

Appendix I of Financial Regulations Manual
Trustee & Governor Expenses Policy



Appendix I

Trustee & Governor Expenses Policy

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1	October 2023	Kim Bowgin	New policy - approved by Board of Directors

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1) Purpose of the Policy

The Trust recognises that although in the first instance, Trustees and Governors should not purchase items from their own money and request reimbursement at a later stage, they may incur expenses related to their work for the Trust for which they should be reimbursed. This policy sets out the Trust policy for reimbursing work-related expenses.

The Trust believes that paying expenses, in specific categories as set out below, is important in ensuring equality of opportunity to serve as board, sub-committees or local academy board members for all members of the community and so is an appropriate use of funds. The specific items allowable reflect this objective.

2) Consultation process

The policy was developed in consultation with the FAR Committee.

3) Relationship to other policies

Financial Regulations Manual
Staff Handbook
Appendix C - Purchasing Policy

4) Reimbursement of Expenses

Trustees, governors and committee members have the right to claim reimbursement or an allowance for reasonable expenses resulting from carrying out their role and responsibilities as a trustee, governor or committee member.

In our unwavering commitment to fostering inclusivity and ensuring equal access to the vital role of governance within our multi-academy trust, we have established this expenses policy. We firmly believe that expenses claims serve as a mechanism to promote diversity and accessibility. Therefore, our primary objective is to reimburse pre-agreed and legitimate expenses, enabling all governors to fulfill their duties and overcome any potential barriers that may hinder engagement or prevent equitable access. While it's crucial to recognise that our Trust faces financial challenges, including deficit budgets, we deeply appreciate the voluntary nature of governors' work and their dedication to enhancing our schools. Consequently, we encourage fair and necessary claims whilst also placing a strong emphasis on prudence and responsible stewardship of our resources. The fair application of this policy ensures that all stakeholders collaborate to protect and maintain our trust's financial health, ensuring that the majority of our resources are directed towards the well-being and education of our children.

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The following are examples:

- Travel costs (car or public transport) to board, or committee meetings, workshops, training courses or any journey linked to The Trust's business. Where applicable, the Chair of the Board will take appropriate measures to ensure that the director's requirement to fulfill their responsibilities does not result in excessive travel, or travel is not a barrier to fulfilling duties.
- Meals
- Accommodation
- Parking
- Care costs
- Telephone rental
- Internet /Broadband use
- Travel

1. Travel

- 1.1 It is the responsibility of each trustee, governor or committee member to ensure that each claim is accurate. Trustees, governors and committee members should keep a record of meetings attended and the mileage/travel costs per meeting.
- 1.2 The Trust has a planned meeting structure, as can be seen in the Trust Strategic Calendar. Any other additional meetings or journeys will need to be authorised by the CEO or CFO. For any mileage outside of the Trust planned meetings, it will need to be evidenced that this was to conduct Trust business, added value to the Trust and was a necessary journey.
- 1.3 Business mileage will be paid at rates in line with the current HMRC mileage rates which are:
 - All cars 45p a mile, plus an additional 5p per mile if 2 or more colleagues travel together or if they are transporting large items of equipment
 - Motorcycles and scooters 24p a mile
- 1.4 Trustees, governors and committee members should try to share cars wherever it is practical and only one claim should be submitted.
- 1.5 Trustees, governors and committee members using their vehicle for business purposes should ensure that the vehicle is adequately insured for the purpose and have a valid MOT. The standard rate per mile is set having taken into account any additional insurance costs, the Trust will not cover any additional insurance costs.
- 1.6 Toll and clean air charges are claimable where it is unavoidable and to conduct Trust/school business.
- 1.7 The Trust does not accept responsibility for any fine incurred (whether parking or any other driving offence) whilst they are travelling on the Trust's business.

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1.8 The Trust is not responsible for any damage to the car of any trustee, governor or committee member, nor any injury to the driver or fellow passenger, nor any third party claims whilst the car is being used on The Trust's business.

1.9 Public transport will be reimbursed as follows:

- Trains – at cost
- London underground or similar - at cost
- Coach and Bus - at cost
- Taxi - at cost

Train travel should be by standard class. Staff and volunteers are encouraged to seek such discounts as may from time to time be available. There may be occasions where it is appropriate and/or cost efficient to travel by first or premium class but this should only be in exceptional circumstances and with the approval of the CFO.

When using the London Underground a receipt is always available from the desk or machine, which can be retained. Alternatively, use can be made of an Oyster card.

Taxi journeys should be avoided if possible as they can be expensive. They may be used for example to make a short journey from a train station to a meeting. A receipt must always be produced. Taxi drivers are required by law to provide receipts upon request from the passenger. There may be exceptional circumstances when travel by taxi is the only option; in such cases approval must be sought prior to the journey.

2. Accommodation and Meals

2.1 Where a trustee, governor or committee member's travel on Trust/school business and an overnight stay is necessary, an overnight subsistence allowance may be claimed. The Trust will reimburse the reasonable costs of accommodation, food and drink when supported by receipts. This should be discussed and agreed in advance with the CFO or CEO, before booking accommodation, as this will be reviewed on a case-by-case basis.

Situations where accommodation may be needed, may include (but not limited to):

- When the meeting and returning travel time last more than 12 hours.
- When the meeting or course lasts more than one day, and it costs less to stay overnight than return home or the accommodation cost is not covered as part of the course.
- The cost of overnight accommodation must be reasonable (typically no more £75 per night, £120 for London). If it is not possible to source a hotel at these nightly rates, and it is necessary to pay a higher rate, then prior written approval should be obtained from the CFO, by the CEO for the CFO, or by the Chair of the Board of Directors for the CEO.

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- 2.2 The Trust will only bear the cost of accommodation required for business purposes and will not meet the costs of any extensions to a stay for personal reasons or for accommodation provided to a spouse or other family members.
- 2.3 Accommodation and travel arrangements should, wherever possible, be pre-booked via the school Finance Lead or the central team when attending events for or on behalf of the Trust. This can save the Trust significant amounts of money through its ability to negotiate lower rates and save in the administration of expenses claims.
- 2.4 Reasonable meal expenses may be claimed if a receipt is produced. The repayment will be the actual sum noted on the receipt and costs should be kept to a minimum. The cost of an evening meal (typically £20) and breakfast (typically £10) can be claimed when staying overnight. Purchase of alcohol cannot be reimbursed. Receipts should not include personal items nor alcohol (or any products containing alcohol).
- 2.5 Members of staff should note that items of a personal nature, such as alcoholic drinks, mini-bars, video hire, etc. will not be reimbursed by the academy and these should be deducted from any bills submitted for reimbursement.

3. Parking

- 3.1 Reimbursement of parking fees may be claimed. A receipt or the ticket itself should be provided to substantiate the claim.

4. Business Entertaining

- 4.1 All business entertaining activities must be approved in advance by the CEO or CFO, and be evidenced by an outcome that delivers value to the Trust.
- 4.2 The purchase of alcohol or alcohol related items for hospitality or celebration is not permitted.

5. Meetings/Refreshments

- 5.1 Where lunches or refreshments are provided for meetings or in-house training the standard practice shall be for this to be ordered and paid for through the normal Trust ordering and payment processes. These must be fully justifiable and have an evidenced outcome which adds value to the Trust.
- 5.2 In the rare event that a trustee, governor or committee member has directly incurred these costs an expenses claim may be made. All recipients must be identified by name in the claim.

6. Carer's Allowances

- 6.1 Payments can be made in relation to arranging childcare or professional care for elderly, sick or dependent relatives. These payments are treated as remuneration

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and taxed accordingly. Prior written approval must be secured in all instances.

6.2 Childcare is reimbursed in accordance with the following requirements:

- Payment is made to someone other than a close relative.
- Payments for the care of under 8s is restricted to payments to registered childminders and other statutory approved childcare providers.
- Payments are restricted to the care of children up to their 14th birthday who normally reside with the trustee, governor or committee member.
- No payments are made in respect of the care of children of compulsory school age during school hours except where the child is absent from school due to illness.

6.3 The reimbursement of expenditure on professional care for an elderly, sick or disabled dependant relative normally residing with the trustee, governor or committee member and requiring constant care, to enable the trustee, governor or committee member to undertake approved duties, is subject to payments being restricted to agencies or persons qualified to provide care. The payment can only be made to someone who is other than a close relative. Reimbursement of expenditure for the care of an elderly, sick or disabled dependent relative will be restricted to care which would otherwise be carried out by the trustee, governor or committee member.

6.4 Payments made on the basis of reimbursement of actual expenditure incurred up to a maximum rate of £20.00 per hour for each hour of absence from home and are subject to a maximum of £500 in any one year.

6.5 Some local authorities can provide a care assistant free of charge for persons over 16. If a carer from a private agency is required then up to £25 per hour can be claimed. Reimbursement of actual costs incurred will be made where a trustee, governor or committee member requires the services of a carer to help them carry out their duties. Receipts must be provided by the carer. A simple signed and dated letter with details of dates, times and amounts paid will suffice. The personal details of the carer (name, address and telephone number) may also be required for the verification of claims.

7. Validation and Certification of Expenses

7.1 Where required, receipts and invoices must be provided to support claims.

7.2 All claims for expenses must be completed on the appropriate form and signed by the trustee, governor or committee member and will then be approved by the CFO.

7.3 In exceptional circumstances where the limits set out within this paper may not be sufficient, the trustee, governor or committee member should bring this to the

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attention of the CFO as soon as possible, with a justification for the additional expense.

- 7.4 Allowances must not be claimed where the trustee, governor or committee member is entitled to receive payment from another body. Where a trustee, governor or committee member attends an event at an organisation from which it is possible to claim reimbursement for travel and subsistence, the claim should be submitted to that organisation rather than The Trust.

8. Payment of Claims

- 8.1 If trustees, governors and committee members intend to make an expenses claim, they must have their prior approval and claims must be made regularly (monthly, or at least quarterly). Claims for expenses older than 12 months will not be paid.
- 8.2 Payments are made via BACS and will be made direct to the trustee, governor or committee member's specified bank account.
- 8.3 It is The Trust's preference to pay carers direct and, to facilitate this, appropriate payment details must be submitted to the CFO.

9. General

- 9.1 The Trust retains the right to publish expenses paid to trustees, governors and committee members.
- 9.2 If the CFO (or the CEO in the case of the CFO's expenses) has any concerns regarding the validity of any expense claim made by any trustee, governor or committee member they will refer the matter back to the trustee, governor or committee member and notify the Chair of the Board or Chair of the relevant LGC as appropriate (in the case of any concerns regarding claims by the Chair of the Board then to the Chair of the FAR committee). If the matter is unresolved or where there is ongoing cause for concern then the matter will be dealt with as a potential breach of the code of conduct and investigated in accordance with its procedures.

5) Monitoring & Review:

The Trust will review this policy every year and assess its implementation and effectiveness.

Board and/or Committee members will oversee the internal audit arrangements; providing the appropriate level of support and challenge to ensure that the agreed practice and procedure has been implemented through:

- Scrutiny of all reporting information requested and received.
- Identification of any associated risks, trends, underlying or contributory factors.
- Assessing any opportunities for change to enhance existing practice and achievement of the Trust's vision.
- Making decisions in respect of any proactive and/or mitigating action to be taken.

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- Evaluating the impact and effectiveness of policy and practice in line with the agreed policy review schedule or as necessary.