
FINANCE POLICY

Recommended by:	CRST CFO
Ratified by:	F&R Committee
Signed:	<u><i>G Bower</i></u>
Position on the Board:	Chair of F&R Committee
Ratification Date	05.03.2025
Next Review:	Spring Term 2026
Policy Tier (Central/Hub/School):	Central

Changes up to February 2025

Section	Change
Purchasing D9 -D11	Update for finance leases
Purchasing D2	Removal of Trust Procurement Manager
Purchasing D23	Inclusion of Bursary payments
Purchasing D20	Expenses updated to paid via payroll system, within monthly salary payment.
Assets and Security Introduction	Depreciation policy updated to reflect statutory accounts estimated UEL

Changes up to February 2024

Section	Change
Throughout	Appropriate sections re-numbered as additional sections added
Throughout	HoF (Head of Finance) replaced with FC (Financial Controller) / MAPC (Management Account & Planning Controller) as appropriate
Throughout	All sections reviewed and amended as appropriate
Credit Cards G6	Update from 'as agreed by CFO, to 'in line with Scheme of Delegation'
A7 – Addition of A7 section- - AO / CEO Responsibilities	Definition of AO now added. Responsibilities are now outlined in line with Conflict of Interest policy.
A9 –Addition of A9 section - Budget Holders Responsibilities	Responsibilities outlined for this version link to Scheme of Delegation
Purchasing Section D	Three additional paragraphs and overall amendments have been made to support and clarify purchasing processes, approval and control.
Income Section F	Additional paragraphs and overall amendments have been made to bring this section up to date with latest controls & requirements
Banking and Credit Cards Section G	Additional paragraph and overall amendments have been made to bring this section up to date with latest controls & requirements
Assets & security Section L	Updated in line with annual accounts fixed assets notes 22/23

Changes up to February 2023

Section	Change
Throughout	Audit, Risk and Standards Committee (AR&S) is updated to Audit & Risk Committee (A&R)
Throughout	The addition and recognition of the Head of Finance (HoF) responsibility (previously CFO)
Credit Cards G6	Update from 'as agreed by CFO, to 'in line with Scheme of Delegation'

Changes up to 31 March 2022

Section	Change
Throughout	References to Central RSA Academies Trust updated to Central Region Schools Trust
Throughout	Removal of any references to Cheque Payments
Throughout	References to key documents updated to the latest versions
Financial Planning p6	Key Reference Documents updated
Financial Planning B4 p6	Reference to Curriculum planning and contact ratios added
Budget Monitoring & Management Accounts C1	Reference to Central Finance Team added
Budget Monitoring & Management Accounts C2	Role of School in monitoring budgets highlighted
Purchasing D8	Reference to internet purchasing and timing of order set up on system added
Purchasing D16	Reference added to monetary limit and process for employees being reimbursed for purchases made
Purchasing D17	Reference added to cover gifts for employees
Income F10	Updated to refer to write offs being approved in line with Scheme of Delegation, not Chair of F&R Committee
Income F11	Reference to emptying of catering credit machines added

Banking and Credit Cards G2	Reference that employees should not use their private bank accounts pay for school expenditure or income removed
Payroll H4	Reference added that schools/Trust will NOT maintain bank details and emergency contact details for employees [this is to be done by the employee themselves]
Payroll H7	Reference added to the school notifying CFO or delegated team of any impact on budget/forecast from staffing pay changes
Payroll H8	HCSS Reference updated to budget/forecast
Payroll H10	New point added that all employee bank and emergency contact details to be maintained via self-serve or by express permission of HR & People Manager where self-serve is not possible
Cash Management & Petty Cash I1	Reference to ability for Principal to authorise increase to petty cash limit removed
Cash Management & Petty Cash I3	Reference to employees being reimbursed for school expenditure added
Tax J2	VAT Returns – reference to returns being completed “at least” quarterly – “at least” deleted
Assets and Security L2	Reference added to CFO signing of annual spot check of asset register. Discrepancy limit of £100 and above requiring sign off by Principal set.
Assets and Security L4	Reference to write offs being signed off in accordance with Scheme of Delegation [replacing reference to F&R Committee Chair]
Insurance M2	Reference to COO also advising on whether to insure against risk added

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Introduction

The purpose of this Policy is to set a framework for sound financial management and boundaries that conform to requirements of propriety and good financial management within which Trustees, Principals, Head Teachers, governors, and staff can operate. The Trust's (referred to as CRST) financial arrangements comply with our funding agreements, current Academy Trust Handbook, Accounts Direction and other relevant guidance issued by the Department for Education (DFE) and Education Funding Agency (ESFA)

CRST recognises that schools within the Trust may refer to detailed finance manuals that may contain local variations.

All staff involved with CRST finances should read this policy and the relevant manuals.

Note: *The term governing body is used to mean the full governing body of any school within the CRST or its committees, where responsibility can be delegated to a committee. The term Principal is used to mean the Principal, Head Teacher or other member of the school's staff, where responsibility has been delegated to that member of staff in line with CRST scheme of delegation. Reference to school means any school within CRST.*

Associated Documents

- Academy Trust Handbook
- Academies Accounts Direction
- Trust Scheme of Delegation
- Procurement Policy
- Data Protection Policy
- Charging and Remissions Policy
- Code of Conduct Policy
- Donations Policy
- Investment Policy
- Reserves Policy

A GOVERNANCE AND ORGANISATION

The Academy Trust Handbook (ATH) sets out the duties and obligations of academy trusts that have a Funding Agreement (FA) with the Secretary of State for Education.

The ATH covers all the requirements under the financial accountability system for academy trusts.

The Education & Skills Funding Agency (ESFA) requires academies to take full control of their financial affairs.

As a Company, the Trust also complies with Company law and Charity guidelines where applicable.

The Trust must maintain accounting records and will publish the audited annual accounts on the Trust website to comply with the Statement of Recommended Practice (SORP) for Charities.

The Trust Board, as advised by the Finance and Resources Committee (F&R) and by the Audit & Risk Committee (A&R), is responsible for the overall financial management of the Trust's schools. These committees are skills based and seek to ensure appropriate skill levels within their membership.

The Trust Board has specific responsibility for:

- Ensuring that grants from the ESFA or other bodies are only used for the purposes intended
- Approving the annual report and accounts

The Finance & Resources Committee has a strategic role and has specific responsibility for:

- Setting financial priorities
- Oversight of sound financial management
- Ensuring the budget is managed effectively
- Reviewing monthly and annual accounts
- Maintaining liquidity and appropriate reserve levels

It is also responsible for ensuring the Trust meets all its statutory obligations and, through the Accounting Officer (AO)/CEO and Chief Finance Officer (CFO), complies with the ESFA's financial regulations. The AO will be empowered to delegate financial responsibilities to the CFO.

Other Financial Governance & oversight

- A1** The **Principals** are responsible on a day-to-day basis for the management of the respective school's finances within the approved budget in accordance with best value, and in line with the School Development Plan, where relevant. The Principal has no sole authority to exceed the approved budget and must operate within the financial limits of delegated authority. It is recognised that local variations to authority limits may apply. Principals have specific responsibility for:
- Approving staff appointments and changes within budget if Approval to Recruit form is signed
 - Authorising expenditure within local limits
 - Monitoring spend
- A2** The financial limits of delegated authority of **local academy governing board (LAGB)** are detailed in the scheme of delegation. Details of the constitution and current membership are available from the Governance Manager. LAGBs have responsibility for:
- Approval of the school's budget to be proposed to Trustees
- A3** The F&R Committee has agreed the minimum frequency, level of detail and general format of the financial information to be provided to it, especially in relation to budget monitoring reports.

- A4** Minutes are taken of all meetings and include all decisions and by whom action is to be taken.
- A5** The Head of Governance and Corporate Services maintains a register of pecuniary and business interests of Trustees, Governors, Principals and any other senior staff who may influence financial decisions. This is open to examination by Governors, staff and parents and is published on the schools' websites in accordance with ESFA guidance. "Declarations of interest" is a standing agenda item on all committee meetings.
- A6** The **A&R committee** are responsible for
- Receiving reports from external and internal auditors
 - Receiving and recommending annual accounts
 - Reviewing procurement arrangements
- A7** The **AO/CEO** is responsible for
- Being the Trust's lead in financial matters, including a personal responsibility to government and to the ESFA's accounting officer.
 - Completing and signing a statement on regularity, propriety, and compliance each year and submitting this to the ESFA with the Audited Accounts.
 - Ensuring the Trust Board is compliant with the Trust's articles of association, funding agreement, and 'Academy trust handbook'.
 - Notifying the ESFA's accounting officer immediately, in writing, if the Trust Board is not compliant.
- A8** The **CFO** is responsible for
- Consolidated financial reporting (monthly and annual)
 - Advising committees, Trust Board, Principals & Central Budget holders on Finance strategy
 - Oversight of local financial arrangements
 - Preparation of monthly management accounts and forward forecasts
 - Preparation of Trust annual budgets
 - Liaison with and reporting to ESFA
 - Financial compliance
 - Risk management and reporting
 - Appraisal and recommendation of significant procurement projects
- A9** The **Budget Holders** are responsible for
- Review Spend and Manage allocated resources in line with Scheme of Delegation and to minimise financial risk and maximise value for money.
 - Regularly review financial performance, monitor and manage risks and issues with Finance Leads to ensure good use of resources.
 - Plan (budget) and spend resources in line with delegated authority & trust policies and local finance manuals
- A10** Other staff including Finance Leads, SBMs, administrators, teaching staff and senior leaders either have financial responsibilities for processing or as budget holders and these are detailed in local finance manuals.
- A11** All staff are responsible for the security of CRST property and for ensuring value for money in the use of resources as outlined in Procurement policy.

B FINANCIAL PLANNING

The Accounting Officer (CEO), Exec Principals, Principals, Budget holders and LAGBs are provided with financial information through management accounts and assisted with forward forecasts in order to gain a clear understanding of how resources are used to deliver educational outcomes. The key reference documents are the Curriculum Led Financial Plan, School Improvement plans, the Budget and the 3-year Forecast.

- B1** Schools in the Trust have a School Improvement Plan (SIP), which includes a statement of its educational goals to guide the planning process.
- B2** The SIP covers in outline the school's educational priorities and includes material and relevant budget implications for the next three years, showing how the use of resources is linked to the achievement of the school's goals.
- B3** The SIP states the school's educational priorities in sufficient detail to provide the basis for constructing budget plans for the next financial year.
- B4** The relevant committee carefully appraises any new initiatives and curriculum plans including proposed staffing costings altering contact ratios in relation to all likely costs and benefits and their financial sustainability. It is recognised that the Principals can use "Powers of Urgency" to gain appropriate Governor or Trust authority where required, and urgent requirements will be fully costed by the CFO.
- B5** The CFO presents a draft budget as recommended by LAGB in line with the SIP to the F&R Committee for approval in July. The budget is set at individual school level in consultation between the MAPC Principal, relevant Central Budget Holders and Chair and Governor representative and then at consolidated level.
- B6** Any budget surpluses will be used in accordance with the Trust's policy on Reserves.
- B7** When the budget has been discussed and agreed by the F&R Committee, it is presented to the Trust Board for consideration and approval at the next available meeting.
- B8** Approved budgets are then formally handed over by CFO to the Principals as ultimate school budget holders.

C BUDGET MONITORING AND MANAGEMENT ACCOUNTING

The F&R Committee monitors performance against agreed budgets at each meeting and maintains financial control by reviewing the current position and recommending remedial action where necessary.

- C1** Central Finance team produce regular budget monitoring reports prepared on an accruals basis as directed by the ATH. These reports include outturn forecasts and variance analysis against the approved budget. Key balance sheet and cash flow information is also provided.
- C2** Where budget elements have been devolved, departmental budget holders receive and review monitoring reports monthly (or on request) comparing the amount spent or committed to date against their budgets. The School/Budget holders monitor these reports periodically and take action where necessary.
- C3** Capital planning and associated income & expenditure is considered at Spring term F&R Committee for priorities identified for the following financial year.
- C4** The 3-year revenue plan is updated by the MAPC to reflect significant changes to forecasts for each school and to reflect the latest management accounts.

D PURCHASING

CRST aims to achieve the best value for money (VFM) from all purchases and contract arrangements. The principles of probity and accountability are applied, and it is recognised that CRST accounts as custodian for public funds. Procurement policy and scheme of delegation set compliance, procedures and guidance to ensure

value is driven through purchasing and contracts.

- D1** The VFM process always considers price, quality and fitness for purpose when purchasing goods or services and seeks to use CRST buying power wherever possible.
- D2** New Suppliers should be approved in line with procurement policy before any business contractual engagement. Where necessary, the off-payroll working rule checks (IR35) will need to be completed as part of the supplier approval process. If IR35 is applicable then the Income Tax and National Insurance is deducted from the invoice total.
- D3** Prior approval is obtained for all expenditure as detailed in the scheme of delegation.
- D4** Competitive quotations/tenders are to be obtained wherever possible in accordance with the procurement policy and recorded by schools where necessary. Written quotations (emails acceptable) should be obtained for all expenditure above the limits predetermined by the procurement policy, unless it is impracticable to do so. In such circumstances, the reasons for not doing so should be recorded on the requisition form. A deviation to policy report is compiled by Financial Accounts and forwarded for approval to CFO/F&R/Board approval.
- D5** Where a quotation/tender other than the lowest is accepted, the reasons for this decision should be recorded on the requisition form.
- D6** All purchases estimated to exceed an amount predetermined by the procurement policy must be put out to tender, using a form common to all tenderers based on a detailed description or specification of the goods or services.
- D7** Contract specifications (e.g. for cleaning, catering and grounds maintenance, school improvement define the service to be provided in terms of its nature, quality standards, information and monitoring requirements and contract review procedures.
- D8** Employees should not enter into any financial agreement with capital or revenue implications without prior approval as per SoD. Any financial agreements require capital approval, the Chief Financial Officer will consider ESFA guidance as appropriate.
- D9** Under UK financial reporting standards applicable to academy trusts, there are 2 types of lease: finance leases: these are a form of borrowing and operating leases: these are not borrowing.
- D10** Trusts must obtain ESFA's prior approval for the following leasing transactions:
 - taking up a finance lease on any asset not on the DfE approved list for any duration from another party, which are subject to the borrowing restrictions described in paragraphs
 - taking up a leasehold or tenancy agreement on land or buildings from another party for a term of 7 or more years
 - granting a leasehold interest, including a tenancy agreement, of any duration, on land and buildings to another party.Other than the these, trusts do not require ESFA's approval for operating leases.
- D11** CRST must ensure any lease maintains the principles of value for money, regularity and propriety. The CFO will seek advice from the external auditor if they are in doubt over whether a lease involves borrowing.
- D12** Official, pre-numbered system generated purchase orders **must** be used for all purchases. Verbal orders are kept to a minimum, but if required for reasons of urgency or emergency, evidence of the

requirement (usually in the form of an email request) should be retained. It is recognised that VFM may be obtained through internet purchasing so a purchase order will be placed on the finance system at the time of order placement, prior to completing the online order.

- D13** All requisitions are to be authorised by approved budget holders who are responsible for ensuring that the goods or services ordered are appropriate,-required, have adequate budgetary provision and that Procurement Policy has been adhered to.
- D14** Purchase Orders are used only for goods and services provided to the Trust. Individuals must not use official orders to obtain goods or services for their or others' private use.
- D15** All purchase orders must be approved by the relevant Budget Holder as per the Thresholds for the Principals Budget Holder to sign orders are agreed locally and approved by the Finance & Resources Committee and covered in the Scheme of Delegation.
- D16** When a purchase order is placed, the estimated cost is committed against the appropriate budget allocation so that it features in subsequent budget monitoring.
- D17** Goods and services are checked on receipt to ensure they match the order, the invoice is approved to pay accordingly. If possible, this should not be done by the person who approves the purchase order.
- D18** Payment is made only when an invoice has been received, processed, certified for payment and evidence uploaded to the finance system, unless specific terms are agreed. CRST standard payment terms are 30 days, which should be complied to where possible unless specifically agreed and approved by CEO/CFO.
- D19** All supplier payments are made using online banking and with dual authorisation.
- D20** Any school purchases claimed as a reimbursement by employees are limited to minor items, where individual claim limit is £50 and to have been approved in advance by an authorised member of staff. Receipts, identifying any VAT paid, must support all expenditure to be reimbursed. Reimbursements will be made via the payroll system. In exceptional circumstances, this limit can be raised, with the prior agreement of the Principal. Principal expenses to be approved by ELT. Payments are made to the bank details held on the HR/Payroll system with the monthly salary payment.
- D21** Gifts purchased for members of staff should be funded via donations from colleagues. If purchased via school budget, limited to £25 plus delivery, and recorded in line with the Code of Conduct Policy.
- D22** Accepting gifts – Please refer to the CRST Donations Policy.
- D23** Bursary Payments – Schools to ensure all bursary payments are approved in line with scheme of delegation. Schools to complete Bursary payment template to enable CRST to upload to bank. Journal for bursary costs to be entered onto Finance system.

E FINANCIAL CONTROLS

CRST have systems and internal financial controls in place to protect the Trust and schools' resources from loss or fraud, to safeguard staff and governors and to ensure that information provided about how budget is to be spent is accurate and timely. These controls are subject to scrutiny by internal and external auditors. The principles of separation of duties are understood and adhered to wherever possible but CRST recognise that in common with many schools and businesses, this is not always possible. Matters concerning GDPR and Data Protection are covered by Data Protection Policy.

- E1** The Trust ensures that the school has written descriptions of all its financial systems and procedures in the form of Financial Manuals or operating documents and these are used in conjunction with this policy. These are kept up to date and all appropriate employees are trained in their use.
- E2** The CFO ensures that financial control is maintained in the absence of key personnel through staff training or by arranging job shadowing. Staff and A&R committee members have completed a Financial Management Competencies matrix analysis.
- E3** The school maintains proper accounting records and retains all documents relating to financial transactions for at least the period required by statute i.e. 6 years plus the current year and will provide auditors with any documentation and explanations they consider necessary.
- E4** There is a clear audit trail, with all financial transactions being traceable from original documentation to accounting records, and vice versa.
- E5** All accounting records are securely retained when not in use and only authorised Finance staff are permitted access.
- E6** The MAPC and FC ensures that all expenditure from ring-fenced sources of income/grants is accounted for separately and transparently and that the funding is used for its intended purpose.
- E7** The AO shall immediately inform the Internal Auditor and ESFA where necessary of any loss or financial irregularity or suspected irregularity, or of any circumstances which may suggest the possibility of such loss or irregularity, including any affecting cash, stores or other property of CRST.

F INCOME

CRST ensures that appropriate controls are in place to ensure the security of income.

- F1** CRST has a Charging & Remissions Policy for School trips, music tuition, private photocopying, private telephone calls and the supply of other goods or services.
- F2** CRST has an Investment Policy to manage its surplus cash investment and earn interest with minimum risk.
- F3** Proper records are kept of all income due and received.
- F4** All lettings are authorised in accordance with the Lettings Policy.
- F5** Payments for income due may be received electronically or without invoices where the value and number of transactions warrant. Examples are for receipt of trip money & other items via ParentPay and ParentMail. These will be continually reconciled to source records.
- F6** Official pre-numbered sales invoices will be raised for all due debts and adequate formal documentation to be maintained and stored for all income where required.
- F7** Cash and cheques are received at a minimum and locked away to safeguard against loss or theft.
- F8** Collections are paid into the Trust bank account promptly and in full. Bank paying-in slips clearly show the split between cash and cheques and list each cheque individually. The receipt number(s) should also be referenced in the paying in book/sheets when income is banked to provide an effective audit trail between incomes received and banked.
- F9** Income collections are banked intact and must not be used for the encashment of personal cheques or

for making payments.

- F10** There is a reconciliation of the sums collected with the sums deposited at the bank.
- F11** Any sales invoices unpaid after 30 days or outside other agreed terms will be subject to credit control procedures. The FC reviews debtor balances regularly.
- F12** Debts are written off only in accordance with the Scheme of Delegation and a record kept of all sums written off.
- F13** The Principal ensures that machines taking money where installed, including telephones and catering credit machines, are emptied and the cash counted and recorded by two people at time of emptying.
- F14** VAT on income will be accounted for according to current VAT legislation.

G BANKING AND CREDIT CARDS

The CFO ensures that Trust bank accounts are properly administered and controlled. Direct Debits are kept to a minimum and should not be entered into without prior CFO approval.

- G1** The trust obtains bank statements from online banking which are reconciled with accounting records. Any discrepancies are investigated. The process is performed on the accounting system and automatic records are available from the system.
- G2** Individuals should not use the Trust school's accounts for payment of their personal expenditure or income.
- G3** Payments are made by electronic banking and always under dual authorisation. Access to online banking is strictly reserved for CEO, CFO and central finance staff and is PIN, password and device protected.
- G4** Online payment authorisers must be by two signatories approved by the F&R Committee. F&R Committee approves a list of bank signatories and changes to the list.
- G5** Supporting information is made available to signatories to safeguard against inappropriate expenditure.
- G6** Credit cards are held by school staff in line with Scheme of Delegation and with an agreed monthly expenditure limit. Card holders must agree to the CRST Cardholder agreement when issued with a card and are responsible for maintaining this agreement at all times.
- G7** Credit cards can be used by staff for online or face to face purchases where required, with a full record of all purchases signed by the cardholder and supported by receipts where available. Where receipts are not available, reasoning should be provided. Timely processing of all credit card transactions is expected by all schools on a monthly basis and where possible finance staff should not be processing their individual credit card transactions.
- G8** Cardholder limit increase requests must be approved by Principal and sent to finance for CFO approval before being actioned

H PAYROLL

CRST choose to outsource payroll and some associated personnel services. The Trust Payroll Manager will manage the Payroll provider and perform checks and reviews as submitted from the schools and central team.

- H1** The administration of personnel activities, including appointments, terminations and promotions are covered by CRST pay policy.
- H2** The Principal ensures that, where practicable, the duties of authorising appointments, making changes to individuals' conditions or terminating the employment of staff are separated from the duties of processing claims.
- H3** The Principal will always authorise all documents relating to appointments, terminations or changes to terms of employment.
- H4** The school will maintain the staff records on the HR system in accordance with Data Protection Policy from which monthly payroll data is drawn. This includes administering home and email address changes for staff, but not bank details or emergency contacts.
- H5** The Principal ensures that only authorised employees have access to personnel files and that arrangements for staff to gain access to their own records are in place.
- H6** All payroll transactions are processed through the payroll system.
- H7** The school will maintain lists of staff employed on the personnel & payroll systems, and notify the MAPC, or delegated staff of any changes (via the monthly payroll changes log) for payroll, budget and forecasting purposes. Procedures are in place to ensure that these lists are updated promptly to reflect new starters and leavers and changes to contract terms. Principals have a responsibility to ensure that this information is available to the MAPC or delegated staff as soon as possible.
- H8** The CFO or delegated staff obtain regular reports on payroll transactions and checks them against the school's documentation on staffing and pay and the budget/forecast to ensure that they match. Sample checking against previous pay levels takes place to ensure that the right individuals have been paid the right amounts.
- H9** Teachers' pay is subject to external audit as part of the Teachers' Pensions audit.
- H10** All bank and emergency contact details are administered by employees via self-service or with the explicit consent of the HR & People Managers where self-service is not an option.

I CASH MANAGEMENT & PETTY CASH

Physical cash handled in schools should be avoided wherever possible by use of online payment collection systems to assist with the aim of reducing risk and becoming cashless. The AO has controls in place to ensure that physical cash held on site is secure and is banked in a timely manner.

- I1** The amount of petty cash to be held must represent a balance between convenience and the risk of holding cash on the premises. The petty cash "float" is set at local school level and will not exceed £100.
- I2** The Principal ensures that the petty cash fund is held securely and that only authorised employees have access to it. This is administered by the Finance staff and locked in a secure place
- I3** Payments from the petty cash fund, or reimbursements to employees for school purchases, are limited to minor items, individual claim limit £50, which have been approved in advance by an authorised member of staff. In exceptional circumstances, this limit can be raised, with the prior agreement of the Principal.

- I4** Receipts, identifying any VAT paid, must support all expenditure from the fund. Cash is signed for by the recipient and countersigned by an authorised member of staff.
- I5** Proper records are kept of amounts paid into and taken out of the fund.
- I6** The amount in the petty cash fund is checked against the accounting records and reviewed by an independent member of staff in a timely manner. Monthly reconciliations are carried out by the Central Finance Team.
- I7** Personal cheques are not encashed from the petty cash fund.
- I8** Accounting duties involving cash are carried out under dual control within the Finance office.

J TAX

The CFO ensures that the school complies with Value Added Tax (VAT) and other tax regulations i.e. Corporation Tax and Construction Industry Scheme (CIS). No responsibility is accepted for individual staff tax affairs.

- J1** The Principal ensures that all relevant finance and administrative staff are aware of tax regulations.
- J2** School procedures stipulate that only proper VAT invoices are paid, as the school will not be reimbursed in the absence of such documentation. VAT returns will be completed quarterly by Central Trust.
- J3** The school makes payments to contractors and subcontractors only in accordance with the Construction Industry Scheme (CIS).

K VOLUNTARY FUNDS & SCHOOL FUND

Voluntary funds including individual school funds e.g. donations from parents, pupils and other benefactors are not public money. This section only applies to voluntary funds that belong to the school and not other organisations that have a connection with the school such as a PTA.

- K1** The Principal ensures that voluntary funds are recorded on the finance system as such, and separately from the school's delegated budget.
- K2** The F&R Committee oversees the recording of funds and this is reflected in the terms of reference of the Committee.
- K3** The AO ensures that the same standards of financial accounting which apply to income and expenditure for the school's delegated budget are applied to the voluntary funds.
- K4** Receipts and /or supporting documentation are retained for any donations entering voluntary funds.
- K5** The AO ensures that regular reconciliations between the accounting records and the balance on the finance system are undertaken and independently reviewed.

L ASSETS AND SECURITY

Assets are recognised as such and recorded in a Fixed Asset Register where the purchase price (excluding VAT)

is £1,000 or greater per item, or a bulk purchase of items under £1,000 exceeds £10,000 and the asset has an expected life of more than 1 year.

Depreciation is charged on a straight-line basis on different categories of assets as follows

- Freehold Land 0%
- Leasehold Land period of lease/125 years, being the period of the lease
- Long-term Leasehold Property 50 years
- Freehold Property 50 years
- Furniture and Equipment 3 to 10 years
- Computer equipment 3 years
- Motor Vehicles 3 years

Full depreciation is charged in the year of acquisition. Interim depreciation rates may apply where an academy with existing different rates joins the Trust.

- L1** A separate register is maintained of all items of equipment that are portable and particularly vulnerable to potential theft.
- L2** The Principal arranges for the asset register and the equipment register to be checked at least once a year against physical items. The annual spot check is signed off and dated by the member of staff undertaking the check, and the FC. All discrepancies are investigated and any over £100 reported to the Principal and their signature is obtained to confirm this.
- L3** Whenever school property, for example musical instruments or computers, (with the exception of staff laptop computers) is taken off the school site it is signed for and a register noted accordingly.
- L4** Write offs and disposals of assets and equipment are authorised according to the Scheme of Delegation and Data Protection Policy.
- L5** Safes and similar deposits are kept locked and the keys removed and held in a different location.
- L6** The F&R committee review plans for the use, maintenance and development of the school's buildings.

M INSURANCE

CRST has joined the DFE's risk pooling arrangement (RPA) and further insurance protection is in place where appropriate.

- M1** The school reviews all risks annually, to ensure that the sums insured are commensurate with the risks.
- M2** The CFO or COO will advise on whether or not to insure risks not covered by the main premium. The costs of such premiums are met from the school's delegated budget.
- M3** The school will notify its insurers, and other agent as appropriate of all new risks, property, equipment and vehicles that require insurance or of any other alteration affecting existing insurance.
- M4** The school does not give any indemnity to a third party without the written consent of its insurers or other agent as appropriate.
- M5** The school will immediately inform its insurers, or their agent of all accidents, losses and other incidents that may give rise to an insurance claim.
- M6** Insurance arrangements cover the use of school property, for example musical instruments or

computers, when off the premises.