

SCHOOLS' FINANCE TEAM SERVICE LEVEL AGREEMENT USING SHROPSHIRE COUNCIL ACCOUNTING SYSTEM
YEAR – 2024-25
SUMMARY OF MAIN ASPECTS OF FINANCE PROVISION FOR SCHOOLS

Financial Advice & Guidance	Bronze	Silver	Gold
Access to a named Finance Officer as well as back-up as needed from a dedicated Team of Finance Officers	✓	✓	✓
Access to telephone and email helpline (unlimited)	✓	✓	✓
Remote access support		✓	✓
Advice & guidance on your current financial position for up to 3 school cost centres *excluding nursery, extended school or SEN Hub. See appendix 1b for additional cost centre support.		✓	✓
On site/remote visits to discuss financial position with Head teacher/Bursar		✓3 visits	✓3 visits
Communication with finance governors during finance committee meeting as directed by head. Can be substituted with second termly monitoring meeting			✓ Max 1.5 hr per finance committee meeting
Additional termly financial health check and alert service			✓
Ensure that accounting entries are within Consistent Financial Reporting regulations via exception reporting		✓	✓
Finance updates available via Shropshire Learning Gateway and Weekly Email to schools	✓	✓	✓
Financial Inputting (subject to appropriate authorisation)	Bronze	Silver	Gold
Input initial school's cost centre budget data into accounting system (including initial department budgets) *	✓ on request (provided in excel in CFR format rounded to nearest ten and with Position Numbers for each staffing budget)	✓	✓
Annually set up suite of monitoring reports		✓	✓

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Financial Inputting (subject to appropriate authorisation) (continued)	Bronze	Silver	Gold
Input journal transfers for Internal Recharges to other schools and Shropshire Council establishments linked to accounting system	✓ on request (provided in standard recharge format) limited	✓ on request unlimited	✓ on request unlimited
Input in year Budget Variations		✓ on request unlimited	✓ proactively and on request unlimited
Support and input corrections and journal transfers within own schools' accounts		✓ on request unlimited	✓ proactively and on request unlimited
Proactively consider and notify school of suggested journals and budget variations to ensure financial reporting is consistent with schools reporting requirements and planning			✓
Year-end accounting adjustments (accruals & prepayments) Including dealing with other grant funded activities which need to be accounted for separately to the school revenue budget such as extended school provision	✓ on request without support	✓ on request	✓ proactive and on request
Dealing with internal Investment of planned surplus schools' balances. Please send your Letter of Intention to Invest from the following 1st April by 30th September	✓	✓	✓
Financial Reporting	Bronze	Silver	Gold
Provision of Staffing Budget Planner – prepared and integrated with HR system offering live data plus ability to create scenarios and costings. The Staffing Budget Planner and guidance notes may be emailed to those schools requesting it.		✓ Available once annually on request with user training cost of £85	✓ Available once annually on request with free user training
Termly monitoring/projection reports produced for up to 3 school cost centres*		✓ Autumn & Spring	✓ Autumn & Spring
Prepare and email reports in advance of meetings (subject to sufficient time being given)		✓ on request	✓ on request
Preparation and presentation of required Finance Committee reports			✓

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Financial Reporting (continued)	Bronze	Silver	Gold
Monitor salaries and highlight variations to budget		✓	✓
Provide relevant data to assist School with completion of SFVS dashboard	Can be purchased at hourly rate	Can be purchased at hourly rate	✓
Access to Pie Charts with your school's projected current year expenditure and income enabling comparison		Can be purchased as add on - £45 per termly projection	✓ On request
Access to multiple year Variance Report – compares previous year outturn against projected current year and future years with % and £ variations with tolerance indicators to support senior management decisions and planning		Can be purchased as add-on	✓ Available on request
Provision of costings, scenarios or detailed analysis reports from accounting system		✓ costings only	✓
Preparation of budget plan for up to 3 school cost centres*		✓	✓
Prepare future year budget forecast for school cost centre		'Add-on' service available	✓ unlimited scenarios
Year-end financial statement		✓ without comments	✓ with comments
Submission of Consistent Financial Reporting data to Department for Education	✓	✓	✓
Provision of Monthly Finance Review Guidance on the Learning Gateway	✓	✓	✓
Termly review/balance of up to 3 school cost centres*, for example School, Sports Grant and Meals. If separate monitoring, projection and/or budgeting is required for additional cost centres such as a Nursery, Extended School or SEN Hub please see separate 'Finance Nursery and Extra CC Service Level Agreement.' If other budgeting and monitoring support is required separate from the school, please request a bespoke costing from your schools' finance officer.		✓ balance only	✓ review and balance

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Financial Reporting (continued)	Bronze	Silver	Gold
Download Benchmarking information and general interpretation of charts arising from Consistent Financial Reporting return to DFE		Pay as you go if required	✓on request
Finance Training	Bronze	Silver	Gold
Finance administration training for new head teachers/school business managers/administrators to cover the schools finance team SLA and budget monitoring and finance administration overview. This is usually a half-day session.		✓on request subject to bespoke charge	✓on request subject to bespoke charge with 10% discount
Finance management training presentation for governors, deputy head teacher or aspiring leader.		✓on request subject to bespoke charge	✓on request subject to bespoke charge with 10% discount

We can also offer a bespoke package if the standard packages above do not meet your requirements. The price will depend upon the services required.

Optional Extras are available as follows; (prices quoted are as purchased with initial SLA, extras purchased in year will be subject to capacity and may be subject to an additional charge)

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Finance Review & Reporting on ERP Training for existing administrators/school business managers/head teachers (available at all levels)	£85 for 2- hour online session
Nursery budgeting, monitoring and forecasting – see separate Service Level Agreement - appendix 1b (available at Gold & Silver service levels)	Less than 20 places – £440 per year From 20 to 40 places - £780 per year Over 40 places - £1,410 per year
Extra cost centres budgeting, monitoring and forecasting – see separate Service Level Agreement - appendix 1b (available at Gold & Silver service levels)	£780 per year per additional cost centre
Monthly budget & transaction download report – This report will be downloaded and emailed to your school within 6 working days of the period end. This supports schools to regularly monitor budget expenditure and maintain records and controls (available at all levels)	£300 per year
Silver School Add-on Only: Basic 3-year planning with current staffing structure only. Included in Gold SLA, available on request. Bronze price on request.	£220 - One per financial year in the Autumn term
Termly Pie Charts (included at Gold, available at Silver as add-on)	£130 per year
Other bespoke finance training, reporting, support or visit	£45 per hour or £230 per day

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Other: e.g. Pie charts enabling comparison, variance reporting, tailored financial analysis reports, multi-year budget forecast, ratios, monitoring additional cost centres	Based on £45 per hour
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**excluding nursery, extended school or SEN Hub. See appendix 1b for additional cost centre support and charge above.*

Add-on services purchased within the financial year will be provided subject to staff capacity and may incur an additional charge of 10% of the prices quoted within the SLA pro-forma issued before the start of the year.

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The following may be used as a working document if the school requires.

SUMMER TERM	Level of Service
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Timescale	Process	Responsibility	School Finance Officer Action	Bronze	Silver	Gold	Time frame to be completed within:	Annotations
April	Arrange termly meeting between Head teacher and Schools' Finance Officer	Head teacher/ Schools' Finance Officer	Ensure suitable meeting date arranged		✓	✓	SFO to contact School to arrange date.	Date:
April	Arrange termly Finance Committee/second monitoring meeting	Head teacher and Finance Governors	Ensure suitable meeting date arranged and attend if required			✓	School to arrange with SFO	Date:
April	Assist with closedown.	School (Head/Admin/ Bursar as appropriate)	Assistance with the calculation and processing of requested accruals		✓	✓	Closedown dates given in Spring term	
April	Dealing with other grant funded activities which may be accounted for separately to the school revenue budget: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Extended school provision • Other grant Income (such as Sports Grant) 	School (Head/Admin/ Bursar as appropriate)	Following school instruction on journal transfers and closedown procedures to ensure nil balances at the end of the year		✓ ✓	✓ ✓	Closedown dates given in Spring term	
April - May	Considering the needs of the School Development Plan, finalise the current and subsequent (where appropriate) year's budget plans	Head teacher	None				10 working days from request, providing all information is given to SFO	

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Timescale	Process	Responsibility	School Finance Officer Action	Bronze	Silver	Gold	Time frame to be completed within:	Annotations								
April –June	Meeting between Head teacher and appropriate financial support to discuss: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Actual Year End Carry forward Finalising of the Budget Plan Future NOR Sign off Year end statement 	Head teacher	Attendance at a meeting with the Head teacher/ Bursar lasting up to half a day Discuss Future Year Funding and implications		✓	✓	To be arranged between SFO and school.	<table border="1"> <tr> <td>Year</td> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>NOR</td> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> </tr> </table>	Year				NOR			
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May - June	Advise Schools' Finance Officer of the following, to assist with budget setting and monitoring: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Staffing changes and number of supply days required. Budget variations One-off changes Future year changes 	School (Head/Admin/ Bursar as appropriate)	None		✓	✓	Email to be sent to Head 7 working days post meeting with post meeting details and highlights of any follow ups outstanding.	Note: This relates to financial information only. Human Resources/Payroll/ERP separately require the standard official staffing forms, duly authorised and input to ERP, to implement employee contract changes.								
May - June	Finance committee meeting to present financial information	Head teacher and Governing Body	Attendance at a Finance Governors' Committee meetings.			✓	To be arranged between SFO and School									

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Timescale	Process	Responsibility	School Finance Officer Action	Bronze	Silver	Gold	Time frame to be completed within:	Annotations
May – June	Provide copy of Finance Committee minutes to Schools' Finance Officer and Finance Governors	Head teacher/ Chair of Finance	Ensure copy of minutes received to confirm action point requirements			✓	Please provide 7 working days post meeting	Date received:
May - June	Prepare full budget plan to be presented to the full Governing Body	Head teacher	Ensure all revisions are completed and send budget plan		✓	✓	School to inform SFO of FC date	
May - July	Produce future year estimated expenditure and income budgets	Head teacher/ Schools' Formula Funding Officer/Schools' Finance Officer	Produce future year estimated expenditure commitment statements, consistent with future year budget share estimates provided			✓	If required, 10 working days post request.	.
June	Full Governing Body meeting at which the relevant Committee should report and secure full approval of the budget plan	Head teacher and Governing Body	None				N/A	Return to the Local Authority an authorised and signed Budget plan by 30th June. Date received:
July	Monitoring check of current year budget	Head teacher	Check current expenditure to budget plan and investigate significant variations			✓	Before the end of term. Head to contact SFO if requirement is sooner	

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AUTUMN TERM**Level of Service**

Timescale	Process	Responsibility	School Finance Officer Action	Bronze	Silver	Gold	Time frame to completed within:	Annotations
September	Arrange termly meeting between Head teacher and Schools' Finance Officer	Head teacher/ Schools' Finance Officer	Ensure suitable meeting date arranged		✓	✓	SFO to contact school to arrange date.	Date:
September	Arrange termly Finance Committee/second monitoring meeting	Head teacher and Finance Governors	Ensure suitable meeting date arranged and attend if required			✓	School to arrange with SFO.	Date:
October - November	Advise Schools' Finance Officer of the following, to assist with budget setting and monitoring: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staffing changes and number of supply days required • Budget variations • One-off changes • Multi-year changes 	School (Head/Admin/ Bursar as appropriate)	None		✓	✓	During Monitoring meeting.	Note: This relates to financial information only. Human Resources/Payroll/ERP separately require the standard official staffing forms, duly authorised and input to ERP, to implement employee contract changes.
October/ November	Monitoring process based on actual year to date expenditure / income, and on information received by the school (via telephone, e-mail and / or meeting)	Schools' Finance Officer/ Bursar/ Administrator as appropriate	Prepare financial and monitoring information for meeting		✓	✓	To be emailed to Head prior to meeting if requested.	

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Timescale	Process	Responsibility	School Finance Officer Action	Bronze	Silver	Gold	Time frame to be completed within:	Annotations
October/ November	Meeting between Head teacher and appropriate financial support to discuss: - <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Current financial position • Budget variations required • Future NOR 	Head teacher	Attendance at a meeting with the Head teacher/ Bursar lasting up to half a day Completion of budget variations as agreed by the Head/Governors Produce/ update the Monitoring Statement as per the decisions agreed at the above meeting. Discuss future year funding information provided by the Schools' Formula Funding Officer		✓ ✓ ✓	✓ ✓ ✓	Email to be sent to Head 7 working days post meeting with post meeting details and highlighting any follow ups outstanding.	Budget variations should be authorised by the appropriate person or committee within agreed limits Only 1 statement will be produced within the SLA. Further statements can be produced at an additional charge.
October/ November	Finance committee meeting to present financial information	Head teacher and Governing Body	Attendance at a Finance Committee meeting. Discuss future year funding information provided by the Schools' Formula Funding Officer			✓ ✓	School to arrange date with SFO	

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September - December	Produce future year estimated expenditure and income budgets	Head teacher/ Schools' Formula Funding Officer/Schools' Finance Officer	Produce future year estimated expenditure commitment statements, consistent with future year budget share estimates provided			✓	If required, 10 working days post request. Providing all information has been provided to SFO	
November/ December	Monitoring check of current year budget	Head teacher	Check current expenditure to budget plan and investigate significant variation			✓	To be sent to School prior to end of term.	
November/ December	Benchmarking of financial information	Head teacher and Governing Body	Download standard charts from DFE website and identify significant variations, ready for presentation at Finance Governors' meetings – on request only			✓	Providing benchmarking information is Available.	

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SPRING TERM**Level of Service**

Timescale	Process	Responsibility	School Finance Officer Action	Bronze	Silver	Gold	Time frame to be completed within:	Annotations
January	Arrange termly meeting between Head teacher and Schools' Finance Officer	Head teacher/ Schools' Finance Officer	Ensure suitable meeting date arranged		✓	✓	SFO to contact school to arrange date.	Date:
January	Arrange termly Finance Committee/second monitoring meeting	Head teacher and Finance Governors	Ensure suitable meeting date arranged and attend if required			✓	School to arrange date with SFO	Date:
January/ February	Prepare salary forecasts for next financial year (if not completed in December)	Schools' Finance Officer	Upload HR system salary information into latest Staffing Budget Planner, for discussion at monitoring/budget meetings, and ready for input to commitment statements. Project staffing forward based on January payroll		✓	✓	In time for termly monitoring meeting.	

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January/ February	Monitoring process based on actual year to date expenditure / income, and on information received by the school (via telephone, e-mail and / or meeting)	Schools' Finance Officer/ Bursar/ Administrator as appropriate	Prepare financial and monitoring information for meeting		✓	✓	To be sent to school prior to meeting if requested.	
January-March	Advise Schools' Finance Officer of the following, to assist with budget setting and monitoring: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Staffing changes and number of supply days required Budget variations One-off changes Multi-year changes 	School (Head/Admin/ Bursar as appropriate)	None		✓	✓	During Monitoring meeting	Note: This relates to financial information only. Human Resources/Payroll/ERP separately require the standard official staffing forms, duly authorised and input to ERP, to implement employee contract changes.
January - March	Prepare an Indicative Commitment Statement for the next financial year based upon information provided by the Head teacher at meeting		Prepare a Commitment Statement and update whenever necessary.		✓	✓	SFO to send 7 working days post meeting providing all information is available.	

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January – March	Meeting between Head teacher and appropriate financial support to discuss: - <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Current financial position • Future implications • Budget variations • New year budget setting 	Head teacher	Attendance at a meeting with the Head teacher/ Bursar lasting up to half a day Completion of Budget variations as agreed by the Head/Governors Produce/ Update the Monitoring Statement as per the decisions agreed at the above meeting		✓ ✓ ✓	✓ ✓ ✓	Email to be sent to Head 7 working days post meeting with post meeting details and highlighting any follow ups outstanding.	Budget variations should be authorised by the appropriate person or committee within agreed limits Only 1 statement will be produced within the SLA. Further statements can be produced at an additional charge
Jan - March	Finance committee meeting to present financial information	Head teacher and Governing Body	Attendance at a Finance Committee meeting Discuss multi-year funding information provided by the Schools' Formula Funding Officer Benchmarking financial information if not reported during the autumn term on request			✓ ✓ ✓	School to arrange date with SFO	

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February	Finalised budget income notification from the Local Authority	Schools' Formula Funding Officer	None	✓	✓	✓	N/A	
March	Monitoring check of current year budget	Head teacher	Check current expenditure to budget plan and investigate significant variations			✓	Email to be sent to school before end of term.	