Lady Joanna Thornhill (Endowed) Primary School

Learning for the Head, Heart and Hand.

Finance Policy

We want to ensure your needs are met. If you would like this document in any other format, please contact us: office@ladyj.kent.sch.uk

Date reviewed	October 2025
Date of next review	October 2026
Reviewer	School Business Manager/Finance Manager/Headteacher
Chair of Governors	James Coumbe

(This policy will be reviewed at least annually and/or following any updates to national and local guidance and procedures).

Article 28 – "I have the right to reach the highest level of education I am capable of."
Article 3 – 'Adults must do what is best for me.'

1. Introduction

The Governors of Lady Joanna Thornhill (Endowed) Primary 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 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 will adhere to the following principles;

- The responsibilities of the Governing Body, its committees, the 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 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, 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 receipted, recorded and banked promptly
- The operation of the bank account and the reconciliation of bank balances with the accounting records are properly controlled
- The use of a NatWest **onecard** is strictly controlled
- The use of petty cash is strictly controlled
- Any suspected irregularity will be reported immediately to the LA's Head of Internal Audit
- The school will adhere to current GDPR and Data Protection legislation
- Appropriate training in financial administration will be given to enable staff cover at all times

3. Putting Policy into Practice

3.1 Delegated Authority

The ***Full Governing Body*** of Lady Joanna Thornhill (Endowed) Primary School 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.

The ***Full Governing Body*** of Lady Joanna Thornhill (Endowed) Primary School will ensure the annual detailed report of the Schools Financial Value Standard (SFVS) is provided to them and the Chair/Co-chair of governors will sign the completed form prior to sending a copy to the Local Authority.

The Full Governing Body is responsible for the following aspects of financial management;

- Evaluate and approve the three-year budget plan, which shows clear links to the School Development Plan.
- To review the Finance Policy and agree levels of delegation
- To review the Charging and Remissions Policy
- To review the Pay Policy
- To monitor the school's review of service agreements and the purchase of insurance
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- To note any consultations to change the LA Scheme for Financing Schools, to allow the school to respond to any consultation
- To monitor the outturn position, highlighting any significant variances
- Evaluate Tenders for Contract Services
- Keeping in-school financial procedures under review
- Benchmark the school's financial performance

The Finance Committee will meet annually to evaluate and recommend the three-year budget plan, which shows clear links to the School Development Plan, for approval by the Full Governing Body.

The 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 is delegated to the School Business Manager and Finance Manager who in turn delegate some tasks to other members of the administration team.

3.2 Internal Financial Controls

The school's internal financial controls follow the financial controls set out in the LA's Scheme for Financing Schools.

3.3 Financial Links to the School Development Plan

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

The School Development Plan attaches costs to specific objectives where appropriate and this is reflected in the three-year budget.

3.4 Monitoring

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 Headteacher carries out a monthly internal monitoring procedure, copied to the finance monitoring pair, which will be made available on Governor Hub. This may be delegated to the Finance Manager or School Business Manager. 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.

3.5 Insurance

The school is insured through **the Kent County Council (KCC) 'Safe Hands' Scheme** with relevant cover, as identified by the schedule received from the LA's Insurance section.

3.6 Purchasing

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At Lady Joanna Thornhill (Endowed) Primary School, there are specific budget headings for Curriculum, SEND, Early Years, Year 1 and subject areas. Budget holders prepare a 'needs budget' for their area of responsibility, which is approved by the Headteacher in line with the priority needs of the school and the School Development Plan. A list of authorised signatories, containing name, position, budget held and value of budget, should be held in school as an appendix to the Finance Policy **(See Appendix A)**.

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

Where the school purchases larger items, we adhere to the procedure for Spending the Council's Money as laid down in the Scheme for Financing Schools.

In summary:

- For purchases up to £24,999* (exc VAT) one written quotation.

- For purchases above £24,999* (exc VAT) and up to the current public procurement threshold, three written quotations are obtained and submitted to the *FGB* for approval according to the TOR responsibilities.

- For purchases above the public procurement threshold for goods and services, or above £1m for works, a tendering procedure compliant with public procurement regulations is required.

* These limits should be viewed as upper limits. It may be appropriate to consider a lower limit dependant on school standing and local knowledge.

The Governing Body operates within the requirements of the Kent County Council Scheme for Financing Schools and retains overall responsibility for the financial management of the school.

In accordance with the Scheme, the Governing Body delegates the day-to-day management of the school's finances to the Headteacher, subject to the limits set out in this policy and the annually approved budget.

Headteacher's Authority
The Headteacher is authorised to:

- Incur expenditure and place orders up to £8,000 per transaction
- Commit expenditure that is:
    - Within the approved budget
    - In line with the School Improvement Plan
    - Compliant with the KCC Scheme for Financing Schools and local financial procedures

All expenditure must demonstrate value for money and follow the school's procurement and internal control arrangements.

Expenditure Requiring Governor Approval
The following require prior approval by the Governing Body:

- Any single item of expenditure above £8K

- Any expenditure not included in the approved budget
- Any contractual commitment above £8K
- Any contract extending beyond one financial year
- Any virements or budget changes that materially alter the approved budget position

All approvals must be formally recorded in governing body minutes, in line with the KCC Scheme.

Approval of Tenders
All tenders above **£25,000** must:

- Be approved by the Governing Body or Finance Committee prior to acceptance
- Be supported by a written specification and evaluation criteria
- Be awarded on the basis of best value, not lowest cost alone
- Be recorded in the governing body or committee minutes

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

3.7 Personnel Matters

At the start of every financial year the ***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 Full Governing Body for incorporation into the school budget planning process.

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

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

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

3.8 Payroll Matters

The payroll provider at Lady Joanna Thornhill (Endowed) Primary School is (HR Connect) Intepay, who provides payroll services to the specification laid down by the LA. The Headteacher, or designated deputy, signs off the monthly payroll reports once they have been checked for accuracy.

3.9 Safeguard of Stocks, Stores and Assets

All staff at Lady Joanna Thornhill (Endowed) Primary School are responsible for the security of school assets. School assets are recorded on a general asset register, maintained and updated by the School Business Manager. School assets with an initial cost of over £300 are recorded on the general asset register. Smaller items such as walkie talkies are logged on the asset register to monitor where equipment is allocated and kept.

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 written off and disposed of and asset disposal form should be completed and the Full Governing Body will need to be in agreement - this is minuted.

Where school assets are loaned to staff or pupils, a loans form is completed and signed when borrowing the item and again when the item is returned.

3.10 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, 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)

The school has introduced a wrap-around care before and after school provision from September 2022, debts were recorded on a specialist system (KinderSoft). From September 2025, ParentPay was introduced and parents make payments via the online platform or direct into the school's bank account.

We have agreed a level of cash to be held in school at any one time as £320. Cash will be receipted, recorded and banked promptly at all times (at least once a term – or sooner if insured limit is reached) without exception.

3.11 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 the Schools Financial Services, as a matter of course.

Suppliers and invoices are paid via online banking/BACS 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 Headteacher or designated deputy signs and dates the bank statement as soon as possible after the reconciliation has been checked.

3.12 Petty Cash

Petty Cash is held securely at all times and the limit for petty cash is £250. Petty cash transactions are kept to a minimum. All staff obtain proper VAT receipts for petty cash purchases, where possible, as this demonstrates value for money in respect of the school budget and satisfies legislative requirements.

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

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

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3.13 NatWest onecard

Approved **onecard/s** are held as an additional method of payment in accordance with the LA guidance.

Approved users

Cardholder's name	Single transaction limit	Monthly card limit
Rachael Foster	£1,000	£2,000
Kristen Weiss	£1,000	£2,000
Sharon Swan	£1,000	£2,000
Sarah Cox	£750	£1,500
Katherine Stephens	£1,000	£2,000
Terence Nettleship	£1,500	£3,000
Amy Teehan	£250 (Amended to £1 due to maternity leave, not reinstated upon return)	£500 (Amended to £1 due to maternity leave, not reinstated upon return)
Andrea Godden	£250	£1,000

3.14 Fraud and Irregularities

All schools must have a robust system of controls to safeguard themselves against fraudulent or improper use of public money and assets.

Schools must ensure they have:

- A Whistleblowing policy
- A Gifts and Hospitality policy. At Lady Joanna Thornhill (Endowed) Primary School, the policy framework relating to gifts and hospitality is within the Code of Conduct policy.

All Staff are made aware of these policies and particularly to whom they should report any concerns. As good practice this information is included in the induction process for new school staff and governors.

3.15 Data Protection

The school (as Data Controller) adheres to the GDPR and the Data Protection Act 2018 including paying a data protection fee to the Information Commissioners Office (ICO). The school pays £47 as determined by the ICO**.** The school's Data Protection Officer is Mr Steve Wright (Privacy Culture Ltd).

3.16 Information Systems

A password protection procedure is adhered to as laid down in the staff handbook. Systems are backed up regularly and the backups held securely, virus protection is in place and is updated regularly and the school has a disaster recovery plan for the administration network.

3.17 Financial Administration

Two members of staff are trained in the use of the finance software and financial administration procedures, to cover any staff absence. We also purchase a support contract through the Schools Financial Services which is reviewed on an annual basis, allowing us the option to purchase additional support, if

required.

3.18 Specimen Signatures

KCC have introduced a form to record specimen signatures for budget holders (Appendix A) – the copy of the form with the signatures is to be held in the school office.

Appendix A

All order requests/invoice authorisation must be signed by a member of SLT. A list of authorised signatories, containing name, position, budget held, and value of budget can be found below. The school office should hold a copy that includes a specimen signature for each budget holder.

This document should be updated annually as part of the budget setting process.

Budget holders for year 2025-2026

Name	Position	Delegated Budget Held (indicate if person is the authorised deputy)	Budget Value
R Foster	Headteacher	All budgets	
K Weiss	Deputy Headteacher	All budgets	
P Oliver	EYFS teacher	EYFS	£2,000
M Irle R Dolder	Year 1 teacher Year 1 teacher	Year 1	£3,000
R Lloyd	Year 5 teacher	Reading	£1,000
J Parker	Year 6 teacher	Science	£200
K Weiss C Brooksbank J Read	Deputy Headteacher Inclusion Support Assistant Pastoral Support	SEN	£1,000
P Oliver	EYFS teacher	Phonics	£500
J Godden	Year 5 teacher	Maths	£500
K Law Williams	Year 3 teacher	PE	£300
A Godden	Thrive Manager	Thrive Consumables	£13,200
N Banner	EYFS teacher	OPAL	£1,000
S Ward	Year 2 teacher	Art	£300
L Whitewood	Year 3 teacher	History	£100
E Burrell	Acting Deputy Headteacher	Geography	£100

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B Kwouk	Year 4 teacher	PSHE including RE	£100
H Coxall	Year 5 teacher	Computing	£300
E Burrell	Acting Deputy Headteacher	Music	£100
L Lewis	Year 2 teacher	DT	£300
R Hollingworth	EYFS teacher	French (MFL)	£100
K Weiss	Deputy Headteacher	Residential Year 6 trip	£21,000
T Nettleship	Site Manager	Buildings Maintenance Grounds Maintenance Cleaning/Caretaking Supplies	£4,000 £3,500 £6,565

Agreed by:

Head teacher……. Chair of Governors…….

Date: ……. Date: ……

Appendix B – Finance Policy Confirmation of compliance

Please sign the declaration below and return this to the School Business Manager.

I hereby confirm that I have read, understood and agree to comply with the provisions of the school's Finance Policy.

Should I have any queries about any aspect of the policy or am unclear of the school's expectations I will discuss these with the Headteacher at the earliest opportunity.

Name:_____ Job Title: _____

Signed:_____ Date: _____

This policy will usually be updated annually. Staff are advised to re-visit this policy during the academic year as a reminder of the content. The policy may be found on SharePoint.