto:schoolfunding@kent.gov.uk))

We have agreed a level of cash income held in the school must not exceed the schools cash insured levels. Cash is insured up to £1000 in transit to the bank (as per schools insurance policy schedule) Cash will be receipted, recorded to the system and banked promptly at all times.

### **3.12 The School Bank Account**

The school operates its school bank account(s) in accordance with the regulations in the LA's Scheme for Financing Schools. The school operates only one current account for the administration of KCC official funds.

Bank account signatories are updated immediately there is a change in staffing and details are copied to Schools Financial Services, as a matter of course.

Suppliers and Invoices are paid via online banking BACS or via the school "Onecard" scheme ensuring it adheres to all financial controls within the Scheme for Financing Schools.

Bank statements are received/printed out on at least a monthly basis and reconciled in accordance with LA guidelines. The Executive Headteacher or designated deputy signs and dates the bank statement as soon as possible after the reconciliation has been checked.

### **3.13 Petty Cash (state if no Petty Cash is held)**

At Joy Lane Primary Foundation School, we do not have petty cash in place. Staff are expected to order via the appropriate channel.

**Staff must not use their own cash, personal debit or credit cards for the purchase of any items for the school.**

This must be done via the school ordering system when an order is raised, this must be signed by the Executive Headteacher before passing to the finance team. This is followed by raising a Purchase Order ideally prior to ordering the goods or within 14 days of purchase.

Personal Reward cards must not be used in conjunction with any school purchase.

### **3.14 NatWest Onecard**

Approved Onecards are held as an additional method of payment in accordance with the LA guidance.

<b>Name</b>	<b>Single transaction limit</b>	<b>Monthly card limit</b>
J M Henderson-Varlin	£1500	£5,500
Nicola Crocombe	£500	£1,000
Lynsey Rumbles	£750	£2,000
Andrew Thompson	£500	£1,000
Katie Dean	£275	£750
Lucy Wilsher	£150	£500
Grace Sidders	£600	£1,500
Aimee Lucas	£750	£2,500

**Personal Credit/Debit cards will not be used in the purchase of items for the school.**

### **3.15 Fraud and Irregularities**

All staff at Joy Lane Foundation Primary School are aware of the LA's Whistleblowing arrangements and to whom they should report concerns. These details are available to staff in their staff handbook, and in the staff room.

### **3.16 Data Protection**

Under the terms of GDPR and the Data Protection Act 1998, the Executive Headteacher and Governing Body are required to notify the Information Commissioner of our processing, storage and disclosure of data procedures, which are covered by this legislation. To this end, we have a password protection procedure, laid down in the staff handbook. Systems are backed up regularly and the backups held securely, virus protection is in place and updated regularly, and the school has a disaster recovery plan for the administration network.

### **3.17 Information Systems**

A password protection procedure is adhered to as laid down in the staff handbook. Systems are backed up daily and backups held securely off site (SNS), virus protection is in place through our school broadband provider (LGFL) and is updated regularly and the school has a disaster recovery plan for the administration network through the school IT Support (SNS).

### **3.18 Financial Administration**

At Joy Lane Primary Foundation School, the School Business Manager, the School Finance Officer and a third member of staff (HRO-previous FO), are trained in the use of the finance software and financial administration procedures, in event of staff absence. The school also purchases a support contract through the Schools Financial Services which is reviewed on an annual basis, allowing the option to purchase additional support, if required.

### **3.19 The Friends of Joy Lane Fund**

In addition to the LA's official funds, Joy Lane Primary Foundation School also operates a Friends of Joy Lane Fund, adopting the procedures in the LA's School Voluntary Fund Guidance. The school recognises that this Fund is an additional source of income and that the controls over its use need to be as rigorous as for the administration of the school's delegated budget. The fund is audited in line with the requirements of the Charities Commission. All monies for the Fund are held securely and separately from those of the school budget.