

# Schools Financial Services

## Service Level Agreement

# Service Level Agreement 1 April 2018 – 31 March 2019

## 1. PURPOSE OF THE SERVICE LEVEL AGREEMENT (SLA)

The purpose of this SLA is to define the rights and responsibilities of the School/Academy (referred to hereafter as the School) and Schools Financial Services (SFS) in respect of packages and services offered.

The SLA sets performance standards, who will provide it and how it will be monitored. It also details any responsibilities that must be met by the School to enable the service to be provided.

## 2. CONTACT

Schools Financial Services  
Room 3.23  
Sessions House  
Maidstone  
ME14 1XQ

Tel: 03000 415 415

Fax: 03000 420 345

[schoolsfinancialservices@kent.gov.uk](mailto:schoolsfinancialservices@kent.gov.uk)

## 3. DURATION OF AGREEMENT

All packages including the Core Financial Support Package (CFSP) require four months' written notice to terminate.

## 4. HOW THE SCHOOL WILL BE CHARGED

Initially, for all services except the CFSP, the School will be charged at Short term support hourly rate whilst the assessment of your financial support is completed.

The charges will be in accordance with the level of service purchased after the initial assessment at the start of a contract. All charges will be processed via EduKent.

Charges for the CFSP will be profiled across 12 months. Budget Setting will be charged annually in June/July. The Full Bursarial Package, the Returns and Monitoring Package and Short Term Support will be charged two months in arrears.

The School will receive their EduKent statement at the beginning of each month which will detail our services and respective charges. Please contact us if you have any queries in relation to these charges.

## 5. DETAILS OF SERVICE TO BE PROVIDED

### **Schools Financial Services Commitment Statement**

SFS are committed to the continuous improvement of our service. We strive to offer the highest standard of provision possible, providing you with a service that offers good value and high impact. In all our dealings with the School, SFS will abide by the following principles:

## Schools Financial Services – Service Level Agreement (August 2018)

**Responsive:** We deliver our services when and where schools and academies need them.

**Value for money:** Our service is competitively priced and offers true value in terms of costs and quality.

**Flexible:** We deliver services that can adjust to meet the changing needs of schools and academies.

**Empathetic:** We always understand the values and unique needs of each school and academy.

**Reliable:** Schools and academies can always have confidence in our services.

**Quality assured:** All our actions are underpinned by robust, transparent quality assurance systems.

SFS provides a comprehensive financial accounting and budgetary support service. The service is designed to meet your needs as flexibly as possible, allowing your School to choose the range of support that is appropriate to your requirements. Advice and support is provided through personal visits, off site preparation, telephone/email support and a remote access facility.

### **Core Financial Support Package:**

- Telephone/e-mail finance support line – including Remote Access
- Budget Planning Software (BPS)
- Budget Planning Software Guidance
- Budget Planning Software Training
- Asset Register Excel Spreadsheet
- System Support
- Financial Advice
- Procedure Notes and Finance Updates
- Step by Step Healthcheck
- SFS Guidebook for Budget Setting and Budget Monitoring
- Guidance for KELS funding templates including special school monthly reconciliation
- Closedown Pack
- Reduced charge on adhoc visits
- Reduced charge on 1:1 training
- Reduced charge on remote training and remote Adhoc work
- Standalone Excel salary calculator to help you plan and budget for staff expenditure
- Standalone Excel budget monitoring spreadsheet to help you monitor your budget

*N.B: A 10% reduction will be applied where a school does not use either BPS or a supported finance package.*

Our helpline is open from 9:00am to 4:30pm Monday to Friday except between Christmas and New Year. We are also closed for three days throughout the year for staff training. These dates will be published on our pages on Kelsi.

**THE EDUCATION  
PEOPLE**

## 6. SFS RESPONSIBILITIES

Prior to any contract the Service Delivery Manager will either carry out an introductory visit (non-chargeable) or telephone call to the headteacher to assess the requirements of the School and ensure the conditions set out below in Section 7 are understood.

Where remedial work is required in order to meet the requirements of the Scheme for Financing Schools and Financial Controls, a charge will be made in addition to the level of service purchased.

Where additional work is required to amend/correct adjustments made by the School to the financial software, a charge will be made in addition to the level of service purchased.

SFS staff will work in line with the School's Finance Policy.

We may have to change the SFS member of staff providing the service in the School at short notice to accommodate our workload planning.

Arrangements for visits will be made in advance and you will be notified of any sickness and cover (where applicable) as soon as possible.

A minimum of two hours will be charged for each visit.

SFS may carry out quality control procedures, e.g. questionnaires or school visits from time to time in order to monitor performance. Consistency and work carried out will be overseen by Senior Officers.

Any technical issues or unforeseen circumstances encountered during a visit resulting in staff being unable to complete work will be referred to the Service Delivery Manager and may incur a charge.

There may be occasions when chargeable work is carried out remotely on- or off-site. In these instances the School will be informed of the number of hours charged by email from the SFS Officer involved.

SFS staff adhere to KCC Policy ensuring any school data will be appropriately secured and protected when moved between premises and information systems; confidentiality protocols and work to the Scheme for Financing Schools and KCC Finance Controls.

## 7. SCHOOL RESPONSIBILITIES

- The headteacher and governors remain accountable/responsible for their budgets and any financial decisions made by the School
- The Finance and Pay Policies are made available to SFS staff
- The headteacher is available during budget setting and monitoring visits
- Information required to set and monitor budgets needs to be available during visits e.g. staff salary information, pupil information including numbers and special educational needs

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- Budget setting and monitoring is based upon information provided by the School/headteacher
- It is the responsibility of the School to filter/print all emails SFS staff need prior to each visit
- School staff are responsible for obtaining quotations for goods where relevant
- School staff are required to be cheque signatories/authorisers for BACs payments
- It is the responsibility of the School to carry out appropriate IR35/self-employment checks
- Payroll reports must be checked and signed in full by the headteacher or designated signatory
- Bank reconciliations, VAT returns and Corporate Card statements must be checked and signed by a designated school signatory as per KCC Financial Controls
- Access to a reasonable working space/area is made available from 8:30am to 5:00pm
- SFS staff will not be expected to work outside of normal school office hours
- SFS staff may be requested to report to governor meetings within the contract time.
- Please contact the Service Delivery Manager to make other arrangements if the governors meeting is outside 8:30am to 5:00pm
- A minimum of 24 hours notification of change of visit day/time must be made (or a 2 hour charge will be levied)
- SFS staff will not be expected to answer the telephone, door or undertake school reception duties
- SFS Contracts Officers should not be directly contacted outside of their visit to the School as they will be working in other schools. If you need to get a message to them or are in need of financial advice please email [schoolsfinancialservices@kent.gov.uk](mailto:schoolsfinancialservices@kent.gov.uk) and we will contact them on your behalf
- SFS Contracts Officers may apply for an advertised position in any of the schools they work in, however they have signed an agreement which prevents them from working in more than one school that have current SFS contracts

### 8. COMPLIMENTS/COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE

Initial Contact – SFS Service Delivery Manager

[Suzanne.Lowe@kent.gov.uk](mailto:Suzanne.Lowe@kent.gov.uk)

In the event of a dispute contact SFS Head of Service, Siobhan Cheeseman:

Schools Financial Services,  
Room 3.23  
Sessions  
House  
Maidstone  
ME14 1XQ

### 9. TERMINATION

Notice of four months in writing (by email) is required to cancel any of our packages including the CFSP.