



# Schools Financial Services

## About us

## Who we are & what we do

Schools Financial Services (SFS) are an experienced, established team who have been providing traded services to schools since 1999. We are a service comprising of around 40 members of staff specialising in high quality financial management and support for both schools and academies. Our team are communicative, approachable and on hand all year round to provide assistance and guidance. Schools Financial Services are continually reviewing financial accounting and budget systems in the market to ensure that we can provide great value, and up to date information, to our customers.

### Why do schools and academies need to manage their finances?

Ensuring financial health and sustainability requires more than just numbers on a spreadsheet—it demands precision, foresight, and access to the latest information.

We understand that money seems to be ever-limited, especially in public sector institutions and grant-hunting can often prove to be a labyrinthine, overwhelming task. We help schools provide the best experience they can with the finances available so that they can plan confidently for the future – for their pupils, and for their staff.

We provide traded, statutory, and discretionary services including, but not limited to, helpdesk support, bursarial and monitoring contracts, and training to maintained schools, academies and multi academy trusts.



Our School Statutory Team provides a robust compliance programme ensuring Kent maintained schools are financially well managed.

As of 2022/23, **Kent** has a commendable deficit record of **1.3%** (the **national average** is **13%**). This impressive statistic is largely due to the efforts of the **School Support team** who work with schools to help eradicate the deficit, produce a revised **three-year plan** and assist with the **Management Action Plan**.

SFS currently support, and are accredited with, FMS6 and Bromcom Finance with several members of the team also working with PS Financials. As a service, we are committed to continuous development which includes plans to accredit ourselves with other Finance Accounting Systems to ensure that we provide our customers with the best possible service.

## Benefits of using our services

- ✓ In-depth knowledge of all aspects of schools and academy finances.
- ✓ Diverse and responsive training packages.
- ✓ Knowledge on the latest advice and information.
- ✓ Staff involved in direct working with schools are DBS (Disclosure and Barring Service) checked.
- ✓ Competitive pricing.



## What our customers think

"Schools Financial Services have provided invaluable support to schools with their knowledge and expertise in submitting returns to KCC, financial controls, detailed step by step procedure notes and daily queries via the help desk. The support team have been so helpful in our Bromcom Finance migration and held our hand from afar answering and resolving the many queries that we have had during this process, thank you to all!"

**Kerry, Higham Primary School**

"Thank you! This is why I love Schools Financial Services! I just wish I had rang you sooner and saved myself hours of missing the obvious. Even after 25 years in schools I am still learning from you!"

**Wilma, Canterbury Road Primary School**



# Core Financial Support Package (CFSP) and Budget Planning Software (BPS)

The CFSP will provide you with a full range of financial management tools, including:

- ✓ **a dedicated team of experts available to answer queries and resolve problems**
- ✓ **Web based Budget Planning Software, along with in-depth training and guidance notes**
- ✓ **Financial Accounting Software system support, with procedure notes and finance updates**
- ✓ **step by step health checks and financial advice from knowledgeable, experienced staff**
- ✓ **access to remote support which allows a member of the team to provide troubleshooting assistance and guidance.**



## What does the Budget Planning Software do?

### **Budget forecasts**

The software allows you to plan and prepare 3 and 5-year budget forecasts. Figures, including inflation, are automatically pulled through into future years, saving you time.

### **Salary forecasting**

Part of the BPS enables salary calculations and 'what if' scenarios. The system flags salary variances, within the monthly payroll reconciliations, for schools to check and manage. The accuracy and reliability of BPS ensures schools can be confident in their salary forecasting.

### **Monthly monitoring**

Monthly financial information from Financial Accounting Systems uploaded into BPS facilitates budget monitoring of Revenue and Capital Funds.

### **Reporting**

The software can generate a whole host of reports, containing different levels of detail, for operational and strategic analysis in PDF and Excel formats. The reports allow schools to make better informed budgetary decisions to support with the preparation and analysis of budgets and forecasts.

### **Reporting for MAT consolidations**

The software offers multi-level reporting allowing academy trusts to run reports at individual school level or MAT level. The feature allows users to identify trends and can support strategic improvement.

## What our customers think

"The school has been working with Schools Financial Services for 8 years. SFS have an in-depth knowledge of financial management, are always helpful and provide excellent, professional advice for Academy Schools. The Core Support Package ensures the school is compliant through regular financial monitoring and returns. SFS provide various training opportunities and termly finance information groups enabling those with financial responsibility to equip themselves with the skills and knowledge to manage the school budget. I would highly recommend SFS."

**Alison, Wentworth Primary School (Academy)**



# Schools Financial Services – financial support in schools

We provide comprehensive financial accounting and budgetary support. This service is designed to meet school needs flexibly, allowing schools to choose the range of support appropriate to their requirements.

Advice and support are provided through personal visits, off-site preparation and telephone/email.

Our standard packages include:

- ✓ **Budget Planning Support**
- ✓ **Weekly Bursarial Support**
- ✓ **Monthly Bursarial Support**
- ✓ **New Bursar Support Package**

In addition to this, we also offer Short Term Financial Support as temporary, one-off short-term visits to cover weekly or monthly bursarial procedures. This may be due to staff absence or support for new staff.

Contact our Service Delivery manager on **03301 651 001** to discuss the most appropriate support for you.





## What our customers think

"I will, forever be indebted to my School Financial Services advisor who has been beside me these past 6 Years, helping me to maintain a healthy school budget.

The advice and support I have received has kept me sane! Your team of advisors really do provide the most invaluable support, offering such expert advice! An Amazing service from start to finish!"

**Sarah, Stowting School**

"I have been so grateful for the support, expertise and skill of SFS. We contacted SFS in a difficult time of transition and immediately they put my mind at ease and focused on helping us find solutions.

Working with our SFS contract officer has further developed my understanding of school finances and her high-quality work shows that she is genuinely invested in supporting our school, she feels very much like part of the team."

**Wilma, Canterbury Road Primary School**

"We have had the privilege of working with our Contract Officer for KCC Finance for a number of years and can quite honestly say that she is worth more than her weight in gold!

She is super-efficient, knowledgeable and a lovely person to work with. She is very patient—even when asked the same question 10 times! We would be lost without her."

**Caroline, Lamberhurst St Marys CEP School**

# Training

We offer numerous courses focused on sound financial management in schools and academies.

Our courses include, but are not limited to, Budget Setting and monitoring, Strategic management, year-end closedown and financial accounting system training.

Our range of courses are designed so that there is something for everyone including new and experienced finance staff, senior leaders and governors.

In addition to our standard training courses, we can offer one to one or small group training to meet your needs.

Please contact the Schools Financial Services Training Manager to discuss any requirements further.

## What our customers think

"The Training Team provide clear and informative courses in a very accessible fashion. They understand how schools work and the requirements of KCC and provide training appropriately. They are always happy to stop and answer question and provide additional information if requested."

**Pat, School Business Manager at a Kent Maintained School**

"Very useful and informative course to think about 'Why?' income generation is important and the impact it could have in improving pupil outcomes. The course covered the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats to successful bid writing and how to stand out from the crowd in a competitive grant bidding environment."

**Finance Officer, Thurnham Primary School**

# Additional support and services

## We also offer:

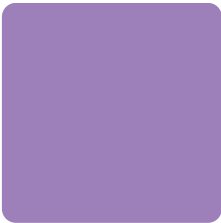
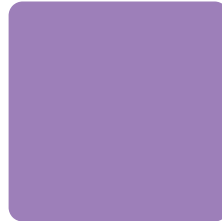
- ✓ **Voluntary Fund Audits**
- ✓ **Headteacher Finance Tests/Interview Support**
- ✓ **Schools Business Manager Finance Tests/Interview Support**
- ✓ **Financial Accounting System Asset Register Set up.**

## Contact us

For additional information, please contact us below.

- ✓ **Telephone: 03301 651 001**
- ✓ **[schoolsfinancialservices@theeducationpeople.org](mailto:schoolsfinancialservices@theeducationpeople.org)**
- ✓ **Monday to Friday – 9am to 4.30pm**





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