

# St Anne's School



## Financial Controls Policy

**Approved by Board of Management: 13<sup>th</sup> June 2024**

**Next Review date: June 2025**

**Signed: \_\_\_\_\_  
(Chairperson of the Board of Management)**

# St Anne's School Financial Controls Policy

## Introduction

Under the Education Act 1998 and in accordance with the Governance Manual for Boards of Management 2023-2027 It is a matter for the Board of Management for ensuring that the financial governance responsibilities of the Board are met. The Board must satisfy itself that good financial controls are in place, to this end this document sets out to provide clarity as to the current financial controls in place surrounding the school's accounts and financial processes.

## Rationale

Section 15 of the Education Act, 1998 requires the board of management, in carrying out its functions, to have regard to the efficient use of resources and, in particular, to the efficient use of State funds. Boards therefore have a statutory duty to ensure that appropriate systems and procedures are in place to ensure school financial resources including grants are managed appropriately and efficiently and in a manner that provides for appropriate accountability to the relevant parties. All expenditure by or on behalf of the board of management must be approved by the Board – *the board delegates responsibility for operation within approved budget to the principal. Once the budget is completed and approved all expenditure within those totals can be exercised by the principal – anything irregular/large/non budget/non specific grant funded would need to be considered at board level*

The Board of Management is responsible for taking all reasonable steps to reduce the risk of error, financial irregularity and fraud. Where an alleged irregularity is identified or suspected it must be reported promptly to the Department and to the school Patron. In relation to any matter of alleged financial irregularity the Department's standard policy is to ensure that an investigation is undertaken and that the matter is referred to An Garda Síochána where appropriate.

## Scope

The Policy will lay out expectations for school management, the Board of Management and the Patron with regard to the following areas;

1. Procurement
2. Purchasing procedures
3. All streams of income (grant and other sources)

4. Banking procedures and payments
5. Budgeting
6. Petty cash procedures
7. Fixed assets
8. Financial reporting
9. Governance and management of fundraising activities.

Both KARE and the Board of Management of St Anne's acknowledge that the key aspects of this policy are drawn from the Governance Manual for Primary Schools, relevant guidance documentation from the Financial Support Services Unit (FSSU) and from Department of Education circulars specific to financial controls. Therefore this document may be superseded at any point by changes in arrangements, information notices or circulars issued by the Department of Education and/or FSSU. The school will comply with any such notifications.

## 1. Procurement

The Schools Procurement Unit (SPU) is the central support resource for providing guidance to all primary schools on procurement of goods and services. The SPU issued the following Procurement Threshold in January 2020, and this is followed by the school.

When procuring good and services the school aligns with the School Procurement Unit thresholds and arrangements as published on [www.spu.ie](http://www.spu.ie).

Quotes received are maintained on the School Drive in the procurement folder within the Financial Transactions folder for the relevant year

## 2. Purchasing procedures

Following on from procurement procedures, the following steps will apply when placing purchase orders.

- a. All orders must be approved by the Principal, or in their absence, by the Deputy Principal. A Purchase Order process is in place for such expenditure. Example attached as Appendix A
- b. Regular, necessary and routine expenses, such as yearly art supply orders or orders of heating oil, may be made by the Principal without Board of Management approval, however, discretionary/non routine equipment or works expenses in excess of €2,000 will require approval from the Board of Management prior to any purchase.

- c. All direct debits and standing orders must be approved by the Board of Management prior to being set up.

### 3. All Streams of Income

The school receives funding from a number of sources, including grants, requisite cost income, voluntary contributions and fundraising. All monies received by the school shall be lodged in the school bank account(s) which shall be held by the school and registered in the name of the school.

Contributions collected by teachers for school tours, and then lodged to the school bank account, will be recorded via the Aladdin System and School Drive along with receipts from the school tour and related expenses.

Some specific grants received from the Department of education are restricted in their usage and only permitted to be spent on certain categories of expense. Considering this and also the various other ringfenced income and expenditure through the school account, the school operates a Specific Grant spreadsheet on the office Drive.

This spreadsheet tracks the income and associated expenditure for restricted grants such as School Book grants, Covid PPE grants, Temporary Accommodation grants etc as well as ringfenced or unrestricted funds such as school fundraising, Parents Association and school tours.

The Specific Grant spreadsheet allows the Treasurer and the Principal to determine quickly what amount should not be considered as part of funding for general running expenses for the school.

### 4. Banking Procedures and Payments

The school bank account(s) shall be used solely for the purposes of the school's banking requirements. The school operates two bank accounts which are named and used as follows.

*St Anne's No.1 account* – This is the main school account in which most school funds flow and where all school income is deposited.

*St Anne's No.2 School Meals Account* – It is a requirement by the DEASP that a designated account is in place for School Meals. All income from DEASP and payments relating to the school meals programme are processed through this account.

The Board of Management shall, elect a treasurer from amongst its members. The treasurer shall keep the school accounts with significant assistance from the Principal and school secretary.

Cheque and online payments must be authorised by two of three nominated signatories of the Board, one being the chairperson and the other the treasurer in the first instance. However, the chairperson may nominate a Board member, in this case the Principal, to act as signatory in his or her absence. Where possible, two signatories should be from different categories of Board members.

Online payments are used in the school in all possible opportunities. As per Governance Manual guidelines, the school does not use its debit card and operates a credit card for the sole purpose of payments which are not possible through the payment procedures above. A standalone Credit Card Policy is in effect for the use of the Credit Card. – **Appendix 2**

Payments are made twice monthly by bank transfer where feasible (Appendix 1)

## 5. Budgeting

At the commencement of the financial year, the Board will frame and adopt a budget for the year. This budget will include provision for all relevant items of expenditure such as insurance, purchase of classroom requisites, maintenance costs etc. The financial year for schools is from 1 September to 31 August.

The Board's budgeted expenditure will not exceed its expected income. In instances where large expenditure items which have been financed over a number of years, drawing on the built up reserve will be recognised as a budget income for the year of the expenditure.

The budget will be synced with the FSSU monthly reporting tool so that percentages of budget expenditure can be presented to Board members as part of the Treasurer's report.

The school utilise the standard FSSU template for its annual budget

## 6. Petty Cash Procedures

Petty cash is used in the school in instances where online payments are either not possible or where they are not appropriate. Individual payments of more than €50 are not approved and a monthly maximum of €200 is in place for petty cash in line with FSSU recommendations.

Petty Cash Vouchers (FSSU Template) are used to record and approve transactions. Each voucher must be signed by the principal prior to any funds being released.

Petty Cash records are held in the school office, along with vouchers and receipts. The running totals are checked with the physical cash in the petty cash box on a monthly basis. The treasurer should view all petty cash claims on a monthly basis, and these should be included in the Finance Statement to each BOM meeting.

Categories of expense for Petty Cash are also recorded for later dissemination into the final year FSSU accounts.

## 7. Fixed Assets

St Anne's maintains an asset register, which contains details of significant equipment and capital items specifically the school bus. The register will be reviewed yearly to include all items acquired by the school which is intended for use on a continuing basis for more than one year.

A physical inventory count of school equipment is also carried out once a year independently from the register.

A fixed asset register will help the school to manage the effective utilisation of its assets and to plan for their replacement. However, it will also:

- form an important part of the school's procedures for ensuring that staff take responsibility for the safe custody of assets
- enable school management to undertake independent checks on the safe custody of assets, as a deterrent against theft or misuse
- help the external auditors to draw conclusions on the financial statements and the school's financial systems
- support insurance claims in the event of fire, theft or other losses.

## 8. Financial Reporting

Financial reporting is considered in two separate contexts, the first being the report to the Board of Management from the Treasurer at Board of Management meetings, and the second being the external reporting requirements such as annual submissions to the FSSU and the school Patron. To satisfy this requirement, an external Accountant is appointed by the BOM on an annual basis.

As per FSSU guidelines, the school uses the monthly reporting template provided which generates the required reports for presentation to Board Members at meetings.

These reports include

- Monthly Bank Reconciliations
- YTD Income and Expenditure
- Income and Expenditure as % of Budget allowed

Monthly Bank Reconciliations are signed for each month following discussion at Board of Management Meetings.

At the end of the financial year (31<sup>st</sup> August), and following reconciliation at the September Board meeting. The FSSU reporting tools are submitted to an external accountant as per FSSU requirements. The external accountant is required to create and then submit the yearly Financial Returns to the Department of Education before the end of February each year. The Chairperson and Treasurer will sign the final accounts prior to submission to the FSSU by the external accountant. A copy of the complete yearly accounts will also be provided to the school Patron once approved and signed off by the Board of Management.

As a registered charity the Board of Management fulfils all statutory and legal obligations as required by the Charity Regulator.

## 9. Governance and Management of Fundraising Activities

The Board of Management at St Anne's School holds the ultimate responsibility and accountability for all fundraising activities conducted under its name. To ensure proper management and oversight, a fundraising policy has been developed by the Board of St Anne's School – refer to **Appendix 3** outlining the control arrangements established for all fundraising efforts, including those involving the public. This policy will be reviewed annually and updated as necessary.

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This policy was agreed by the St Anne's Board of Management on the 13<sup>th</sup> June 2024.

This policy will be reviewed annually.

Chairperson \_\_\_\_\_

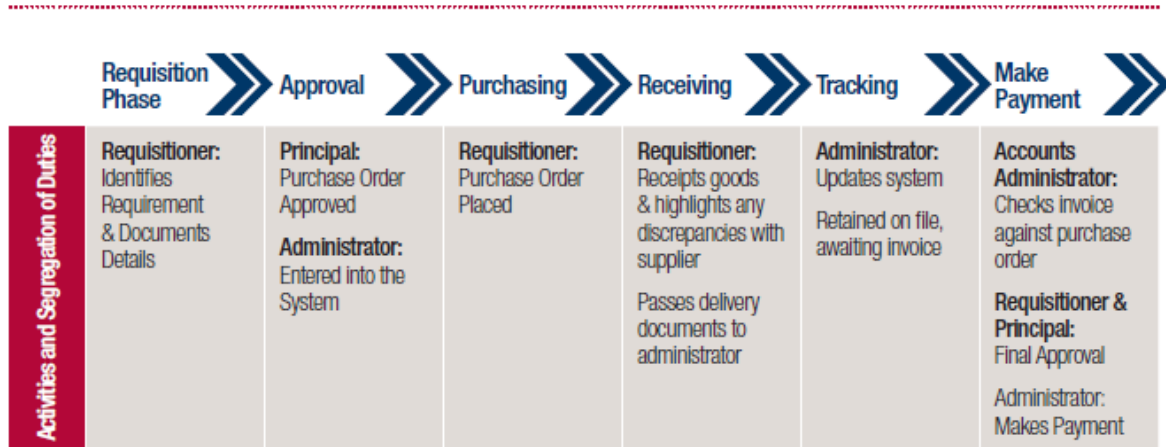
Date \_\_\_\_\_



# Appendix 1 – Purchasing Procedures

This process has been developed in alignment with the FSSU Guidelines for schools.

**Fig 6. Typical Requisition to Pay Process**



St Anne’s School operates a manual system for purchases, as such in alignment with FSSU requirements PO books are printed on pre-numbered books with the school details and logo. The books are in triplicate form. The order books should be kept at all times in the school administrator’s office.

## Phases and stages

### 1. Requisition Phase

The person requesting the goods or services will complete the PO requisition in full in the school administrator’s office, sign, and give it to the accounts administrator together with any supporting quotations/price documentation. Details should include:

- Description of goods or service
- Quantity
- Date required
- Cost centre/code
- Suggested suppliers and pricing
- Approval

### 2. Approval

The PO requisition and any supporting documentation will then be given to the Principal/Deputy Principal in absence of principal for approval and when the order is certified by the Principal/DP it is returned to the school administrator. The school administrator will record the order in full on the system and (where appropriate) remove the first copy of the order from the book together with any supporting documentation and give it to the person who made the original request.

### 3. Purchasing

The order is then placed by the person making the request - The PO requisition number MUST be referred to the supplier when the order is placed and the supplier informed

that all correspondence, delivery documentation and invoices will only be processed if they comply with this request (terms and conditions).

#### *4. Receiving*

On receipt of the goods/services the person who placed the order must check the goods/service for quality, quantity and pricing against the order, The supplier must be notified immediately of any discrepancies on any of these issues and a goods received note must be attached to the delivery documentation giving the details. (GRN sample below)

#### *5. Tracking*

The delivery docket, GRN together with the order and supporting documentation is passed immediately to the Accounts Administrator so that they can update the accounts system for the receipt of the goods. The Accounts Administrator retains these on file pending the receipt of the invoice.

#### *6. Payment*

- When the invoice is received the accounts administrator will check it to the purchase order, GRN and delivery docket as to quantity and the condition of goods delivered and evidence that the service has been supplied to a satisfactory standard. The quantities, pricing and the calculations on the invoice should be checked in full. Check that the supplier has quoted the order number on the delivery documentation and the invoice.
- Where discrepancies arise between the order/delivery and the invoice these should be brought to the attention of both the person who ordered the goods/services, and the principal. The supplier should be notified in writing. Invoices which do not quote a purchase order number should be returned to the supplier unpaid. The invoice will be entered on the system and held for payment approval.
- The checked invoice is then given to the person who ordered the goods for final approval and when they have signed it the invoice is returned to the Accounts Administrator. The invoice is then given to the principal for final approval.
- The approved invoices are then given to the accounts administrator who will release the invoice for payment. The invoice, delivery documentation and order must then be filed in a systematic way, for example, A to Z, monthly, by accounting period, and school year.

# 1A - PO FORM SAMPLE



## PURCHASE ORDER

For Goods and Services

**Shipping Info:**

St Anne's School 19277B  
 Ballymany Cross,  
 The Curragh,  
 Co. Kildare R56 VH67

Numbers pre filled in

Requestor Name:		Budget Cat:		Date:	
Requestor Contact No:		Budget Code:		Date Required	

Products or Services				
Item Code	Description	Quantity	Unit Price	Amount
Comments or Special Instructions		Total (Incl VAT & Shipping)		
School's Authorised Signatory:				
_____		_____		
Principal/Deputy Principal		Date		
<i>This PO is not valid without an authorised signature.</i>				

# 1B - GRN SAMPLE

St Anne's School <u>Goods Received Note</u>					
Purchase Order No: _____					
Supplier: _____			Date Received: _____		
Requestor: _____					
Full Order Delivery		Part Order Delivery		Delivery Note Attached	
<b>Comments:</b>					
<p>The Undersigned acknowledges receipt of the goods/services which are described on the attached purchase order. The undersigned also acknowledges that these goods have been inspected and found to be in conformance with the purchase order specifications.</p>					
Signed: _____			Date: _____		

<u>Office Use</u>			
<i>GRN to be stapled to PO and other paperwork and submitted to principal monthly for authorisation</i>			
Budget Cat:		Budget Code:	
Authorised for payment: _____ <div style="text-align: center;">(Principal Signature)</div>			
Date: _____			

## APPENDIX 2 – Credit Card Procedures

### St Anne's School 19277B

### Credit Card Procedures

Approved by Board of Management: **13<sup>th</sup> June 2024**

Next policy review date: **June 2026 or as required.**

#### 1. Policy objective

The board of management is required to layout a policy that sets out the limit, terms and conditions and procedures governing the issue, use, administration and retention of the school credit card.

#### 2. Scope

This policy statement applies to all personnel authorised to use a credit card at **St Anne's School** who come under the control of the board of management.

#### 3. Approval required for the use of a school card credit

- a) Approval has been obtained from the board of management for the use of a credit card by the school. This approval was included in the minutes of the board meeting **11/5/23**.
- b) Approval has been obtained from Kare for these procedures and record of this is kept on file.

#### 4. Responsibility:

- a) The Principal is the only person that should have a school credit card.
- b) The Principal is responsible for the safe custody of the card and the security of the card information.
- c) The Principal is responsible at all times for the proper use of the credit card in line with the policy.
- d) The Principal is responsible for managing the required security controls as set out by the bank and must keep secure any applications or security keys issued for credit card use.
- e) A written record of PIN numbers must not be kept and PIN numbers should be changed regularly (e.g. every six months).
- f) If a credit card is lost, the cardholder must:

- I. Contact **Bank of Ireland** immediately. A 24-hour service is provided for this purpose – telephone number **1800 946 764**, quoting card number
- II. Inform the Garda Síochana if loss is a result of theft and obtain a crime reference number

5. Credit card limit:

The credit card limit is set at **€5,000**. This limit should not be exceeded.

6. Terms and conditions of use

- a) The card must only be used for bona fide school purposes where the expenditure requirement cannot be met through the school's existing financial systems and services.
- b) A credit card payment is subject to the same rules as a cheque payment or electronic payment, This is achieved by implementing the following process;
- c) Once the monthly credit card statement is received, the supporting invoices/receipts should be attached to the statement. The **principal** and the **treasurer** of the board of management should sign the monthly credit card statement before payment is approved.
- d) The credit card statement must be supported with proper receipts for all expenditure, copies of credit card receipts alone are insufficient.
- e) The credit card must not be used to withdraw cash or personal use.
- f) Contactless payments should not be made with a credit card.
- g) The credit card should not be used where other forms of payments are accepted i.e. cheque, EFT.

If from time to time any expense issue arises which is not covered by these guidelines, the Principal should bring the matter to the attention of the Chairperson who will decide what response is appropriate.

7. Contacts:

For questions about this policy, contact the board of management in writing;

**FAO Chairperson BOM**  
**St Anne's School**  
**Ballymany Cross**  
**The Curragh,**  
**County Kildare**

# APPENDIX 3 – St Anne’s School Fundraising Policy

## *Fundraising on Behalf of St Anne’s School – General Principles*

### **1. Introduction**

The Board of Management at St Anne’s School holds the ultimate responsibility and accountability for all fundraising activities conducted under its name. To ensure proper management and oversight, the following control arrangements are established for all fundraising efforts, including those involving the public. This policy will be reviewed annually and updated as necessary.

### **2. Board of Management Responsibilities**

The Board of Management must ensure that:

- **Appropriate Controls:** Financial, accounting, and other relevant controls are in place.
- **Legal Compliance:** All legal obligations are fulfilled.
- **Record Maintenance:** Appropriate records of all fundraising activities are maintained.
- **Charities Regulator Compliance:** The school adheres to the Charities Regulator guidance on fundraising.
- **Health and Safety:** Health and safety concerns and child protection issues related to each activity are considered and provided for.

### **3. Financial Considerations**

- **No Cost Shortfall:** Involvement in any fundraising activity must not result in any cost shortfall being covered by school funds, either temporarily or permanently.
- **No Use of School Funds:** School funds must not be used for making payments or accepting receipts related to fundraising activities, regardless of the organiser.

### **4. Financial Records and Reporting**

- **Separate Records:** Separate financial records must be maintained to manage and control funds from authorised activities. Templates are provided in this document.
- **Annual Reporting:** A report detailing income and expenditure for each activity must be presented to the Board within three months of the year-end and included in the school’s financial statements for that year.
- **Funds Management:** When fundraising proceeds are transferred to the school, they should be lodged in the main school bank account and spent according to financial guidelines.

### **5. Authorisation and Documentation**

- **Board Agreement:** The Board must agree on and document the manner in which funds will be raised and their intended purpose.

- Activity Authorisation: Each fundraising activity must be authorised by a separate board minute, specifying the purpose and nature of the activity.
- Principal's Authority: The principal is authorised to discharge the Board's responsibilities for small-scale fundraising activities (e.g., non-uniform days) where the expected proceeds will not exceed €500. The same principles for reporting apply to these activities.

## **6. Donation and Equipment Management**

- Asset Recording: Equipment donated to the school by outside bodies must be recorded in the assets register.
- Acceptance of Subventions: The Board may need to arrange for the acceptance of subventions or donations for specific objectives other than the general direction and government of the school. Before accepting such subventions, the Board should ensure the donor is reputable and of good standing.

## **7. Subcommittee Compliance**

Any subcommittee of the school community conducting fundraising activities in the school's name must adhere to the same procedures established for school accounts and be supervised similarly.

## **8. Arrangements for Fundraising**

- Supervision: The collection of money must always be supervised by a staff member, with at least two people involved in collecting and counting money.
- Prompt Lodging: All money should be handed over to the school office as soon as possible for lodging in the school bank account.
- Receipt Issuance: The fundraising committee should receive a receipt from the office for all money handed over which shall also be signed by the committee member.
- Financial Reporting: A brief financial report on the activity should be submitted to the Board at the end of each school year, with a final report upon the activity's completion.

## **9. Board Responsibilities**

The Board must maintain a register of approved fundraising activities, including:


- Activity/Fund Name: The name of the activity or fund.
- Approval Date: The date of approval.
- Responsible Personnel: Names of the personnel responsible for the fundraising activity.
- Authorised Signatories: Names of authorised signatories and/or online payment approvers.
- Other Relevant Matters: Any other pertinent information deemed necessary by the Principal or Board.



## **10. Single Approval and Annual Renewal:**

- For annual fundraisers that are recurring and have been previously approved, a single initial approval may be granted by the Board of Management.
- This approval will remain in effect and be subject to an annual review and renewal process.
- The same principles for financial reporting and compliance as detailed in the main fundraising policy will apply to annual fundraisers.
- A follow-up report must be submitted after each event to document the amount raised, expenses, and any relevant observations or recommendations.
- The initial approval and subsequent renewals should be documented in the school's fundraising register, noting the annual review dates and any conditions attached to the approval.

### 3A - Fundraising Event Application

 <b>St Anne's School Fundraising Event Application</b> To be submitted to the Board of Management/Principal for approval	
Event Details	
Event Name:	
Date:	
Details – Proposed Purpose (provide quotes for specific items)	
Organising Committee	
Committee Name	
Committee Members	
Key Contact Info	Email:  Ph:
Fundraising Goals	
Expected Amount	
Expected Expenses (eg venue)	
Method of Collection (eg ticket sales, sponsor)	
Secure Storage of Monies	
Health and Safety Measures Planned	
Declaration	
I/We I have read and agree to comply with St Anne's School Fundraising Policy including the keeping of appropriate records and submission of a final report after event.	<b>Insert X</b>
Any monies raised will be transferred promptly to the school main account promptly	
Signature 1:	
Signature 2:	
Board/Principal Use Only	
	<b>Approved</b>
	<b>Not Approved</b>
Comments	
Date	
Signature	

### 3B - Fundraising Event Annual Renewal



## St Anne's School Fundraising Event Renewal

To be submitted to the Board of Management/Principal for approval

Event Details	
Event Name:	
Date:	
Details – Have there been any changes to the event details since last year?	
Organising Committee (if different from previous year)	
Committee Name	
Committee Members	
Key Contact Info	Email:  Ph:
Fundraising Goals	
Expected Amount	
Expected Expenses (eg venue)	
Declaration	
I/We I have read and agree to comply with St Anne's School Fundraising Policy including the keeping of appropriate records and submission of a final report after event.	Insert X
Any monies raised will be transferred promptly to the school main account promptly	
Signature 1:	
Signature 2:	
Board/Principal Use Only	
	Approved
	Not Approved
Comments	
Date	
Signature	

### 3C - Fundraising Follow Up Summary

	
<h2>St Anne's School Fundraising Follow Up Report</h2> <p>To be submitted within three months of event completion/end of school year</p>	
<b>Event Summary:</b>	
Event Name:	
Date:	
Description	
<b>Financial Summary</b>	
Committee Name	
Committee Members	
Key Contact Info	Email:  Ph:
<b>Fundraising Goals</b>	
Total Raised	
Total Spent	
Net Proceeds	
Amount Lodged:	
Date Funds Lodged:	
If the amount spent is less than the donation/allocation, please provide explanation and intended disposition of balance	
<b>Declaration</b>	
Income and expenditure <u>Report including</u> all receipts has been completed and included in this Report	<b>Insert X</b>
Signature 1:	
Signature 2:	
<b>Board/Principal Use Only</b>	
Comments	
Review Date	
Signature	

