

1st September 2015



An Active Learning Trust School

Note: This document incorporates changes suggested in the auditor's letter to the Active learning Trust on 7th December 2014

Neale-Wade Academy

Financial Controls

Manual

Issued, monitored and reviewed by: Neale-Wade Academy, Audit and Finance Committee

Financial Controls Manual

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Glossary of acronyms

AVP	-	Assistant Vice-Principal
BM	-	Business Manager
NWA	-	Neale-Wade Academy
AIP	-	Academy Improvement Plan
DfE	-	Department for Education
EFA	-	Education Funding Agency
EPM	-	Education Personnel Management Ltd (Payroll provider)
FA	-	Finance Assistant
FM	-	Finance Manager
FMS	-	Financial Management System (PS Financials)
Ofsted	-	Office for Standards in Education
PSF	-	PS Financials (the Academy's accounting system)
SIMS	-	Academy's information management system, including pupil database.
SLT	-	Senior Leadership Team
VP	-	Vice Principal

Introduction

1. Purpose

- 1.1 The purpose of this manual is to ensure that the Academy maintains and develops systems of financial control which conform to the requirements both of propriety and of good financial management. It is essential that these systems operate properly to meet the requirements of the Active Learning Trust's funding agreement with the Department for Education (DfE).
- 1.2 The Academy must comply with the principles of financial control outlined in the academies guidance published by the DfE. This manual expands on that and provides detailed information on the Academy's accounting procedures and systems. The manual should be read by all staff involved with financial systems.

2. Organisation

The Trust

- 2.1 The Active Learning Trust (the Trust) is governed by a Board of Trustees who are responsible for, and oversee, the management and administration of the Trust and the academies run by the Company. The Neale-Wade Academy (the "Academy") is one of these academies.
- 2.2 The Trustees are accountable to external government agencies including the Charity Commission and the Department for Education/Education Funding Agency (including any successor bodies) for the quality of the education they provide. They are required to have systems in place through which they can assure themselves of quality, safety and good practice.

Local Governing Body

- 2.3 In order to discharge the Trust's responsibilities, the Trustees appoint people who have a more local focus to serve on a board (the Local Governing Body) which has been established to ensure the good governance of the Academy.
- 2.4 The formal relationship and division of financial responsibilities between the Trust and the Local Governing Body is set out in the Scheme of Delegation.

Principal

- 2.5 Within the framework of the Academy development plan as approved by the Local Governing Body, the Principal has overall executive responsibility for the Academy's activities including financial activities. Much of the financial responsibility is delegated to the Business Manager but the Principal retains responsibility for:
 - approving new staff appointments within the authorised establishment, except for any senior staff posts which the Local Governing Body have agreed should be approved by them;
 - authorising orders and contracts within limits set out in Appendix 1.

Vice Principals

- 2.6 The Vice Principal(s) will have the authority of the Principal to continue the day to day running of the Academy's financial affairs when the Principal is unable to do so. At any other time, the Vice Principal(s) may authorise payments as set out in Appendix 1.
- 2.7 The Vice Principal(s) will also undertake such other duties or responsibilities relating to financial matters as may be required of them by the Principal. In exceptional circumstances or in an emergency situation, additional authority may be obtained from the Chair of Governors and the Chair of the Finance Committee acting jointly.

Business Manager

- 2.8 The Local Governing Body and Principal have designated the Business Manager to discharge the following responsibilities:
- The management of the Academy's financial position at a strategic (with the Principal) and operational level.
 - The management of effective systems of internal control.
 - Responsibility for the management of staff appointed to undertake duties involving any aspect of the Academy's finances.
 - Initiating consultations with the Chair of Governors and/or the Chair of Finance Committee on any significant and exceptional financial circumstances or any financial matter that is causing concern. He/she will also report;
 - Any failure in any material respect of any member of the Academy staff to comply with these procedures
 - Any circumstances which could adversely affect the Academy's finances
 - Any matter of serious concern in relation to the Academy finances
 - Authority to vire within budget headings within limits set out in Appendix 1, such virements to be reported to the Finance Committee.
 - Authorise orders/purchases of individual items not exceeding the limits set out in Appendix 1.

Finance Manager

- 2.9 The Finance Manager is responsible in accordance with his or her job description, this manual and the EFA's Academies Financial Handbook for specific operational duties relating to the Academy's financial systems and procedures.
- 2.10 The Finance Manager is responsible for the day to day management of the Academy's funds and budgets. The Finance Manager is responsible for the discharge of the following responsibilities:
- The management of the Academy's financial position at an operational level.

- The management of effective systems of internal control
- Authorise orders/purchase of individual items not exceeding the limits set out in Appendix 1.
- Manage and authorise petty cash transactions up to the level set out in Appendix 1.

Other Staff

- 2.11 Other members of staff, primarily the Finance Assistants and budget holders, will have some financial responsibilities and these are detailed in the following sections of this manual.
- 2.12 All staff are responsible for the security of Academy property, for avoiding loss or damage, for ensuring economy and efficiency in the use of resources and for conformity with the requirements of the Academy's financial procedures.
- 2.13 Budget holders may authorise orders/purchase of individual items not exceeding the limits set out in Appendix 1. A full list of budget holders, nominated by the Principal as responsible for monies allocated under their control will be held by the finance office and be available for scrutiny by the Company and its approved auditors. The list of budget holders is attached at Appendix 10.

3. Register of business interests

- 3.1 It is important for anyone involved in spending public money or who has a role in decision-making that leads to spending, to be able to demonstrate that they do not benefit personally from the decisions they make. To avoid any misunderstanding that might arise, all Academy governors and staff are required to declare any financial interests they have in entities or individuals from whom the Academy may purchase goods or services, or to whom the Academy might provide services.” The register is open to public inspection.
- 3.2 No governor or employee of the school may use their connection with the school to offer payments under terms which are preferential to those that would be offered to an individual or organisation with no connection to the school. All goods and services will be procured through an open and fair process as set out in Section 13 of this manual.
- 3.3 Where goods or services (other than services provided under a contract of employment) are provided by individuals or organisations connected to the school, the school will pay no more than the cost price, i.e. there will be no element of profit included in the charge.
- 3.4 Governors will not be paid for acting as a governor.
- 3.5 The register should include all business interests such as directorships, share holdings or other appointments of influence within a business or organisation which may have dealings with the Academy. The disclosures should also

include business interests of close relatives such as a parent or spouse, and business partners where influence could appear to be exerted over a governor or a member of staff by that person.

- 3.6 The existence of a register of business interests does not detract from the duties of governors and staff to declare interests whenever they are relevant to matters being discussed by the Local Governing Body or a committee. Where an interest has been declared, governors and staff should not attend that part of any committee or other meeting.
- 3.7 A copy of a form for the disclosure of a pecuniary interest is attached at Appendix 2. The register is held by the Clerk to the Local Governing Body and will be published on the school's website

Financial planning and review

4. Academy development plan

- 4.1 The Academy prepares both medium term and short-term financial plans. The medium term financial plan is prepared as part of the development planning process. The development plan indicates how the Academy's educational and other objectives are to be achieved within the expected level of resources over the next three years.
- 4.2 The development plan provides the framework for the annual budget. The budget is a detailed statement of the expected resources available to the Academy and the planned use of those resources for the following year.
- 4.3 The development plan is concerned with the future aims and objectives of the Academy and how they are to be achieved; that includes matching the Academy's objectives and targets to the resources expected to be available. Plans should be kept simple and flexible. They are the "big picture" within which more detailed plans may be integrated.
- 4.4 The form and content of the development plan are matters for the Trust to decide in consultation with the Academy but due regard must be given to the matters included within the guidance to Academies and any annual guidance issued by the Trust and the EFA/DfE.
- 4.5 Each year the Principal will provide a planning cycle and timetable to the Local Governing Body which allows for:
- a review of past activities, aims and objectives - "did we get it right?"
 - definition or redefinition of aims and objectives – "are the aims still relevant?"
 - development of the plan and associated budgets – "how do we go forward?"
 - implementation, monitoring and review of the plan – "who needs to do what by when to make the plan work and keep it on course", and
 - feedback into the next planning cycle – "what worked successfully and how can we improve?"

- 4.6 The timetable will specify the deadlines for the completion of each of the stages described above. Lead responsibility for the completion of each of the stages will be assigned by the Principal.
- 4.7 The completed development plan will include detailed objectives for the coming academic year and outline objectives for the following two years. The plan must also include the estimated resource costs, both capital and revenue, associated with each objective and success criteria against which achievement can be measured.
- 4.8 For each objective the lead responsibility for ensuring progress is made towards the objective will be assigned to a member of the Academy's SLT. The responsible manager should monitor performance against the defined success criteria throughout the year and report to the SLT on a quarterly basis. The SLT will report to the Local Governing Body if there is a significant divergence from the agreed plan and will recommend an appropriate course of action. This revision will be reported to the Company's Head of Finance for onward transmission to the Company's Board.

5. The annual budget

Budget planning

- 5.1 The Finance Manager, in conjunction with the Business Manager, is responsible for preparing and obtaining approval for the annual budget that runs from September to August each year. The budget must be approved by the Principal, the Finance Committee and the full Local Governing Body.
- 5.2 The approved budget must be submitted to Head of Finance of the Active Learning Trust by 31st May each year. The Finance Manager is responsible for establishing a timetable which allows sufficient time for the approval process and ensures that the submission date is met.
- 5.3 The annual budget will reflect the initial funding allocation notified to the Trust from the EFA for the forthcoming year and will detail how those resources are to be utilised. There should be a clear link between the development plan objectives and the budgeted utilisation of resources. . The Local Governing Body may not approve a deficit budget. In the event of financial difficulties the Trust's Head of Finance must be informed immediately.
- 5.4 The budgetary planning process will incorporate the following elements:
- forecasts of the likely number of pupils to estimate the amount of DfE grant receivable; review of other income sources available to the Academy to assess likely level of receipts;
 - review of past performance against budgets to promote an understanding of the Academy cost base;
 - identification of potential efficiency savings and

- review of the main expenditure headings in light of the development plan objectives and the expected variations in cost e.g. pay increases, inflation and other anticipated changes.

Budget setting and approval

- 5.5 Comparison of estimated income and expenditure will identify any potential surplus or shortfall in funding. If shortfalls are identified, opportunities to increase income should be explored and expenditure headings will need to be reviewed for areas where savings can be made. This may entail prioritising tasks and deferring projects until more funding is available.
- 5.6 Plans and budgets will need to be revised until income and expenditure are in balance. If a potential surplus is identified, this may be held back as a contingency or alternatively allocated to areas of need.
- 5.7 Once the different options and scenarios have been considered, a draft budget is prepared by the Finance Manager, in conjunction with the Business Manager, for approval by the Principal, the Finance Committee and the Local Governing Body. Later, a final budget is approved in the same way. The final budget should be communicated to all staff with budget responsibility so that everyone is aware of the overall budgetary constraints.
- 5.8 The budget should be seen as a working document which may need revising throughout the year as circumstances change.

Monitoring and Review

- 5.9 Monthly reports will be prepared by the Finance Manager. The reports will detail actual income and expenditure against budget both for budget holders and at a summary level for the Business Manager and Principal. These reports will be submitted to the ALT Finance Team monthly and presented to the relevant committee of the Local Governing Body at a time to be agreed with the Local Governing Body and, if necessary, the Company Board and no less frequently than three times per year.
- 5.10 Any potential overspend against the budget must in the first instance be discussed between the Principal and the Business Manager who will agree an action plan to address concerns and a copy of the plan will be submitted to the ALT Finance Team.
- 5.11 The monitoring process will be effective and timely in highlighting variances in the budget so that differences can be investigated and action taken where appropriate.

Accounting procedures

6. Accounting

- 6.1 The Trust's accounting policy is included in the Scheme of Delegation. The following sections of the manual describe how those policies are implemented at the Neale-Wade Academy.
- 6.2 All the financial transactions of the Academy must be recorded on the PS Financials accounting system. The Academy payroll is administered through an external company. At the time of completing this manual that company is EPM Ltd.

System Access

- 6.3 Entry to PS Financials and EPM payroll is password restricted. The Finance Manager is responsible for ensuring that user's passwords are changed regularly (bi monthly as a minimum).
- 6.4 Access to the component parts of PS Financials system can be restricted. The Finance Manager and the Business Manager will determine the appropriate access levels for all members of staff using the system and request these be set by the ALT Finance Team.

Back-up Procedures

- 6.5 PSF – the providers of the accounting system have in place robust backup procedures to ensure data is protected and properly backed up.
- 6.6 The Finance Manager in conjunction with the Business Manager will maintain a disaster recovery plan to ensure there is planning in place in the event of loss of access to the web based accounting facilities or financial data. The disaster recovery plan will fall within the annual assessment made by governors of the major risks to which the Academy is exposed and the systems that have been put in place to mitigate those risks.

7. Transaction processing

- 7.1 All transactions input to the accounting system must be authorised in accordance with the procedures specified in this manual. Transactions input to the accounting system by the Finance Assistant should be checked and reconciled to the bank statements by the Finance Manager whilst carrying out the monthly reconciliation.
- 7.2 Detailed information on the operation of PS Financials can be found in the user manuals held in the Finance Office.

Transaction Reports

- 7.3 The Business Manager will obtain and review system reports to ensure that all transactions are posted correctly to the accounting system. The Business

Manager will sign and retain appropriate reports as evidence of review. The reports reviewed will include:

- audit trail reports;
- management accounts summarising expenditure and income against budget at budget holder level.

Reconciliations

7.4 The Finance Manager is responsible for ensuring the following are reconciled each month:-

- debtor control account
- creditor control account
- payroll control accounts and
- bank balances to the bank statements.
- Any petty cash balances
- VAT Control account

7.5 Any unusual or long outstanding reconciling items must be brought to the attention of the Business Manager. The Business Manager will review and sign appropriate reconciliations as evidence of review.

Payments and cash management

8. Payroll payments

- 8.1 After the payroll has been processed but before payments are made, a summary print of salary payments for each individual should be obtained from the system. The print must be reviewed and authorised online and this should be evidenced by the person authorising signing the hard copy payroll report. The authorisation will be retained as evidence of review.
- 8.2 All salary payments are made by BACS via EPM.
- 8.3 Payslips are issued to paid employees the day before salary payment is made into bank/building society accounts.
- 8.4 The payroll system automatically calculates the deductions due from payroll to comply with current legislation. The major deductions are for tax, national insurance contributions and pensions. The amounts payable are summarised on a printout and payments for these amounts are prepared by EPM Ltd and authorised for payment by the Finance Manager.
- 8.5 After the payroll has been processed the Finance Manager or Finance Assistant will update the nominal ledger with the payroll costs for the month.
- 8.6 The Finance Manager will check for each member of staff that the gross pay per the payroll system agrees to the contract of employment held on the personnel file of the individual. This check will be made termly. The Finance Manager will sign and retain the check list as evidence of review.
- 8.7 Further details of payroll procedures are set out in Appendix 3.

9. Bank Accounts

- 9.1 The Neale-Wade Academy has a main Active Learning Trust current account. This is consolidated with all other Trust Accounts for treasury management purposes. The account details are held by the Academy's Lead Finance officer.
- 9.2 The account signatories are:-
 - Principal
 - Business Manager
 - Finance Manager
 - Vice Principal (Teaching and Learning)
- 9.3 The level of authorisation for each signatory and the number of signatories required are detailed in the formal Bank Mandate.

Payments and withdrawals

- 9.4 All cheques and other instruments authorising withdrawal from the Academy bank account must bear the signatures of two authorised signatories. This

provision applies to all accounts, public or private, operated by or on behalf of the Local Governing Body of the academy. Signatories may not sign a cheque reimbursing themselves.

Bank reconciliations

- 9.5 The Finance Manager must ensure bank statements are received regularly and that reconciliations are performed at least on a monthly basis. Reconciliation procedures must ensure that:
- all bank accounts are reconciled to the Academy's cash reconciliations are prepared by the Finance Manager;
 - reconciliations are subject to a monthly review carried out by the Business Manager or the Principal and
 - adjustments arising are dealt with promptly.
- 9.6 Reconciliation reports and a record of actions taken are signed and retained as evidence of review.

Credit Cards

- 9.7 The Academy has two credit cards. For details see appendix 4
- 9.8 These cards are only to be used when cheque or BACS payments are not possible. Receipts must be retained and matched to monthly statements. Procedures for the issue and use of credit cards are attached at Appendix 4.

Internet Banking

- 9.9 Wherever possible, payments should be made electronically. The Academy's finance system (PS Financials) is set-up to produce a BACS file for direct upload to the Academy's bank account. This should be the default route for making payments to all suppliers.
- 9.10 Urgent payments may be paid electronically by direct input to Barclays.net. Administration of access to the Barclays.net system is controlled by the Trust's Head of Finance and the Operations Director. Barclays.net has been configured so that internet payments and BACS uploads will be input by the Finance Assistant, for authorisation by the Finance Manager or the Business Manager.

10. Petty Cash Accounts

- 10.1 The Academy maintains a maximum cash balance of £1,500 for the Finance Office cash tin and £10 float, with a maximum cash balance of £2,000 to include the other cash tins. The Petty Cash account is to be administered on an imprest basis. Cash tins are administered by:
- the Finance Office,
 - the Sports Centre Manager.

Deposits

- 10.2 The only top-up to petty cash should be from cheques cashed specifically for the purpose. The top-up should be recorded in the petty cash system with the date, amount and a reference, normally the cheque number, relating to the top-up.
- 10.3 All other cash receipts, including those from the catering service and for whatever reason should be paid directly into the bank in their entirety.

Payments and withdrawals

- 10.4 In the interests of security, petty cash payments will normally be limited to £50. Higher value payments should be made by cheque or BACS directly from an Academy bank account.
- 10.5 The Finance Office is responsible for entering all transactions into the petty cash records on a regular basis. Additionally, the Finance Manager will undertake regular, but unannounced cash counts to ensure that the cash balance reconciles to supporting documentation. The Finance Manager will sign off all petty cash expenditure on a monthly basis

Physical Security

- 10.6 Petty cash will be held in a locking cash box which is put in a safe overnight.

11. Cash Flow Forecasts

- 11.1 The Finance Manager is responsible for preparing cash flow forecasts to ensure that the Academy has sufficient funds available to pay for day to day operations. Cash flow forecasts are included as part of the monitoring reports submitted to the Finance Committee of the Local Governing Body.

12. Investments

- 12.1 Investments must be made only in accordance with written procedures approved by the Trust's Head of Finance.
- 12.2 All investments must be recorded in sufficient detail to identify the investment and to enable the current market value to be calculated. The information required will normally be the date of purchase, the cost and a description of the investment. Additional procedures may be required to ensure any income receivable from the investment is received.

Procurement and purchasing

13. Procurement principles

- 13.1 The Trust has agreed Financial Regulations relating to the procurement of goods and services. These are included in the Scheme of Delegation. These set a minimum standard of control for all the Trust's purchasing activities. Arrangements at individual academies may be more stringent. This section of the manual sets out the standards approved by the Local Governing Body for the Neale-Wade Academy and provides additional guidance to Academy staff.
- 13.2 The Academy wants to achieve the best value for money from all its purchases. This means it wants to purchases to be in the correct quality, quantity and time at the best price possible. A large proportion of purchases will be paid for with public funds. The Academy needs to maintain the integrity of these funds by following the general principles of:
- *Probity*, it must be demonstrable that there is no corruption or private gain involved in the contractual relationships of the Academy;
 - *Accountability*, the Academy is publicly accountable for its expenditure and the conduct of its affairs;
 - *Fairness*, that all dealings with the Academy are done on a fair and equitable basis.

14. Purchasing

Routine purchasing of £5,000 or less

- 14.1 Budget holders will be given indicative information of the budget available to them at least one month before the start of the financial year. Confirmation of their budget allocation will be received at the start of the Autumn Term. It is the responsibility of the budget holder to manage the budget and to ensure that the funds available are not overspent. Each budget holder must ensure that, each month, they review their budget and spend and ensure that they report any variances in accordance with the Academy requirements.
- 14.2 A quote or price must always be obtained before any order is placed. Budget holders and the Finance Office should ensure that best value is achieved, taking account of both quality and price.

Purchases over £5,000 and up to £30,000

- 14.3 At least three written quotations should be obtained for all orders over £5,000 and up to £30,000 to identify the best source of the goods/services. Written details of quotations obtained should be prepared by budget holders and attached to orders passed to the Finance Office. This is for audit purposes. Telephone quotes are acceptable if these are evidenced and emailed or faxed confirmation of quotes has been received before a purchase decision is made.

Purchases over £30,000

- 14.4 All goods/services ordered with a value over £30,000 must be subject to formal tendering procedures. Ordering goods which may potentially be over £30,000 must be discussed with the Business Manager prior to any communication with suppliers. This is to ensure correct procedures are followed from the outset.
- 14.5 Procedures for the publication and award of tenders are set out in the Trust's Financial Regulations which are included in the Scheme of Delegation.
- 14.6 Single items in excess of £50,000 require the approval of the Trust's Head of Finance.
- 14.7 Purchases over £173,934 (threshold from 01/01/2012 for supplies and services) excluding VAT may fall under EU procurement rules which requires advertising in the Official Journal of the European Union. Guidance on the OJEU thresholds is given in the Academies Financial Handbook.

15. Ordering

- 15.1 All orders must be prepared using an official order form. Orders must be sent by the budget holder to the Finance Office. Orders will only be processed if there is adequate budget provision for the department.
- 15.2 The Business Manager will countersign orders of £15,000 or less once the budget provision has been confirmed. The Principal will countersign orders over £15,000.
- 15.3 Countersigned orders are recorded in the commitment report, allocated a reference number and dispatched to the supplier by the Finance Office.
- 15.4 Special arrangements apply for purchases of catering supplies and for site management. Details are attached at Appendices 5 and 9 respectively.

16. Delivery and invoice processing

- 16.1 The Finance Office must make appropriate arrangements for the delivery of goods to the Academy. On receipt, the Finance Office must undertake a detailed check of the goods received against the goods received note (GRN) and make a record of any discrepancies between the goods delivered and the GRN. All checked goods are then passed to the budget holder – large deliveries may be initially checked by the site team, any discrepancies reported to the Finance Office immediately.
- 16.2 If any goods are rejected or returned to the supplier because they are not as ordered or are of sub-standard quality the Finance Office will record this.
- 16.3 All invoices should be sent to the Finance Office. All invoices must be authorised by the budget holder to ensure goods have been received and reconciled to the original order. The invoice will be recorded by the Finance Assistant on PS Financials.

- 16.4 The Finance Assistant will use a checklist to evidence the following:-
- goods/ services received;
 - goods/services as ordered;
 - prices correct;
 - invoice arithmetically correct;
 - invoice posted to purchase ledger;
 - invoice authorised for payment.
- 16.5 If a budget holder is pursuing a query with a supplier, the Finance Office must be informed of the query and kept up to date with progress on a weekly basis.
- 16.6 Once a week the Finance Assistant will produce a list of outstanding invoices from the purchase ledger and this list, together with supporting documentation, will be reviewed by the Finance Manager who will note any action taken on the relevant print version of the list.
- 16.7 The Finance Assistant will input details of payments to be made to the purchase ledger and generate the BACS payments or cheques required. The BACS payments or cheques must be signed by two of the nominated bank signatories, one of which must be either the Principal or the Business Manager.
- 16.8 Cheques will be dispatched to suppliers by the Finance Assistant. BACS payments will be notified to suppliers by email.
- 16.9 Non-order purchases must have the prior approval of the Finance Manager. Non-order purchases must be kept to a minimum and should only take place when it is essential for the smooth running of the department. The Catering Manager is authorised to make non-order purchases for standard daily/weekly food supply orders. See Appendix 5.

Income

17. Income sources

- 17.1 The main sources of income for the Academy are the grants from the DfE/EFA via the Active Learning Trust and from the local authority (Cambridgeshire County Council). The receipt of these sums is monitored directly by the Finance Manager who is responsible for ensuring that all grants and other income due to the Academy are received.
- 17.2 The Academy also obtains income from:
- students, mainly for trips and catering
 - the public, mainly for use of sports facilities.

18. Trips

- 18.1 A lead teacher must be appointed for each trip to take overall responsibility for the trip. The lead teacher must prepare a record for each student intending to go on the trip showing the amount due. A copy of the record must be given to the Finance Office.

18.2

ParentPay is the preferred method of payment for all trips, catering, consumables and any other activities offered by the Academy.

Trips

NWA uses ParentPay to allow parents/guardians and staff to make fast secure on-line payments to pay for school activities.

The monies are paid directly into the Academy bank account electronically which eliminates the need for money handling. The system produces reports so that all trip leaders can see who has paid etc.

All payments requested are attached to a specific code so that the payment is made to the relevant activity only.

Parents who need to, that do not have any on-line access and who need to continue to make payments by cash, may do so by using the Paypoint network at local convenience stores.

Catering

NWA uses ParentPay to allow parents/guardians and staff to make fast secure on-line payments onto their catering accounts.

The monies are paid directly into the Academy bank account electronically which eliminates the need for money handling.

The payments made are allocated to the student/staff specific catering account and credits the NWA cashless catering system (IMPACT) allowing food/drink purchases to be made.

- 18.3 The Finance Assistant will maintain an up to date record for each student showing the amount paid and the amount outstanding.

19. Catering Income

- 19.1 The income received daily for the Catering Department is collected by the Finance Assistants and reconciled against the audit reports held in the school safe.
- 19.2 The Finance Department input the income details into the accounting package. Any discrepancies must be reported to the Finance Manager immediately.

20. Sports Centre income

- 20.1 The Sports Centre Manager is responsible for maintaining records of bookings of sports facilities and for identifying the sums due from each organisation. Copies of invoices produced must be forwarded to the Finance Office. Payments must be made in advance for the use of facilities unless it is a regular let.
- 20.2 The Sports Centre Manager is responsible for chasing outstanding debts and ensuring no further use is made of the facilities unless payment has been made.
- 20.3 Organisations using the sports facilities should be instructed to send all payments to the Sports Centre Manager. The income is kept in a safe and taken to the Finance Office prior to banking.
- 20.4 The Finance Office must input the income details from the paying in slip into the accounting system, whilst checking that this reconciles to the accompanying printouts. Any discrepancies must be reported to the Finance Manager immediately.

21. Debt collection

- 21.1 Write off of debts should be in accordance with the limits set out at Appendix 1 to this manual.
- 21.2 A protocol for the recovery of debt is attached at Appendix 6.

22. Custody

- 22.1 The Finance Office will issue official, pre-numbered Academy receipts for all cash and cheques received where no other formal documentation exists. All cash and cheques must be kept in a safe prior to banking.
- 22.2 Monies collected must be banked in their entirety in the appropriate bank account. The Finance Manager is responsible for preparing reconciliations between the sums collected, the sums deposited at the bank and the sums posted to the accounting system. The reconciliations must be prepared monthly and be certified by the Business Manager.

Fixed assets

23. Asset register

23.1 The purpose of the asset register is to:

- ensure that staff take responsibility for the safe custody of assets;
- enable independent checks on the safe custody of assets, as a deterrent against theft or misuse;
- to manage the effective utilisation of assets and to plan for their replacement;
- help the external auditors to draw conclusions on the annual accounts and the Academy's financial system, and,
- support insurance claims in the event of fire, theft, vandalism or other disasters.

23.2 All items purchased with a value over the Academy's capitalisation limit of £1,000 must be entered in an asset register. The asset register should include the following information:

- asset description
- asset number
- serial number (if available)
- date of acquisition
- asset cost
- source of funding (% of original cost funded from DfE grant and % funded from other sources)
- expected useful economic life
- depreciation
- current book value
- location
- name of member of staff responsible for the asset

23.2 The register will also include a schedule of computer software licences where these exceed £1,000, the equipment to which they relate, their cost, and any expiry or renewal date.

23.3 A copy of the asset register should be held in the Finance Office.

24. Depreciation, security and disposals

Depreciation

24.1 Depreciation on assets is as follows:-

- Leasehold Land & Buildings over the period of the lease (generally 125 years i.e. 0.8% per annum)
- Motor Vehicles 25% straight line
- Plant & Machinery 25% straight line
- Furniture & Equipment 15% straight line
- Computer Equipment & Software 33.333% straight line

Security of assets

24.2 Equipment must be secured by means of physical and other security devices.

24.3 All the items in the register should be permanently and visibly marked as the Academy's property and there should be a regular (at least annual) count by someone other than the person maintaining the register.

24.4 Discrepancies between the physical count and the amount recorded in the register should be investigated promptly and, where significant, reported to the Finance Committee. Inventories of Academy property should be kept up to date and reviewed regularly. Where items are used by the Academy but do not belong to it this should be noted.

Disposals

24.5 Asset items which are to be disposed of by sale or destruction must be authorised for disposal by the Finance Committee and, where significant, should be sold following competitive tender. The Academy must seek the approval of the Trust in writing if it proposes to dispose of an asset for which capital grant in excess of £20,000 was paid.

24.6 If disposals within one financial year (September-August) collectively originally attracted grant of more than £20,000 then the Academy must inform the Trust.

24.7 Disposal of equipment to staff is not encouraged, as it may be more difficult to provide evidence that the Academy obtained value for money in any sale or scrapping of equipment. In addition, there are complications with the disposal of computer equipment, as the Academy would need to ensure licences for software programmes have been legally transferred to a new owner.

24.8 The Academy is expected to reinvest the proceeds from all asset sales for which capital grant was paid in other Academy assets. If the sale proceeds are not reinvested then the Academy must repay to the DfE a proportion of the sale proceeds.

24.9 All disposals of land must be agreed in advance with the Secretary of State.

Loan of Assets

- 24.10 Items of Academy property, including portable computers, must not be removed from Academy premises without the authority of the Head of Department. A record of the loan must be recorded on a loan of equipment form (Appendix 7), and booked back into the Academy when it is returned.
- 24.11 The Head of Department will be asked for a copy of a loan of equipment form, should an item of equipment be missing when a fixed asset audit is undertaken.
- 24.12 If assets are on loan for extended periods or to a single member of staff on a regular basis the situation may give rise to a 'benefit-in-kind' for taxation purposes. Loans should therefore be kept under review and any potential benefits discussed with the Trust's internal auditors.

Other financial procedures

25. Retention of records

Accounts etc

Sales Contracts	6 years after agreement ends
Purchasing Contracts	6 years after agreement ends
Stock Inventories	10 years
Published Accounts	Permanently
Taxation Returns	Permanently
External Audit Reports	Permanently
Cheques	6 years
Bank Statements	6 years
Deeds of Covenant	12 years after final payment
Primary Salaries & Wages Records	7 years
Expense Accounts	7 years
Pension Scheme Records	Permanently

General

Insurance Policies (Excluding Liability)	6 years after lapse
Liability Insurance Policies	Permanently / Indefinitely
Insurance Claims	6 years after settlement
Insurance Schedules	10 years
Academy Minutes	Permanently

Academy Records

Student Records	5 yrs after leaving date
Academy Meal Records	Current year + 3 previous years
Receipt Books	Current year + 3 previous years
Voluntary Fund Records	Current year + 3 previous years
Finance System Back Up	Retained/maintained by supplier (PS Financials) for 6 years.

26 Tax

- 26.1 VAT is a complicated area. The following controls set out the control framework for the school. The Active Learning Trust compiles and submits a consolidated VAT returns for all its components and deals with HMRC on all matters relating to VAT.
- 26.2 All school finance staff need to be aware of the main principles of VAT as set out below:
- *Input tax:* As a member of the Active Learning Trust, the school can reclaim the VAT charged by suppliers for all school-related activities (with the exception of certain exempt activities)
 - *Output tax:* The school must add VAT (output tax) to any charges it levies for goods and services defined as 'business'. For VAT purposes, 'business' has a wide meaning and includes any activity that is mainly concerned with making supplies to other persons for a consideration. In most cases it will be clear whether an activity is a business activity for VAT purposes and whether the related income is therefore within the scope of VAT. Examples of income which is generally outside the scope of VAT include most grants, donations and compensation payments. If there is any doubt in this area, the lead finance officer in the school should contact the Trust's Head of Finance.
- 26.3 In order for the school to reclaim input tax, a proper VAT invoice is required. A VAT invoice must contain the following elements:
- Suppliers name, address and VAT registration number
 - Date goods/services were supplied
 - Name and address of the school
 - Goods or services supplied
 - Amount payable excluding VAT
 - Amount of VAT
 - VAT rate

For items under £250 suppliers are allowed to issue a less detailed invoice

27. 27 Leasing

- 27.1 Certain types of lease are a form of borrowing and require prior approval from the EFA. Since it is not always clear whether a particular lease falls into this category, the Scheme of delegation requires individual schools to consult the Trust's Director of Finance before entering into any leasing arrangement.
- 27.2 The requirement to consult the Trust's Director of Finance covers all lease agreements including those for equipment such as photocopiers, computers and hand dryers as well as for premises or land. Further details are included in the Scheme of Delegation.

28. Novel and contentious payments

- 28.1 The EFA requires Trusts to exercise particular care before entering in to novel payments or other transactions in which the trust has no experience, or which are outside the range of normal business activity for the trust. Similar care must be exercised in entering in to contentious transactions i.e. those which might give rise to criticism of the trust by the public or the media.
- 28.2 It is difficult to be specific about what might constitute novel or contentious payments. Academies **must** therefore seek advice from the Trust's Director of Operations at an early stage if there is any doubt about the propriety of a payment. The Director of Operations will seek further advice from the EFA, including seeking specific approval in advance where appropriate.

29. Staff expenses

- 29.1 The Trust wide staff expenses policy adopted by the Local Governing Body is attached at Appendix 13.

30. Investigation of fraud and irregularity

- 30.1 The procedures set out in this manual are intended to provide a range of proportionate internal controls to reduce the risk of fraud and irregularity. However, since such risks can never be completely eliminated, all governors and employees should be alert to the possibility of fraud and irregularity. .
- 30.2 In the event of suspected or identified fraud, the matter must be reported immediately to the Trust's Head of Finance. Following investigation, the Head of Finance is responsible for taking or recommending appropriate action including notification to the EFA where the level of fraud or theft meets the thresholds set out in the Academies Financial Handbook.

31. Insurance

- 31.1 It is a Trust requirement that schools enrol with the DfEs Risk Protection Arrangement (RPA). Schools are also responsible for procuring separate and additional insurance from commercial providers for risks not covered by the RPA including, in particular, cover for vehicles, overseas travel and works of art.

APPENDICES

**Appendix 1: Schedule of authorisation limits.
Neale-Wade Academy**

Transaction	Secretary of State	ALT Finance Director	Local Governing Body	Principal	Vice Principal	Business Manager	Finance Manager	Head of Dept/ Budget Holder
General purchases and contracts		>£50,000	£50,000	£30,000	£5,000	£15,000	£5,000	£500 [£5,000 for Catering Manager]
Monthly payroll						No limit	No limit	
Bad debts [After debt recovery protocol]	>1% of income or 2.5% per year	Up to 1% of grant income or 2.5% of grant income per year Max £250,000	£5,000			£200	£50	
Disposal of assets [Removal from asset register]	Freehold, leasehold and tenancy agreements.	>£20,000	£20,000					
Petty cash payments							£50 [Max from petty cash]	
Discretionary (non-contractual) payments to staff	>£50,000	£49,999	£30,000 (Ex gratia) £10,000 (Termination)					

Appendix 2: Disclosure of pecuniary interests

<p>The <i>Active Learning</i> Trust</p>	<p>DECLARATION OF BUSINESS INTERESTS FORM</p> <p>Company No: 7903002</p>
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Name of Trustee / Governor / Employee:

I certify that I have declared all interests which:

- I or any person connected to me has with the Academy Trust
- Any company or firm connected to me or any person connected to me that may have dealings with the Academy Trust
- I consent to any interests declared below being published on the Active Learning Trust website

Signed

.....
..... Date
.....

1. Your Relationship with the Academy Trust

Please disclose any relationship you might have with the Academy Trust (or any of its subsidiaries) including under a contract of employment or a contract for goods or services.

Nature of business (e.g. details of employment or services)	Nature of interest (e.g. contract of employment or contract for services)	Date that the employment /contract commenced	Date of cessation of interest	Date of entry

2. Connected party relationship with the Academy Trust – individuals

Please disclose any relationship that any person connected to you has with the Academy Trust (or any of its subsidiaries) including under a contract of employment, or under a contract for goods or services. A person is connected to you if they are your child, stepchild, parent, grandchild, brother, sister or spouse or any person living with you as your partner.

Name of person connected to you	Nature of their business (e.g. teaching assistant, builder)	Nature of interest (e.g. contract of employment, or contract for goods or services)	Date that the employment/ contract commenced	Date of cessation of interest	Date of entry

3. Connected parties' relationships with the Academy Trust – companies and firms

Please disclose details of any company or firm with which you are connected (or with which a person connected to you is connected) that may have dealing with the Academy Trust. A firm or company is connected to you or a person connected to you (see section 2) if it is one in which you or a person connected to you is a partner, an employee, a consultant, a director, a member or a shareholder.

Name of company or firm	Nature of the company or firm's business (e.g. law firm, school improvement services)	Person connected to the company or firm (e.g. you or a person connected to you)	Confirmation of how the company or firm is connected to you or a person connected to you (e.g. you or the person connected is an employee or a shareholder)	Nature of business with the Academy Trust (e.g. contract for services, contract for supply of goods)	Date of entry

Date _____

Extracts from Academies Finance Handbook 2015

3.1.11 Principles applying to connected party relationships

3.1.12 Academy trusts **must** be even-handed in their relationships with connected parties by ensuring that:

- trustees understand and comply with their statutory duties as company directors to avoid conflicts of interest, not to accept benefits from third parties, and to declare interest in proposed transactions or arrangements
- all members, trustees, local governors of academies within a multi-academy trust, and senior employees have completed the register of interests retained by the trust, in accordance with sections 3.1.16 to 3.1.19 of this handbook, and there are measures in place to manage any conflicts of interest
- no member, trustee, local governor, employee or related individual or organisation uses their connection to the trust for personal gain, including payment under terms that are preferential to those that would be offered to an individual or organisation with no connection to the trust
- there are no payments to any trustee by the trust unless such payments are permitted by the articles, or by express authority from the Charity Commission and comply with the terms of any relevant agreement entered into with the Secretary of State. Trusts will in particular need to consider these obligations where payments are made to other business entities who employ the trustee, are owned by the trustee, or in which the trustee holds a controlling interest
- the Charity Commission's prior approval is obtained where the trust believes a significant advantage exists in paying a trustee for acting as a trustee
- any payment provided to the persons referred to in section 3.2.2 satisfies the 'at cost' requirements in this handbook

The trust should be aware of the Charity Commission's guidance for trustees CC11: Trustee expenses and payments. <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/trustee-expenses-and-payments-cc11/trustee-expenses-and-payments>

3.1.13 The board of trustees **must** ensure that the requirements for managing connected party transactions are applied across the trust. The chair of the board of trustees and the accounting officer **must** ensure that their capacity to control and influence does not conflict with these requirements. They **must** manage personal relationships with connected parties to avoid both real and perceived conflicts of interest, promoting integrity and openness in accordance with the seven principles of public life.

3.1.14 Trusts **must** recognise that some relationships with connected parties may attract greater public scrutiny, such as:

- transactions with individuals in a position of control and influence, including the chair of the board of trustees and accounting officer
- payments to commercial organisations which have a profit motive, as opposed to those in the voluntary sector
- relationships with external auditors that go beyond their duty to deliver a statutory audit

The trust **must** maintain sufficient records, and make sufficient disclosures in their annual accounts, to evidence that transactions with these parties, and all other connected parties, have been conducted in accordance with the high standards of accountability and transparency required within the public sector.

3.1.15 Trusts **must** seek EFA's prior approval for transactions with connected parties that are novel and/or contentious. Trusts should carefully consider the impact of this requirement and its relevance to transactions involving the chair of the board of trustees and the accounting officer

3.1.16 Register of interests

3.1.17 The academy trust's register of interests **must** capture relevant business and pecuniary interests of members, trustees, local governors of academies within a multi-academy trust and senior employees, including:

- directorships, partnerships and employments with businesses

- trusteeships and governorships at other educational institutions and charities
- for each interest: the name of the business; the nature of the business; the nature of the interest; and the date the interest began

3.1.18 The register **must** also identify any material interests arising from close family relationships between the academy trust's members or trustees, and relationships between members or trustees and employees. Close family relationships is defined in section 3.2.2 (third bullet).

3.1.19 Trusts should consider carefully whether to include the interests of other individuals in the register of interests. This may include other employees of the trust and close family members of individuals already on the register. Interests are not limited to the items in sections 3.1.17 and 3.1.18 and trusts should consider whether other interests should be registered. If in doubt the presumption should be towards including an interest in the register. Boards of trustees should keep their register of interests up-to-date through regular review.

3.1.20 Trusts **must** publish on their websites relevant business and pecuniary interests of members, trustees and local governors. Trusts have discretion over the publication of interests of other individuals including child, parent, spouse and civil partner. The Charity Commission offers guidance on managing potential conflicts of interest in: CC29: Conflicts of interest: a guide for charity trustees. <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/conflicts-of-interest-a-guide-for-charity-trustees-cc29/conflicts-of-interest-a-guide-for-charity-trustees>

3.2 Trading with connected parties

This part of the handbook deals with goods or services provided by individuals or organisations connected to the academy trust

3.2.1 At cost requirements

3.2.2 Subject to sections 3.2.7 to 3.2.12, a trust **must** pay no more than 'cost' for goods or services provided to it by the following persons ('services' do not include services provided under a contract of employment):

- any member or trustee of the academy trust

- any individual or organisation connected to a member or trustee of the academy trust.

For these purposes the following persons are connected to a member, or trustee:

- a relative of the member or trustee. A relative is defined as: a close member of the family, or member of the same household, who may be expected to influence, or be influenced by, the person. This includes, but is not limited to, a child, parent, spouse or civil partner
- an individual or organisation carrying on business in partnership with the member, trustee or a relative of the member or trustee
- a company in which a member or the relative of a member (taken separately or together), and/or a trustee or the relative of a trustee (taken separately or together), holds more than 20% of the share capital or is entitled to exercise more than 20% of the voting power at any general meeting of that company
- an organisation which is controlled by a member or the relative of a member (acting separately or together), and/or a trustee or the relative of a trustee (acting separately or together). For these purposes an organisation is controlled by an individual or organisation if that individual or organisation is able to secure that the affairs of the body are conducted in accordance with the individual's or organisation's wishes
- any individual or organisation that is given the right under the trust's articles of association to appoint a member or trustee of the academy trust; or any body related to such individual or organisation
- any individual or organisation recognised by the Secretary of State as a sponsor of the academy trust; or any body related to such individual or organisation

Appendix 3: Payroll procedures

Payroll Policy – Neale-Wade Academy

Staff Appointments

The Principal has authority to appoint staff within the authorised establishment. The Principal is responsible for ensuring the maintenance of personnel files for all members of staff which include contracts of employment. All personnel changes must be notified to the Finance Office immediately by the Principal's PA.

Payroll Administration

The Academy payroll is administered by EPM Ltd – EPM Ltd – NW Academy's nominated payroll providers and advisors on human resources issues.. All staff are paid monthly through this payroll package.

New staff can only be added to the payroll with the express approval of the Principal. New staff must complete all relevant payroll documents issued by the Academy Office. Failure to do this may result in delayed payment of salary. In these circumstances, the salary payment may not be made until the next payroll run in the following month.

Amendments to salary levels can only be made with the express approval of the Principal/Business Manager and records of such changes should be kept both on the individual personnel file and overall school record with clear evidence as to the reason for the change.

Staff can only be removed from the payroll with the express approval of the Principal.

Payment for sickness or maternity must be authorised by the Business Manager in line with the employment contract for the individual.

Where leave of absence is discretionary, payment can only be made with the express approval of the Principal (for teaching staff) or the Business Manager (for support staff).

Staff who are paid on submission of a time-sheet must complete and return their time-sheet to their Line Manager in line with the published EPM Ltd timetable. Failure to do this may result in delayed payment of salary by the Academy. In these circumstances, the salary payment may not be paid until the next payroll run in the following month. The

manager must then check and sign the time-sheet and return it to the Finance Office. Time-sheets are then authorised in writing on the relevant sheet by the Business Manager.

Staff nominated by the headteacher (Insert names) have access to the online payroll system to amend information, these amendments must have properly authorised instructions supporting the changes being made.

Payments

After the payroll has been processed but before payments are made a print of salary payments for each individual should be obtained from the system. The print must be reviewed and authorised by either the Finance Manager or the Business Manager, who will then give authority to EPM Ltd to release payments. The authorisation will be retained as evidence of review.

All salary payments are made by BACS unless cheque payment has been authorised.

Payslips are issued to paid employees the day before salary payment is made into bank/building society accounts. The payroll system automatically calculates the deductions due from payroll to comply with current legislation. The major deductions are for tax, National Insurance contributions and pensions. The amounts payable are summarised on a printout and payments for these amounts prepared by the payroll provider and signed as authorised online for payment by the nominated person (insert names).

The Finance Manager will check for each member of staff that the gross pay per the payroll system agrees to the contract of employment held on the personnel file of the individual. The check will be made termly. The Finance Manager will sign and retain the check list as evidence of review.

Appendix 4: Credit card policy and procedures

NEALE-WADE ACADEMY

CREDIT CARD POLICY AND PROCEDURES

1. Introduction

- 1.1 The Academy credit card is issued to enable key staff to make purchases relating to academy business only without having to use their own funds or personal cards, or where it is not possible for invoices to be paid centrally by the finance office. Cards will therefore usually be used for travelling and accommodation expenses, for small or urgent items, and for online or telephone purchases. Use for cash withdrawals is prohibited.
- 1.2 Credit cards are the property of the The Active Learning Trust. The Academy reserves the right to withdraw use of the card at any time. The card must be surrendered when the holder ceases employment with the Academy. In either event the cardholder must immediately cut the card in half and send it to the Academy finance office.
- 1.3 The card bears the name of both the cardholder and the Academy. The Academy is ultimately responsible for all payments, so use of the card is conditional on the holder complying with the policies and procedures set out in this document.
- 1.4 Credit cards are to be used solely for the purpose of conducting Academy business. The card must not be used for private expenditure. Any breach of this condition will be treated as a serious matter.

2. Cardholders and credit limits

- 2.1 The Local Governing Body has approved the issue of an Academy credit card (Corporate Barclaycard) to certain senior staff with the following credit limits:

Position	Name on card	Single transaction limit	Monthly limit
Business Manager	Elaine Graham		£11,500
Finance Manager	Andrea Long		£3,00

- 2.2 The cardholder is required to provide certain personal information, including home address (to which replacement cards and monthly statements will be sent) and contact details. The card issuer and the Academy finance team must be informed immediately if any of these details change.

2.3 The cardholder is required to complete and sign agreements with both the card issuer and the Academy which set out the terms and conditions for the use of the card. The Academy conditions include a list of prohibited items – see Section 5, below. Breach of the conditions could result in disciplinary action.

2.4 A copy of the Academy agreement is attached at Annex A.

3. Card security

3.1 The cardholder is responsible for keeping the card secure at all times. It should be kept in a secure location when not in use. The cardholder is issued with a PIN which must be kept secret at all times and never disclosed.

3.2 The card number must not appear in emails. If a secure web site is not available the supplier should be contacted by telephone and the card number provided orally.

3.3 If the card is lost or stolen, or the cardholder believes the secrecy of the PIN has been compromised, the cardholder must immediately inform both the card issuer and the Academy finance team so that the card can be cancelled and any further transactions halted. In the event of theft the cardholder must immediately inform the Police and obtain an incident report number.

4. Purchases

4.1 Credit cards are intended for small or emergency purchases where payment by cheque or electronic bank transfer is not reasonably possible. They can also be used for online and telephone purchases where this can be done securely and offers best value for money.

4.2 Items must be purchased in line with the Academy's purchasing and procurement rules. The Academy's approved suppliers must be used where these are available, for guidance prior to their completion please refer to the Trust's procurement Manager. The card credit limits mean that purchases are unlikely to reach the thresholds for written quotations (£5,000) or for tenders (£30,000). However, value shopping such as comparing catalogues or using price comparison web sites should always be used to demonstrate that best value has been obtained.

4.3 The credit card must be used for Academy purposes only. Any incentives generated from the use of the card must be for the Academy's benefit only.

5. Prohibited purchases

5.1 The Local Governing Body has agreed the following schedule of items for which the Academy's credit cards must not be used. The items on the schedule may be amended from time to time:

- Personal transactions.
- Cash advances, except in a genuine emergency.

- Fuel . The cost of business travel by car is reimbursed through an expenses claim at the approved mileage rate.
- Expenditure from non-contracted suppliers where a contracted or Academy approved supplier already exists.
- Regular or recurring expenditure.
- On-line auctions, e.g. eBay or similar.
- Purchases from unsecured web sites. Secure web pages have either “https” in the web address or the closed padlock symbol. Suppliers should also have a UK postal contact address and a telephone number for queries.
- Staffing, e.g. agency staff, temporary staff, contractors.
- Alcohol, except modest drinks with a meal. No champagne.
- Tips/gratuities.
- Periodic debit authorities where the merchant automatically debits your card on a set date until you tell them to stop.
- Premium rate telephone calls.
- Transactions for which it is not possible to provide evidence of payment such as a receipt, voucher or VAT invoice.
- Expenditure where the cost has been broken down into smaller transactions in order to avoid breaching the cardholder’s credit limit.
- The purchase of gifts, flowers, food and related items in relation to non-business activities, such as birthday celebrations, farewells and the like. HMRC treats these items as personal expenditure which, if charged to the credit card, could lead to a tax liability for the individual or the Academy.
- Expenditure which, if publicised, might cause reputational damage to the Academy.

6. Receipts and reclaiming VAT

- 6.1 All transactions must be supported by a receipt, voucher or other evidence of payment. The Academy reserves the right to charge the cardholder for items without sufficient evidence of payment.
- 6.2 Where a purchase is subject to VAT and the supplier is VAT registered, a VAT invoice is required so that the Academy can reclaim the tax paid. For on-line purchases a print-out of the invoice, receipt or payment confirmation page is acceptable provided it shows the necessary details.

7. Monthly log and submission of statements for payment

- 7.1 Cardholders must maintain a log of all transactions in the approved format. The log includes details of the cost centre/ budget code to be charged. Where the cardholder is not also the budget holder, the budget holder’s authorisation is also recorded on the log.

- 7.2 The budget holder must be satisfied that there are sufficient funds available before authorising the payment. The cardholder must not spend another budget holder's funds without the budget holder's knowledge and permission.
- 7.3 Cardholders will reconcile the transaction log to their monthly statement from the card issuer and to the relevant receipts, vouchers or VAT invoices. The finance team stands ready to advise, but it is the cardholder's responsibility to investigate and resolve items that do not reconcile.
- 7.4 The cardholder submits a monthly package to the finance assistant within seven working days of receiving the statement from the card issuer. The package comprises:
- the transaction log with a budget code and budget holder's signature for each item;
 - the card issuer's monthly statement with each item ticked to confirm that it reconciles to the transaction log and that the relevant evidence of payment is attached;
 - the relevant receipts, vouchers or VAT invoices. It is helpful if these are numbered in the same sequence as the transaction log.
- 7.5 Receipt of the package enables the Finance Assistant to authorise payment of the card balance and to post the transactions into the accounting system against the correct budget code. The Business Manager or Finance Manager (but not if they are the cardholder) will countersign the posting.

Neale-Wade Academy credit card holder agreement

I consent to be a cardholder on the following credit card account held by the Neale-Wade Academy (the Academy) and not to exceed the approved credit limits

Credit Card Issuer: _____ Card Number: _____

Credit limits: Single transaction £_____ Monthly limit: _____

I confirm that I have read the Academy's credit card policy and that I will abide by its terms and conditions. I will also comply with the conditions supplied to me by the card issuer. I understand that breach of these conditions could lead to disciplinary action.

In particular I acknowledge and agree that:

1. I will use the account only to purchase items/services on behalf of the Academy and not use the account for any personal expenditure.
2. I will incur expenditure only where budget provision exists and never without the budget holder's permission.
3. I will only purchase items/services in accordance with the policy. In particular, I understand that the policy includes:
 - a list of prohibited purchases;
 - a requirement to obtain evidence of payment for all purchases;
 - a requirement to obtain a HMRC compliant VAT invoice for purchases subject to VAT;
 - an administrative procedure to be followed each month to ensure that the statement balance is paid on time and that purchases are properly recorded in the Academy's accounts.
4. I will take care of the card whilst in my possession to avoid its loss or theft.
5. I will not disclose to any other person, or write down, the card's PIN.
6. I will only use the card's security number for online purchases where a security number is requested and only on a secure (indicated by "https" or the padlock symbol) Internet website.
7. I will not use the card to withdraw cash except in cases of extreme emergency.
8. I understand that upon discovery of loss or theft of the card, I must as soon as possible notify:
 - the issuing bank; and
 - the Academy finance team; and
 - the police (in the event of theft)
9. I understand that I am personally liable for all charges on the account which relate to transactions which have not been conducted in accordance with the policy.
10. I accept that I must reimburse the Academy promptly should I cause the account to incur any unauthorised charges. In the absence of prompt reimbursement, I authorise the Academy to recover all unauthorised charges by

deduction from any amounts otherwise owing to me by the Academy, including but not limited to salary and expenses.

11. I agree that if I cease to be employed by the Academy, I will make no further purchases and promptly return the card to the finance office.

Agreed by	Authorised by
<i>Cardholder:</i>	<i>Chair of Governors:</i>
Date	Date
Signature	Signature

Appendix 5: Catering operating procedures

NEALE-WADE ACADEMY - CATERING OPERATING PROCEDURES

ORDERING SUPPLIES

Orders are placed on the phone by the Catering Manager. Orders are subject to the authorisation limit for a Head of Department as set out in Appendix 1 of the Finance Manual.

The Catering Manager records the items ordered on a pre-prepared order sheet for each supplier. The Catering Manager signs the order sheets to confirm the order and prices. At the end of the week the hand written orders are passed to the Finance Office.

No equipment can be ordered without the approval of the Business Manager or Finance Manager. Thresholds above which written quotations or formal tendering is required are set out in this Manual.

DELIVERY OF GOODS

When the goods arrive at the kitchen a member of staff other than the Catering Manager checks that the delivery is complete and correct against the delivery note/invoice. The checker then signs to confirm that everything has arrived. The invoices are then passed to the Finance Office.

FINANCE OFFICE

Finance match up the original orders and delivery notes with the invoices checking that no additional items have arrived and that the supplier invoice contains no error of calculation.

Finance will review the invoices to check for arithmetical errors and any unusual items. Finance then batch up the invoices for the week and present them to the FM for approval.

The FM will review the invoices for any unusual items and to check for high value expenditure and will then authorise for payment.

CATERING FOR OTHER DEPARTMENTS/FUNCTIONS

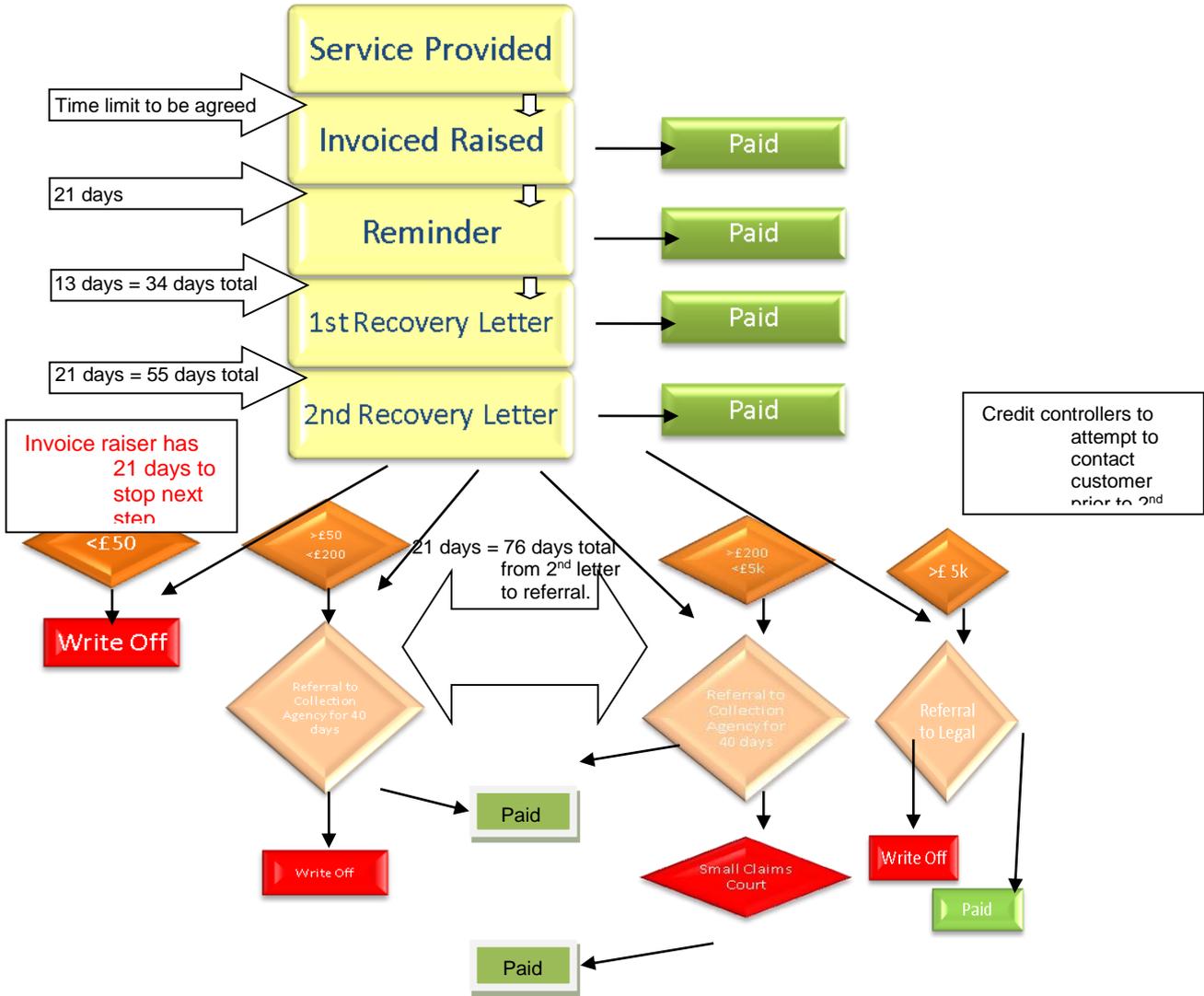
Requests for catering for other events e.g. open evenings, training days or meetings are recorded by the Catering Manager. Every month the Catering Manager produces a schedule of these events with the costs involved. The BM approves the schedule and costs are borne by the various departments based on a pre approved quote.

No catering equipment may be removed from site without the approval of the Principal or BM.

COSTS AND MARGINS

Every month the Finance Manager produces a Catering Profit and Loss report. The gross margins achieved are compared with Budget and the previous year. Any adverse movements with the gross margins will be discussed with the catering staff at the next staff meeting, the reasons for movements identified and an action plan drawn up and implemented to address concerns.

Appendix 6: Debt escalation protocol



Appendix 7: Equipment loans

Record of Equipment Loaned or Removed From the Academy

Neale-Wade Academy

Date of Issue	Details Incl Serial Numbers	Reason for Issue	Signature of Recipient	Approved by (signature)	Period of Issue	Returned (date)	Received by (signature)

Appendix 8: Charging and remissions policy

Statutory framework

The Charging Policy at Neale-Wade Academy is the application of the Education Act 1996, sections 449 – 462, to all activities of the School.

Purpose

To be in line with the above statute, and to be fair in its application to all school users.

Education

Schools and local authorities can charge for:

- Any materials, books, instruments or equipment where the child's parent/carer wishes them to own them;
- Optional extras (see below); and
- Music and vocal tuition, in limited circumstances.

The School will meet examination fees except where:

- The student fails to submit work or attend timetabled examinations
- Fees for re-scrutiny or examination results
- Fees for examination entry against the advice of the School
- Fees for examination of privately prepared courses.

Optional Extras

Charges may be made for some activities that are known as “optional extras”. Where an optional extra is being provided, a charge can be made for providing materials, books, instruments, or equipment. Optional extras are:

- education provided outside of School time that is not:
 - a) part of the National Curriculum; or
 - b) part of a syllabus for a prescribed public examination that the student is being prepared for at School; or
 - c) part of religious education.
- examination entry fee(s) if the registered student has not been prepared for the examination(s) at School;
- transport (other than transport that is required to take the student to school or to other premises where the local authority/Local Governing Body have arranged for the student to be provided with education); and
- board and lodging for a student on a residential visit.

In calculating the cost of optional extras an amount may be included in relation to:

- any materials, books, instruments, or equipment provided in connection with the optional extra;
- non-teaching staff;
- teaching staff engaged under contracts for services purely to provide an optional extra, this includes supply teachers engaged specifically to provide the optional extra; and
- the cost, or a proportion of the costs, for teaching staff employed to provide tuition in playing a musical instrument, where the tuition is an optional extra.

Any charge made in respect of individual students must not exceed the actual cost of providing the optional extra activity, divided equally by the number of students participating. It must not therefore include an element of subsidy for any other students wishing to participate in the activity whose parents are unwilling or unable to pay the full charge.

Furthermore in cases where a small proportion of the activity takes place during School hours the charge cannot include the cost of alternative provision for those students who do not wish to participate. No charge can be made for supply teachers to cover for those teachers who are absent from School accompanying students on a residential visit.

Participation in any optional extra activity will be on the basis of parental choice and a willingness to meet the charges. Parental agreement is therefore a necessary pre-requisite for the provision of an optional extra where charges will be made.

Parents are responsible for the purchase of materials for practical subjects if the student is to own the finished product and if the agreement is confirmed in advance.

Voluntary Contributions

Voluntary contributions may be requested for the benefit of the School or any School activities. However, if the activity cannot be funded without voluntary contributions, the Local Governing Body or Principal will make this clear to parents at the outset. The Local Governing Body or Principal must also make it clear to parents that there is no obligation to make any contribution.

It is important to note that no student should be excluded from an activity simply because his or her parents are unwilling or unable to pay. If insufficient voluntary contributions are raised to fund a visit, then it must be cancelled. If a parent is unwilling or unable to pay, their child must still be given an equal chance to go on the visit.

When making requests for voluntary contributions to School funds, parents must not be made to feel pressurised into paying as it is voluntary and not compulsory.

Residential Visits

Schools **cannot** charge for:

- education provided on any visit that takes place during school hours;
- education provided on any visit that takes place outside school hours if it is part of the National Curriculum, or part of a syllabus for a prescribed public examination that the pupil is being prepared for at the school, or part of religious education; and
- supply teachers to cover for those teachers who are absent from school

accompanying pupils on a residential visit.

Schools **can** charge for:

- board and lodging and the charge must not exceed the actual cost.

When the School informs parents about a forthcoming visit, they will make it clear that parents who can prove they are in receipt of the following benefits will be exempt from paying the cost of board and lodging:

- Income Support (IS);
- Income Based Jobseekers Allowance (IBJSA);
- 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, does not exceed the total published by HMI each financial year.
- the guarantee element of State Pension Credit; and
- an income related employment and support allowance that was introduced on 27 October 2008.

Music Tuition

The Education and Inspections Act 2006 introduced a regulation-making power which allowed the Department for Children, Schools and Families to specify circumstances where charging can be made for music tuition. The Regulations, which came into force in September 2007, provide pupils with greater access to vocal and instrumental tuition.

Charges may be made for teaching either an individual pupil or groups of any appropriate size (provided that the size of the group is based on sound pedagogical principles) to play a musical instrument or to sing. Charges may only be made if the teaching is not an essential part of either the National Curriculum or a public examination syllabus being followed by the pupil(s).

Transport

The School **cannot** charge for:

- transporting registered students to or from the School premises, where the local education authority has a statutory obligation to provide transport;
- transporting registered students to other premises where the Local Governing Body or local education authority has arranged for students to be educated;
- transport that enables a student to meet an examination requirement when he has been prepared for that examination at the School; and
- transport provided in connection with an educational visit.

Parents will be responsible for travel costs incurred between home and work experience location.

Education partly during school hours

Where an activity takes place partly during and partly outside School hours, there is a basis for determining whether it is deemed to take place either inside or outside school hours. However, a charge can only be made for the activity outside school hours if it is not part of the National Curriculum, not part of a syllabus for a prescribed public examination that the student is being prepared for at the School and not part of religious education.

Non-residential activities

If 50% or more of the time spent on the activity occurs during School hours, it is deemed to take place during School hours. Time spent on travel counts in this calculation if the travel itself occurs during School hours. School hours do not include the break in the middle of the day.

Where less than 50% of the time spent on an activity falls during School hours, it is deemed to have taken place outside School hours. For example, an excursion might require pupils to leave School an hour before the School day ends, but the activity does not end until late in the evening.

Residential visits

If the number of School sessions taken up by the visit is equal to or greater than 50% of the number of half days spent on the visit, it is deemed to have taken place during School hours (even if some activities take place late in the evening). Regulations require that the School day is divided into 2 sessions. A "half day" means any period of 12 hours ending with noon or midnight on any day.

Example 1: Visit during School hours

Students are away from noon on Wednesday to 9pm on Sunday. This counts as 9 half days including 5 School sessions, so the visit is deemed to have taken place during School hours.

Example 2: Visit outside School hours

Students are away from School from noon on Thursday until 9pm on Sunday. This counts as 7 half days including 3 School sessions, so the visit is deemed to have taken place outside School hours.

Damage/Loss to Property

A charge will be levied in respect of wilful damage, neglect or loss of School property (including premises, furniture, equipment, books or materials), the charge to be the cost of replacement or repair, or such lower cost as the Principal may decide.

Lettings

The School will make its facilities available to outside users at a charge of at least the cost of providing the facilities. The scale of charges will be determined annually by the Finance Committee. For users connected to the School, e.g. staff, the charge will be based on the site staff overtime costs.

Other charges

The Principal, Finance Committee or Local Governing Body may levy charges for miscellaneous services up to the cost of providing such services e.g. for providing a copy of an Ofsted report.

Appendix 9: Maintenance Department operating procedures

MAINTENANCE DEPARTMENT OPERATING PROCEDURES

ORDERING SUPPLIES

1. Orders can only be placed with the approval of the Business Manager (BM).
2. Small items or emergency supplies can be collected by the maintenance team on behalf of staff if approved by the BM.
3. All other supplies must have an official order raised by the Finance Office.
4. Any work required to be carried out by an outside contractor must be subject to quotation or tender as set out in the Academy's finance manual. Official orders will be raised by the Finance Office.
5. No tools or equipment can be ordered without the approval of the Business Manager. Acceptance and approval limits are those set out in Appendix 1 of the Academy's finance manual.
6. Staff may not order personal goods from the Academy's suppliers to be delivered to the Academy

DELIVERY OF GOODS

1. When the goods arrive on site the member of Finance staff receiving the goods checks that the delivery is correct against the delivery note/invoice and signs to confirm that everything has arrived correctly.
2. The invoices /delivery note are then passed to the Finance Office.

FINANCE OFFICE

1. Finance match up the original orders with the invoices checking that no additional items have arrived.
2. Finance will review the invoices to check for arithmetical errors which could lead to overpayments, and any unusual items and price variations.
3. Finance will then pass the invoices to the FM/BM for approval.
4. The BM will review the invoices for any unusual items and to check for high value expenditure. Payment will be authorised in line with the thresholds set out in Appendix 1 of the Academy's finance manual.

MAINTENANCE EQUIPMENT

1. No equipment may be removed from site without the approval of the Principal/ BM/FM.
2. Academy equipment, materials and facilities are not to be used for non-academy projects.
3. All equipment is to be stored in a locked area after use.
4. The maintenance department vehicles are only to be used on Academy business.
5. No equipment or materials should be sold as scrap without the written authority of the Principal or the Business Manager.

Appendix 10: Budget holders

Budget	Budget Holder
Administration	Office Manager
Art	Head of Department
Building Maintenance	Business Manager/ Site Manager
IAG/Careers	IAG Manager
D&T	Head of Department
Devolved Formula Capital	Business Manager/ Principal
Drama	Head of Department
English	Head of Department
Examinations	Business Manager/ Exams Officer
Food Tech	Head of Department
Geography	Head of Department
Gifted & Talented	Advisor
History	Head of Department
Information Technology	Head of Department
Mathematics	Head of Department
Media	Head of Department
Modern Foreign Languages	Head of Department
Music	Head of Department
PE	Head of Department
PE Transport	Head of PE Department
Progress Leader Year 7	Head of Year
Progress Leader Year 8	Head of Year
Progress Leader Year 9	Head of Year
Progress Leader Year 10	Head of Year
Progress Leader Year 11	Head of Year
PSHE	Head of Department
RE	Head of Department
Resource Centre	Manager
Academy Improvement	Principal/ Business Manager (SLT)
Science	Head of Department
Sports Centre	Sports Centre Manager/ Business Manager
Staff Development	Business Manager
Supportive Learning	Support Learning Officer

Appendix 11 Special payments – ex-gratia payments, staff severance and compensation payments

Staff severance and compensation payments can only be made with the approval of the DFO of the Trust, following a recommendation from the Trust's Head of HR. The following statements reflect the duties laid on the Trust by the Academies Finance Handbook and as such are applied across the Trust and its schools.

Special staff severance payments (known as Settlement Agreements) are ex-gratia payments paid to employees outside of normal contractual requirements when leaving the employment of the Trust and a termination of contract is agreed. Such an ex-gratia payment is considered to be a damages payment for the waiving of employment rights/making a claim to an Employment Tribunal.

If the trust is considering making a staff severance payment above contractual entitlements for the payment of notice, it will consider the following issues:

Whether such a payment is justified, based on a legal assessment of the chances of the academy trust successfully defending the case at tribunal. If the legal assessment suggests a better than even chance of winning, there is no rationale for settling the case. But where the case will be lost, there is a justifiable rationale for the settlement.

If the settlement is justified, the trust would then need to consider the level of settlement. This must be less than the legal assessment of what the relevant body (e.g. an Employment Tribunal) is likely to award in the circumstances.

Special staff severance payments will not be made where they could be seen as a reward for failure, such as dismissal for gross misconduct or poor performance. The only acceptable rationale in the case of gross misconduct would be where legal advice is that the claimant is likely to be successful in an Employment Tribunal claim. In the case of poor performance, an acceptable comparison would be the time and cost of taking someone through performance management and improvement procedures.

Agreements associated with staff severance payments drawn up by the Trust's solicitors will not contain confidentiality clauses which prevent an individual from making disclosures in the public interest (whistleblowing).

Compensation payments are different to staff severance payments. Compensation payments are made to provide redress for personal injuries, traffic accidents, damage to property etc. If a compensation payment is under consideration, the Trust will consider whether the proposed payment is based on a careful appraisal of the facts, including the acceptance or otherwise of liability/culpability in the claim and in the context of having taken legal advice and that value for money will be achieved.

It is also good practice to consider routinely whether particular cases reveal concerns about the soundness of control systems, and whether they have been respected as expected. It is also important to take any necessary steps to put failings right.

The Trust can self-approve individual special staff severance payments and compensation payments provided any non-statutory/non-contractual element is

under £50,000. The trust will not consider making a special staff severance payment or compensation payment exceeding the statutory/contractual entitlement by £50,000 or more, unless prior approval has been sought from HM Treasury (HMT), via the EFA, for the non-statutory/non-contractual element.

Appendix 12: Local Government Pension Scheme Discretions Policy

General Principles

1.1. Under the rules of the Local Government Pension Scheme (“LGPS”) the employer has the right to authorise discretion on a number of matters regarding the administration of the pension scheme.

1.2. For a number of discretions there is a statutory requirement to publicise the approach the employer will take.

1.3. The approach to exercising discretion in this policy is to allow the employer to make a reasonable decision in individual cases but also to be clear as to the factors it will take into account in making that decision.

1.4. In formulating and reviewing its policy statements the employer is required to:

- Have regard to the extent to which the exercise of their discretionary powers, unless properly limited, could lead to a serious loss of confidence in the public service, and,
- Be satisfied that the policy is workable, affordable and reasonable having regard to the foreseeable costs.

1.5. Any complaints relating to decisions in these matters would need initially to be raised under the pension scheme’s Internal Disputes Resolution Procedure, details of which are available from the pension scheme administrator.

1.6. This policy confers no contractual rights.

1.7. Active Learning Trust retains the right to change this policy at any time.

1.8. Only the policy which is current at the time a relevant event occurs to the scheme member will be the one applied to that member.

This policy deals with the Employing Authority’s Discretions Under the following legislation:

The Local Government Pension Scheme (Administration) Regulations 2008 (as amended) (Prefix A below)

The Local Government Pension Scheme (Benefits, Membership and Contributions) Regulations 2009 (as amended) (Prefix B below)

The Local Government Pension Scheme (Transitional Provisions, Savings and Amendment) Regulations 2014 (Prefix C below)

The Local Government Pension Scheme Regulations 2013 (Prefix D below)

The Local Government (Early Termination of Employment) (Discretionary Compensation) (England and Wales) Regulations 2006 (as amended) (Prefix E below)

The Local Government Pension Scheme Regulations 1995 (Prefix F below)

The following table applies to discretions which may be exercised on and after 1 April 2014 in relation to scheme members who left the scheme between 1 April 2008 and 31 March 2014

Regulation	Discretion	Employer's Policy on the exercise of this discretion
B12	Whether to augment membership of an active member (by up to 10 years)	Active Learning Trust will not have a general policy to augment membership of an active member by up to 10 years but may decide to do so where a sound business case can be made for exercising this discretion and there are exceptional extenuating circumstances. Each case will be considered on its individual merits.
B13	Whether to grant additional pension to a member (by up to £5,000 p.a.)	Active Learning Trust will not have a general policy to grant additional pension to a member (by up to £5,000 p.a.) but may consider doing so where a sound business case can be made for exercising this discretion and there are exceptional extenuating circumstances. Each case will be considered on its individual merits.
B18(1)	Whether all or some benefits can be paid if an employee reduces their hours or grade after reaching age 55 (flexible retirement)	Active Learning Trust will not have a general policy of exercising this discretion but may exercise this discretion where a sound business case can be made for granting flexible retirement with immediate access to all or part of the member's benefits. Each case will be considered on its individual merits.
B18(3)	Whether to waive, in whole or in part, any actuarial reduction on benefits paid on flexible retirement.	Active Learning Trust will not have a general policy of waiving, in whole or in part, the actuarial reduction on the benefits paid on flexible retirement, but may consider doing so where a sound business case can be made for doing so or where other exceptional circumstances arise.

B30(2)	Whether to grant application for early payment of benefits on or after age 50/55 and before age 60	Active Learning Trust will not have a general policy of granting early payment of benefits on or after age 50/55 and before age 60 but will consider requests on a case by case basis. Active Learning Trust will only consider exercising this discretion where a sound business case can be made for doing so or where other exceptional circumstances arise that make payment of those benefits justifiable.
B30(5)	Whether to waive, on compassionate grounds, the actuarial reduction on benefits paid early.	The Active Learning Trust will not generally waive the actuarial reduction applied to benefits paid early under regulation B30(2) above. The Active Learning Trust may consider waiving the actuarial reduction where exercising that discretion can be justified in terms of the sound businesses case made for initially paying those benefits or where other exceptional circumstances arise that make payment of those benefits justifiable. Each case will be considered on its individual merits.
B30 A	Whether to grant early release of pension benefits for former employees who are seemed to be "pensioner members with deferred benefits" under ill health retirement provisions of the LGPS.	The Active Learning will not have a policy of granting such payments and any payments of this sort will be only granted on exceptional compassionate grounds or in situations where no costs will be charged to the Trust/Schools within the Trust.
A22(2)	Whether to extend the period for a member to elect to pay contributions to cover unpaid leave of absence, maternity, paternity, or adoption leave beyond 30 days after returning to work or leaving.	The School will allow the extension of the period in cases where the member was not notified of the right to pay contributions.
A83(8)	If a scheme member wishes to transfer pension rights into the LGPS he/she must opt to do so within 12 months of joining the LGPS "or such longer period as the employer may allow".	The Active Learning Trust will only extend the 12 months time limit in exceptional circumstances where negligence on the part of the Trust, its

		schools or partner service providers has contributed significantly to any such delay .
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The following table applies to the discretions which may be exercised on and after 1 April 2014 in relation to active scheme members and members who cease active membership after 31 March 2014

D16(2)(e) and D16(4)(d)	This regulation allows The Active Learning Trust to fund employees additional pension contributions up to a maximum of £6500 (as at 1 April 2014) either in whole or in part.	Additional pension contributions will not normally be funded in whole or in part. Any such payments would only be granted in exceptional cases.
D30(6)	Qualifying scheme members who are over age 55 can, with the consent of The Trust, continue to work for the Trust or in a particular school within the Trust on different terms and conditions and request to draw their pension entitlements (flexible retirement).	The Active Learning Trust will not have a general policy of exercising this discretion but may exercise this discretion where a sound business case can be made for granting flexible retirement with immediate access to all or part of the member's benefits and where the release of pension benefits for such an employee is a major factor in the decision to offer/accept this flexible arrangement. The Active Learning Trust will consider requests on a case by case basis.
D30(8)	Benefits payable pursuant to D30(6) and D30(5) will be adjusted in accordance with guidance issues by the Government Actuary.	The Active Learning Trust] will not have a general policy of waiving, in whole or in part, the actuarial reduction on any benefits paid, but may consider doing so, subject to affordability and mindful of the setting pf precedent, where a sound business case can be made or where other exceptional circumstances arise. Each case will be considered on its individual merits.
Rule of 85 protection	It should be noted that some people may ask for the "rule of 85	Such applications will not normally be approved by

	protections” to be applied when their pension benefits are being paid, rather than phrasing the question as asking for the “waiving of actuarial reduction”.	The Active Learning Trust. Applications may be approved in exceptional circumstances or where there is a sound business case for doing so.
D31	Whether to grant extra annual pension of up to £6500 (as at 1 April 2014) to an active scheme member or within 6 months of leaving to a member whose employment was terminated on the grounds of redundancy or business efficiency.	The Active Learning Trust will not have a general policy to grant this sum but may consider doing so where a sound business case can be made for exercising this discretion or where there are exceptional circumstances (subject to affordability and mindful of the setting of precedent). Each case will be considered on its individual merits.
D9 & 10	Active members are required to make contributions on the basis of pensionable pay bands. This policy is made to aid the administration of the scheme – in particular in setting the contribution rates to be applied to each individual. However, nothing in this policy can override the statutory provisions of the LGPS.	The Active Learning Trust] will allocate employees to the appropriate contribution rate according to pay band which applies at the 1 April] each year and adjust only where there is a contractual change during the year.
D100 (6)	Whether, with the agreement of the Pension Fund administering authority, to permit a scheme member to elect to transfer other pension rights into the LGPS if he/she has not made such an election within 12 months of joining the LGPS.	The Active Learning Trust will only extend the 12 month’s time limit in exceptional circumstances where negligence on the part of the Trust, its schools or partner service providers has contributed significantly to any such delay
D17 & C15(1) (d) & A25(3) & B15(3)	Whether, how much, and in what circumstances to contribute to a shared-cost Additional Voluntary Contribution (SCAVC) arrangement entered into on or after 1 April 2014 and whether, how much, and in what circumstances to continue to contribute to any shared cost Additional Voluntary Contribution (SCAVC) arrangement that the employer had entered into before 1 April 2014.	The Active Learning Trust does not and does not intend to have a general policy on the provision of any arrangement of this sort.
D22(7) & (8)	Whether to extend the 12 month time limit within which a scheme member who has a deferred LGPS benefit in England or Wales following the cessation of	The Active Learning Trust will only extend the 12 months time limit in exceptional circumstances. Each case will be

	<p>employment (or cessation of a concurrent employment) may elect not to have the deferred benefits aggregated with their new LGPS employment (or ongoing concurrent LGPS employment) if the member has not made an election to retain separate benefits within 12 months of commencing membership of the LGPS in the new employment (or within 12 months of ceasing the concurrent membership).</p>	<p>considered on its individual merits.</p>
<p>D21(4)(a)(iv), 21(4)(b)(iv) and 21(5)</p>	<p>Whether or not, when calculating assumed pensionable pay when a member is:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - on reduced contractual pay or no pay on due to sickness or injury, or - absent during ordinary maternity, paternity or adoption leave or during paid additional maternity, paternity or adoption leave, or - absent on reserve forces service leave, or - retires with a Tier 1 or Tier 2 ill health pension, or - dies in service <p>to include in the calculation the amount of any 'regular lump sum payment' received by the member in the 12 months preceding the date the absence began or the ill health retirement or death occurred. A 'regular lump sum payment' is a payment for which the member's employer determines there is a reasonable expectation that such a payment would be paid on a regular basis.</p>	<p>The Active Learning Trust will not have a general policy of exercising this discretion but may do so where a sound business case can be made or there are exceptional circumstances. In any event, The Active Learning Trust will consider requests on a case by case basis and any decisions to exercise this discretion will be fair, equitable and justifiable.</p>
<p>E 5 (1)</p>	<p>Power to increase statutory redundancy payments above statutory weekly pay limit</p>	<p>The Active Learning Trust will not increase statutory redundancy payments above statutory weekly pay limit.</p>
<p>E 6</p>	<p>Decision to award up to 104 weeks compensation instead of compensatory added years</p>	<p>The Active Learning Trust will not award up to 104 weeks compensation instead of compensatory added years.</p>

The following table applies in relation to discretions to be exercised on and after 1 April 2014 in relation to scheme members who ceased active membership before 1 April 1998

F11(2)(c)	Whether to grant applications for the early payment of deferred pension benefits on or after age 50 and before age 65 on compassionate grounds.	Such applications will not normally be approved by The Active Learning Trust unless there are exceptional circumstances where individuals can show that there are significant compassionate grounds.
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APPENDIX 13

EXPENSES POLICY FOR SCHOOL-BASED STAFF

Neale Wade Academy

Adopted by the Local Governing Body on xxxxxx

Note: Where a member of staff transferred to the Trust under TUPE arrangements and their previous terms and conditions provided more generous reimbursement of expenses than in this policy, then the previous arrangements will continue for as long as the TUPE protections apply.

1. General principles

- 1.1 The purpose of the Expenses Policy is to ensure that Trust employees are reimbursed for all necessary expenditure reasonably incurred and approved in the performance of their school duties. Employees should adopt the principles of best value in deciding when and how expenditure is incurred. The Trust relies on employees to act reasonably and apply common sense when incurring expenses, having in mind the potential for reputational damage if claims are seen to be excessive or extraordinary.
- 1.2 The basis of expenses claims is actual expenditure up to the limits specified in this policy. Limits will be reviewed annually. The limits are maximum amounts; they are not allowances. Some of the limits set within this policy follow HMRC guidance. It is important that these are adhered to as the Trust will not be put in the position of providing a taxable benefit for individuals. Nor will the Trust accept liability for any additional tax on behalf of employees.
- 1.3 Expenses can only be claimed for additional costs that staff have incurred over and above those they would have incurred during a normal working day. This policy sets out those expenses which are allowable and those which are not.
- 1.4 The policy relates to expenses incurred by staff at their personal expense and then claimed back. The principles and claim limits also apply to travel and accommodation paid for using the school's normal purchasing arrangements.
- 1.5 All expense claims must be approved by the headteacher or another senior member of staff nominated by the headteacher with the appropriate level of authority who must also be someone other than the claimant. Some types of expense such as air travel and first class rail tickets require approval in advance.
- 1.6 The school wishes to reimburse employees without undue delay and with the minimum administrative burden commensurate with proper accounting and audit requirements. Employees are therefore asked to use the claim form and adhere to the timescales set out in the policy.
- 1.7 Claims for items not allowed under the policy will be rejected. Staff should note that authorising managers have no authority to vary this policy. Failure to comply with the policy may be treated as a disciplinary matter. The school reserves the right to recover any

additional costs that it incurs as the result of an employee's non-compliance with the policy from the employee's salary or otherwise.

2. Guidelines for claiming expenses

- 2.1 Original receipts must accompany all claims. Credit card slips or statements will not be accepted as evidence of business expenditure. A VAT invoice/receipt is required for all expenditure where VAT has been charged. The school cannot reclaim the VAT without a VAT invoice/receipt which meets HMRC requirements.¹
- 2.2 Claims are submitted using the school's expenses claim form which includes space for the authorising manager's signature, usually the [\[Business manager/line manager\]](#). The headteacher's own claims must be authorised by the [\[Chair of Governors/Chair of Finance Committee/Lead Finance Officer\]](#). If the usual authorising manager accompanied the claimant on a journey or attended the same event then the claim must be authorised by an alternative senior manager who is familiar with the employee's work.
- 2.3 Each claim must have a cost centre/account code so that expenditure is charged to the correct budget. . Expenses must not be charged to an account without the budget holder's permission.
- 2.4 For security and to ensure compliance with HMRC rules all expenses are normally reimbursed through the monthly payroll. For this purpose claim forms with the appropriate authorisation must be submitted to the finance team no later than three working days before the payroll variances cut-off date for the month. In preparing claims, employees will need to take account of the availability of their manager so that the claim can be authorised within this timescale. Claims arriving after the deadline will be held and processed with the payroll at the end of the following month.
- 2.5 For large or unexpected amounts and in exceptional circumstances (of which a note should be kept for audit purposes), or where delay would cause financial hardship, the headteacher may authorise immediate payment by cheque or direct bank transfer. Reimbursement will not normally be made from petty cash, given all schools have access to the use of an authorised credit card which can be used by the appropriate person for local purchases.
- 2.6 Copies of the claim form are provided to all schools as part of the Trust's documentation to support this manual.
- 2.7 The school will maintain sufficient records to be able to demonstrate that claimants were entitled to each payment. The school will also undertake routine checks to ensure that the travel expense rules are being followed.

3. Travel - general

¹ A VAT invoice/receipt must include the name and address of the retailer, the retailer's VAT registration number, the date of the purchase, details of what goods or services have been purchased and the VAT inclusive value of those goods or services in sterling. A VAT registration number consists of nine digits and is set out in the following format: 123 4567 89.

- 3.1 Staff should always consider whether travel is essential, particularly for face-to-face meetings.
- 3.2 Unless several people are travelling together, public transport is usually the most economic mode of travel and is the default option for school employees. Taxis should be used only when there is no reasonable alternative and the reason for this summarised on the claim.
- 3.3 Any travel beyond the UK that is paid in part or in full with school funds, needs to be approved in advance by the Trust's Finance Director.
- 3.4 The following travel-related expenses are *not* allowable:
- Travel to/from home to normal place of work (commuting);
 - Car parking at normal place of work, unless making a business journey to/from another location;
 - Car wash/valet;
 - Lunch at normal place of work.
 - Taxi fares without receipts;

4. Rail travel

- 4.1 The Trust's policy is for staff to travel standard class.
- 4.2 First class travel is not permitted. The only exception is where it can be demonstrated that it is the cheapest ticketing option of all available tickets.
- 4.3 Travel should be arranged as economically as possible. Advance and off-peak tickets should be used whenever possible. The availability and validity of cheaper tickets should be taken into account when arranging business meetings.
- 4.4 Eligible staff may claim the cost of a railcard where this is cost-effective over the period of validity of the card.

5. Travel in London

- 5.1 Oyster fares are generally cheaper for travel in London. If the card is registered with Transport for London then a print-out of the statement from the TfL web site with the relevant journey(s) highlighted is acceptable as a receipt for travel.

6. Taxis

- 6.1 Taxi fares may be claimed where:
- there is no suitable public transport, or
 - the journey time by public transport would be excessive, or
 - the employee is required to transport items unsuitable for public transport.
- 6.2 Claims must be supported by a receipt showing the final destination.

7. Air travel

- 7.1 Air travel should be regarded as exceptional and should normally be booked in advance rather than claimed as a personal expense. Economy class air fares may be claimed subject to managerial approval in advance but only where there is a clear practical or economic advantage over other means of transport.
- 7.2 See paragraph 3.3 (above) where any travel beyond the UK is planned.

8. Driving

- 8.1 The Trust does not provide cars for school-based employees. If an employee is required to travel on business the school may contribute to the cost of driving subject to the conditions set out in this section. Mileage rates, where applicable, are subject to change and are published separately.
- 8.2 For journeys where suitable public transport is available no contribution will be made unless it can be demonstrated that the reimbursement of car mileage is a lesser cost to the school than the cost of public transport would have been. In such a case car mileage will be reimbursed (using HMRC rates) to a maximum of what would have been the public transport cost.
- 8.3 For journeys where no suitable public transport is available or where there is a valid business reason for taking a car, mileage at the current HMRC rate may be claimed. A valid business reason could include a significant saving in time, equipment to be carried, or a number of people are travelling together. In all cases the distance claimed should be along the shortest reasonable route.
- 8.4 Travel from home to/from the employee's normal place of work cannot be claimed unless the business destination is further than the normal journey. In this situation only the excess mileage can be claimed.
- 8.5 It is the employee's responsibility to ensure that the car is roadworthy and insured for business use.
- 8.6 Reasonable parking fees, tolls and, where unavoidable, congestion charges will be reimbursed provided a receipt or other evidence of payment is submitted.
- 8.7 The following costs relating to car use are not allowable expenses:
- Car parking at normal place of work;
 - Car wash/valet;
 - Parking penalty charges;
 - Fines

9. Day subsistence expenses

- 9.1 No meals will be reimbursed while working at school, irrespective of whether or not it is the employee's normal place of work or whether or not it has catering facilities.

- 9.2 Lunches away from school cannot be claimed unless it is a working lunch involving people from outside the school. In such cases claims should be limited to light buffet-style refreshments and non-alcoholic beverages. In relation to residential training courses/conferences it is normal practice for meals and light refreshments to be provided for delegates and for the cost to be included in the delegate fee for the event.
- 9.3 Claims will be met for the following items when working away from the school site. These are maximum amounts and not allowances. All claims must be supported by valid VAT invoices/receipts. Different amounts may be claimed when staying overnight – see below.

Item	Conditions	Maximum claim
Breakfast	After start of journey and when required to leave home before 6.00am	Current rates are published separately
Lunch	Working lunch with non-school staff. Away from normal place of work for at least five hours.	
Either: Tea	Away from normal place of work for at least five hours and unable to return home until after 6.00pm.	
Or: Evening meal	When required to work after 8.00pm.	

10. Overnight accommodation

- 10.1 Necessary overnight accommodation should normally be booked in advance through the school's purchasing arrangements rather than through a personal expense claim. However, the same limits apply whether the booking is made centrally or claimed retrospectively. The limits are intended to reflect the cost of a stay in a modest 2 or 3 star business type hotel.

Item	Conditions	Maximum claim
Room rate	Single room with en suite facilities.	Current rates are published separately
Breakfast	When not included in the room rate.	
Lunch	Working lunch with non-school staff.	
Evening meal	May include modest drink. Beer or wine is acceptable, but spirits or champagne are not.	
Incidental expenses	e.g. telephone call home.	

- 10.2 The following hotel costs are not allowable expenses:

- Drinks, except a modest drink with an evening meal
- Bar or minibar bills
- Laundry
- In-room entertainment
- Tips/gratuities
- Gym or spa usage

- 10.3 Where practicable, employees should take advantage of late/early deals or special offers to reduce the cost of overnight stays.
- 10.4 Where demand for accommodation in an area is high for any reason and a room cannot be secured within the maximum limit the employee should seek the agreement of the [\[headteacher or lead finance officer\]](#) before incurring any additional costs. Where a higher rate is agreed the decision and the reasons will be logged.
- 10.5 Where an employee chooses to incur costs over the maximum limit but rooms would have been available within the limit they may elect to pay the difference between the cost of a reasonable available room and the room of their choice themselves.
- 10.6 If an employee chooses to stay in private accommodation with a friend or relative, only the actual costs incurred (if any) will be reimbursed up to the limits for other overnight accommodation. HMRC no longer accepts a flat rate allowance for tax purposes when staying in private accommodation.
- 10.7 All claims must be supported by a valid VAT invoice/receipt.

11. Other expenses

- 11.1 The cost of subscriptions to professional bodies and journals are personal expenses met by the individual employee unless the employee is required by the school or Trust to hold such membership.
- 11.2 Where an employee needs a telephone when working away from the school sites, the school will provide the necessary equipment and meet the cost of all business use. School phones are not intended for personal use.
- 11.3 Protective clothing and uniforms, where required, will be provided by the school.
-

Appendix 14 Schedule of Delegation

Table 5.1(a): Authorisation and Acceptance Thresholds for Works, Supplies and Services - Schools

	Contract Value*					
	less than £10 k	£10k up to £50k (£20k for a primary school)	£50,001 (£20,00 1) up to £173,93 4*	£174k up to £49 9,9 99k *	£500k a n d u p to £ 4. 3 2 2 m *	£4.322m* a n d o v e r
Authorisation	None if bud get ary pro visi on; oth erw ise Pri nci pal	None where Trust has authoris ed by Budget and supporti ng plans; otherwis e Local Governi ng Board	None where Trust has authoris ed by Budget and supporti ng plans; otherwis e Local Governi ng Board	Trust Board or Finance Committee		
Acceptance	Principal or Offi cer s no min ate d in sch em e of del ega tion	Principal or nominat ed Deputy, Asst Head or "bursar/ busines s manage r"	Local Governing Board	Trust Board or Finance Committee		

Table 0-1: Quotation and tendering thresholds for works, supplies and services – Schools and Core Trust Activities

	Contract Value*					
	less than £10k	£10,000 up to £75k	£75,001 up to £172, 514*	£174k up to £4 99 ,9 99 *	£500k and up to £4. 32 2m *	£4.322m* and over
Supplies and Services Contracts	No special rules but reasonable means of selection	Written Quotations - Request two (2) or more written competitive quotations but must have minimum 2 returned. Less than 2 bids returned then repeat competition	Quotation Process Request three (3) or more written competitive quotations but must have minimum 2 returned. Less than 2 bids returned then repeat competition	EU Tendering process subject to EU legislation as required by Trust's Director of Operations/legal advisors		
Works Contracts	No special rules but reasonable means of selection	Written Quotations Request two (2) or more written competitive quotations but must have minimum 2 returned. Less than 2 bids returned then repeat competition	Quotation Process Request three (3) or more written competitive quotations but must have minimum 2 returned. Less than 2 bids returned then repeat competition	Tendering Process Request five (5) or more written competitive quotations but must have minimum 2 returned. Less than 2 bids returned then repeat competition	Tendering process subject to EU legislation as required by Trust's Director of Operations/legal advisors	

*Please check with for the latest threshold set out by EU Regulations as these figures are subject to change

Appendix 15 Month-end and Year-end accounts procedures

The Active Learning Trust											Responsibility:	
											Academy:	ACA
Month-End Accounts - Closing Procedure											Active Learning Trust:	ALT
Month End	Days after Month End										Completed closure period	Date
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10		
Review Annotate Payroll Reports	ACA											
Salary Journal	ACA											
Post Net Pay & Supn.	ACA											
Childcare Voucher Invoice	ACA											
Control A/c's report reviewed			ACA									
Review Unauthorised Orders		ACA										
Review Outstanding Orders		ACA										
Review Outstanding GRN's		ACA										
Ensure all Inv's on system					ACA							
Ensure all Chqs/BACS posted					ACA							
Post NI/PAYE Accrual					ACA							
Post Bank Interest					ACA							
Post all DD/SO's				ACA								
Post Credit Card payments					ACA							
Upload Bank Statement				ACA								
Reconcile Current Bank Account						ACA						
Reconcile PAYS Control A/c			ACA									
Post all Petty Cash transactions								ACA				
Reconcile to Tin								ACA				
Ensure all Sale Invoices raised - General				ACA								
Ensure all Sale Invoices raised - Lettings				ACA								
Post all Expenses Claims								ACA				
Review Expenses Control A/c									ACA			
Review Aged Crs Report			ACA									
Review Aged Drs Report			ACA									
Chase Outstanding SINV's			ACA									
Prepayments			ACA									
Accruals			ACA									
Review Trips for balances												
Recharges to Departments		ACA										
Review Expense Nominals for FA's				ALT								
Set up FA Ledger A/c's or update FA Register if applicable				ALT								
Check Reimbs from School Fund									ACA			
Post Payments for School Fund									ACA			
Close PSF Month for School Level Entries										ACA		
VAT Download report and calculate exemption deminimis											ALT	
Prepare VAT Return											ALT	
Reconcile VAT Control A/c											ALT	
Close VAT Period											ALT	
Update rolling VAT deminimis											ALT	
Submit VAT return to HMRC											ALT	As per HMRC timetable
Review Spend										ACA	ALT	
Run Management Accounts Report										ACA	ALT	
Review Variances and document explanations										ACA		
Prepare Supporting Schedules/ comments											ACA	
Variance Reports to Governors											ACA	
Run Management Accounts Report (termly)											ACA	
Run Mgmt Accs Report with revised forecast (termly) to HT											ACA	
Run Management Accounts Report to Governors											ACA	
Run Balance Sheet Report											ACA/ALT	
											ACA	
Prepare Reserves Note with supporting schedules										ACA		
Update Cashflow Report for Actuals										ACA		
Review Cashflow											ALT	
Management Accounts to Governors											ACA	As per LGB cycle
Management Accounts to ALT Finance Cttee											ALT	As per Cttee cycle
Close Period - Move Period Security to Level 9											ALT	
Full Audit in PS Financials											ALT	

The Active Learning Trust													Responsibility:		
													Academy:	ACA	
Year-End Accounts - Closing Procedure													Active Learning Trust:	ALT	
	31st August completed items	Key dates in September for completion					Key dates in October for completion					November - Final accounts submission to auditors - Notes	Final adjustments & closure as at 30th Nov.		
		10th	15th	20th	25th	30th	10th	15th	20th	25th	30th				
Review Annotate Payroll Reports	ACA														
Salary Journal		ACA													
Post Net Pay & Supn.		ACA													
Childcare Voucher Invoice		ACA													
Control A/c's report reviewed			ACA	ALT											
Review Unauthorised Orders			ACA												
Review Outstanding Orders			ACA												
Review Outstanding GRN's			ACA												
Ensure all Inv's on system		ACA	ACA												
Ensure all Chqs/BACS posted		ACA	ACA												
Post NI/PAYE Accrual		ACA	ACA												
Post Bank Interest		ACA	ACA												
Post all DD/SO's	ACA														
Post Credit Card payments	ACA														
Upload Bank Statement		ACA													
Reconcile Current Bank Account		ACA													
Reconcile PAYS Control A/c		ACA													
Post all Petty Cash transactions	ACA														
Reconcile to Tin	ACA														
Ensure all Sale Invoices raised - General	ACA														
Ensure all Sale Invoices raised - Lettings	ACA														
Post all Expenses Claims	ACA														
Review Expenses Control A/c		ACA													
Review Aged Crs Report				ACA											
Review Aged Drs Report				ACA											
Chase Outstanding SINV's				ACA											
Prepayments				ACA											
Accruals				ACA											
Review Trips for balances															
Recharges to Departments		ACA													
Review Expense Nominals for FA's					ACA										
Set up FA Ledger A/c's or update FA Register if applicable					ACA										
Check Reimbs from School Fund		ACA													
Post Payments for School Fund		ACA													
Close PSF Month for School Level Entries		ALT													
VAT Download report and calculate exemption deminimis												ALT			
Prepare VAT Return												ALT			
Reconcile VAT Control A/c												ALT			
Close VAT Period												ALT			
Update rolling VAT deminimis												ALT			
Submit VAT return to HMRC												ALT			
Review Spend	ACA	ACA	ACA	ACA	ACA	ACA	ACA	ACA	ACA	ACA	ALT	ALT	ALT	ALT	
Run Management Accounts Report			ACA	ACA	ACA	ACA	ACA	ACA	ACA	ACA	ALT				
Review Variances and document explanations	ACA	ACA	ACA	ACA	ACA	ACA	ACA	ACA	ACA	ACA	ALT				
Prepare Supporting Schedules/ comments	ACA	ACA	ACA	ACA	ACA	ACA	ACA	ACA	ACA	ACA	ALT				
Variance Reports to Governors	ACA					ACA									
Run Management Accounts Report (termly)	ACA										ALT				
Run Mgmt Accs Report with revised forecast (termly) to HT	ACA										ALT				
Run Management Accounts Report to Governors	ACA										ALT				
Run Trial Balance	ACA														
Run Balance Sheet Report	ACA										ALT	ALT	ALT	ALT	
Prepare Reserves Note with supporting schedules											ALT	ALT	ALT	ALT	
Update Cashflow Report for Actuals	ACA											ALT			
Review Cashflow	ACA														
Management Accounts to Governors												ALT			
Management Accounts to ALT Finance Cttee												ALT	ALT	ALT	
Close Period - Move Period Security to Level 9			ALT	ALT	ALT	ALT	ALT	ALT	ALT	ALT	ALT	ALT	ALT	ALT	
Full Audit in PS Financials												ALT	ALT	ALT	

Appendix 16

Staff Division of Duties Schedule

Insert Name of School

Staff Names						
<i>Tick against appropriate actions</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Purchase order raising						
Purchase order authorisation						
Check goods against invoices received						
Processing order goods received notes						
Processing order invoices to PSF						
Processing invoices received against official order						
Processing non-order invoices to PSF						
Bank payment authorisation						
Print cheques						
Cheque signatories						
General school income collection						
Catering income collection						
Lettings income collection						
Prepare income for banking & complete paying in slip						
Deliver monies to bank						
Authorise paying in slip received by bank						
Process receipts to PSF						
Process paying in slips to PSF						
Bank reconciliation						
Petty cash payments						
Process petty cash payments via EPM						
Completing monthly absence						
Authorising monthly absence						
Completing travel claim payments						
Authorising travel claim payments						
Checking additional hours claimed						
Authorising additional hours claimed						
Checking supply claims						
Authorising supply claims						

Specimen Signatures

Name	Signature
