

17. Orders for Work, Goods and Services (Non-employee)

Preamble

Orders create contracts and commit the Governing Body to expenditure from the school's budget share. It is vital that the ordering process fully protects the interests of the Governing Body and the local authority and that the ability to sign or authorise orders is strictly controlled at the school. This applies to electronically prepared and/or transmitted orders as well as those in paper form. Governors and staff need to be aware of potential conflicts of interests and to declare all such interests as contractors or suppliers are selected.

Regulations

- 17.1. Within the local authority's requirements for value for money, taking into account quality and convenience for the school as well as price, schools may purchase goods and services from whatever source they see fit. Schools are, however, encouraged to participate in the local authority's central purchasing and contract arrangements and Headteachers should seek the advice of the local authority's Procurement Team before arranging a contract for goods or services.
- 17.2. No governor or member of the school staff may authorise the purchase of goods or services from themselves, their relatives or any organisation in which they have an interest. Neither may they authorise for payment vouchers relating to expenditure incurred or services supplied by them, their relatives or an organisation in which they have an interest. A register in which all such interests shall be recorded must be maintained at the school. An interest is defined as one in which the individual stands to gain direct or indirect benefit or reward from a transaction made with the school, e.g. ownership or interest in local businesses or where members of their family are either working at or attending the school.
- 17.3. If sources of supply outside the local authority's central purchasing arrangements are selected, schools must comply with the procedure for contracts and tenders as laid down in the Standing Orders which contained in the Financial Manual of Guidance documentation.
- 17.4. All orders placed must be covered by the relevant financial budget provision.
- 17.5. The Headteacher, within powers delegated by the Governing Body, shall be responsible for all orders issued from the school for goods, work to be done or services rendered.

- 17.6. A list of employees empowered to authorise orders on behalf of the Governing Body shall be prepared annually and personally certified by the Headteacher, who shall also authorise any amendments to the list. This list must be approved by the Governing Body and, as far as possible, ensure a proper division of duties. Certain categories of employees may from time to time be excluded from this provision with the agreement in writing of the Chief Internal Auditor.
- 17.7. Each Headteacher shall control the use of the electronic order book within his/her school.
- 17.8. Where a paper order is produced from the electronic order book it shall be signed by an authorised employee in his/her own name.
- 17.9. All paper orders shall be generated from software approved by the FBP CEF. It is normal practice for electronic orders to be produced. Where it is necessary to place telephone or verbal orders these must be confirmed immediately on an official order, which should be clearly endorsed as confirmatory. Orders are not required for small cash purchases properly paid out of petty cash accounts, or for rents, business rates payments are managed through the accounting system's Invoicing Plan function while metered supplies of utility services (gas, electricity, water and telephone), should be processed as service orders (again within the accounting system) or by either direct debit or standing orders, where appropriate.
- 17.10. Electronically transmitted orders shall be authorised by an employee, approved for the purpose by the Headteacher, in such a way that the employee can be uniquely identified.
- 17.11. Wherever possible, official orders should be processed through the accounting system to ensure that the expenditure is committed. Where other ordering methods are undertaken, these should be limited to exception cases. The details should be entered into the accounting system within a limited period to ensure that the expenditure is recorded and that the budget information reports are accurate.