

FOBS Financial Control and Expense Policy

Introduction

This policy outlines the principles guiding financial control and expense management within the **Friends of Bletchingley Village Primary School (FOBS)**. It applies to all members of the association and is endorsed by the committee. The policy will be reviewed annually to ensure it remains aligned with the organisation's operational needs and volunteer activities.

Scope of applicability

This policy applies to all trustees and committee members responsible for managing the association and to all members entitled to reimbursement for legitimate, out-of-pocket expenses incurred while supporting the charity's objectives.

Bank account management

- The bank mandate will require two signatures from a pool of at least three designated signatories.
- All Trustees will have access to the bank account and retain their passwords for online banking. All Trustees will have signatory rights on the bank account.
- The Treasurer is responsible for operating the bank account.
- All online banking payments must be authorised according to the agreed procedures

Use of bank cards

- Bank cards are the property of the PTA and must be returned if the cardholder steps down from the committee
- Only authorised signatories may hold and use bank cards
- Receipts for purchases must be submitted to the Treasurer for reconciliation with bank statements
- All spending using bank cards must be carried out in line with this policy

Online banking protocols

- Online banking credentials must be stored securely and known only to the individual to whom they are issued
- For single-authorisation accounts, all payments require prior committee approval. This can be achieved via the formal committee WhatsApp group.
- For dual-authorisation accounts, one signatory initiates the payment and another must authorise it; committee approval is still required
- Former signatories must be removed promptly and their online access revoked
- Payments to signatories on the account, authorised in line with this policy, must not be instigated by the signatory the payment is for (i.e. if a transfer is needed to be made to the Treasurer, the Chairperson should instigate the transfer).

Handling Cash

- For all events there must be a minimum of two people counting cash.

- Money can only be taken off site by a Trustee unless in exceptional circumstances. If exceptional circumstances apply, this must be approved by at least one of the Trustees and recorded in the financial records.
- Money from events must be banked within 7 days of the event. If the Treasurer is unable to conduct this, they must make arrangements for another Trustee member to deposit the monies within this timeframe.
- The Treasurer should bank funds gross, this means without deduction for costs or expenses.
- Cash deposits must be deposited directly into the FOBS bank account only.
- When going to the bank with funds amounting over £1,000, a minimum of two Trustees must be in attendance. A signed record must be kept of the persons in attendance and the confirmed amount it relates to.
- Cash floats for events will be signed out to a pre-agreed designated person who will be responsible for the float and then required to be signed back in.
- Cash in a private residence of a Trustee must be stored safely and securely and locked with either code or key access.
- No more than the sum insured through the insurance policy is allowed to be held in cash. It is the responsibility of the Treasurer to keep themselves and the committee up to date with the current amount that is insured under the active insurance policy at any given time.

Expense reimbursement

Trustees may claim reasonable expenses incurred while fulfilling their duties. All expense claims must:

- Be pre-approved by two committee members, neither of whom may be the claimant
- Include receipts for expenses
- Be submitted within 30 days of the expense date
- Follow this list of allowable expenses:
 - Ink cartridges, printer paper and other reasonable stationery used for activities relating solely to FOBS.
 - Travel expenses whereby the Trustee is going out of their way for the purpose of FOBS activities. Mileage shall be calculated in accordance with HMRC.

Member purchases

Members may be reimbursed for pre-approved purchases made on behalf of the association. All purchases must:

- Be authorised by the Treasurer or Chair
- Be backed by receipts
- Be claimed within 30 days of the purchase date
- Have committee approval prior to purchase. For purchases up to the value of £20, the prior approval can be an agreement in principle (e.g. there is agreement that items should be purchased, but the precise items have not been specified, such as stationery or decorations).
- Purchases made without prior approval are not guaranteed reimbursement.

School donations

- All donations to the school shall be approved by the Trustees at FOBS Committee meetings.

- At any FOBS Committee meeting which agrees expenditure, members will be reminded of the Conflicts of Interests policy and asked to declare any such conflicts before decisions are reached.
- Should there be a 50:50 split decision at the Committee meeting, the decision will need to be deferred until the next Committee meeting, after additional research and discussion has taken place.
- Where this is not possible, in extraordinary circumstances, agreement can be obtained via a WhatsApp poll only when all Trustees are in agreement.
- Once FOBS agrees to a purchase and informs the school, the Trustees should request proof, in the form of an invoice or a signed receipt, as confirmation of purchase.
- On receipt of this confirmation the Trustees will release the money to Blethingley Village Primary School / Tandridge Learning Trust (as applicable).

Accounts and Recording Transactions

- The Treasurer shall keep the accounts up to date and produce accurate reports for the Trustees. All transactions will be recorded, no matter how small.
- The Treasurer must produce an income and expenditure statement and bank reconciliation for all Committee meetings so the Trustees can review and discuss. A second Trustee should review the statement and reconciliation to identify any discrepancies.
- The Treasurer will prepare a set of annual accounts, and make arrangements for a regular simple review of the accounts at the end of the financial year. This will be a financially competent person or local accountant, who is not on a Trustee or related to a Trustee.
- Donations to the school must be accurately recorded. If money is donated for a specific purpose, it must be spent on that purpose e.g. if £1,000 has been donated for picnic benches, it must be spent on picnic benches.

Waived expenses and Gifts in Kind

Members who choose not to claim expenses or purchase reimbursements create accounting challenges. Unclaimed items cannot be recorded as charitable donations or used to reflect the charity's true operating costs. These waived amounts are classified as 'Gifts in Kind' and are not eligible for Gift Aid claims.

Policy review

This policy will be reviewed annually by the FOBS committee to ensure it continues to support both the organisation and its volunteers effectively.

Policy Approval

Approved and adopted by the committee of FOBS in November 2025.

Next review in November 2026.