Policy: Expenses Claims Policy
F&R approval: October 2025
Ratified FGB: November 2025
Review: November 2028

Holy Trinity Church of England (VA) Primary School

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Expenses Claims (Staff and Governors) Policy

SCHOOL VISION

Our vision is for our pupils to flourish in an inclusive, inspirational place of learning where we are happy, respectful, kind and safe.

At Holy Trinity Church of England Primary School our Christian vision shapes all we do.

"I know that there is nothing better for people than to be happy and to do good while they live.' Ecclesiastes 3:12.

- we facilitate opportunities so every child can flourish in a place where they feel **safe**, **happy and confident**.
- staff **well-being** and professional development is valued and supported in order to fulfil their roles, **inspire** others and experience personal **fulfilment**.
- the school provides facilities that enables our pupils to reach their potential in an **optimum learning environment**.
- the **school plays a central role within our community** and enjoys strong **links with the church, local companies and other schools.**
- we create a culture of vigilance to **safeguard** all children.

General Principles

The School has an obligation to ensure effective use of the school budget.

It is the policy of the school to refund only costs which are unavoidably incurred wholly and necessarily in relation to school business.

The school has internal controls in place to ensure appropriate levels of authorisation are obtained in respect of reimbursed expenditure, that it achieves value for money and that budgetary guidelines have not been breached. At the same time, it is expected that representatives will be aware of the need to minimise the costs of travel and subsistence to the school, but in a way consistent with its ethos and strong support for staff well-being.

Public money is not, under any circumstances, to be used to fund alcohol and/or leaving gifts. Where prior agreement has been sought from the Headteacher, Finance Committee and Chair of Governors, expenses could be requested from locally raised income only.

Staff

Travel

Staff will be fully reimbursed for the cost of travel undertaken by train, tube and bus for offsite meetings, courses, conferences and training where approved in advance by the Headteacher (or Chair of Governors/Chair of Finance Committee where the Headteacher is the potential claimant).

Unless prior approval is given by the Headteacher only the cost of a **standard class fare** (evidenced by a ticket or receipt) will be reimbursed by the school. It should be noted that savings can be achieved by way of public transport and this should be done wherever possible.

The reimbursement of car expenses will be limited to the mileage undertaken for school purposes at the mileage allowance rate prevailing at the time the journey was made. The reclaimable amount for car and fare expenses will be based on the lesser of the miles from the representative's place of work to their destination or their home address to their destination. Rates of mileage allowances are currently paid at 0.45p (to be adjusted yearly in line with the Local Authority expenses) per mile.

When claiming expenses, the use of a car must be approved in advance of a school journey by the Headteacher and should only be allowed if unable to use public transport, transporting bulky goods or musical/sports equipment. It is the responsibility of the car owner to obtain adequate insurance and documentation before the use of the vehicle is granted for school purposes.

Taxis and mini cab costs will not be reimbursed unless the Headteacher (or Chair of Governors or Chair of Finance for Headteacher travel) is satisfied that there was no practical alternative or where their use resulted in savings for the school, e.g. because a group was travelling together. Receipts should always be obtained. Taxis will not be reimbursed without a receipt. Parking expenses may be claimed with a valid receipt.

Staff Subsistence

Subsistence is defined as accommodation and food costs.

On site meals and refreshments

Hot drinks such as tea and coffee are not provided by the school.

Meals and refreshments over and above normal provision will not be provided for staff during the school day. The only exception to this is breakfast/lunch on INSET days for those attending work at the Headteacher's discretion, for example Senior Leadership Team extended meetings or during inspection preparation.

Offsite meals and refreshments

The school does not normally support offsite meetings and will not reimburse any subsistence costs in relation to offsite events without the prior agreement of the Headteacher or Chair of Governors/Chair of Finance Committee where the Headteacher is the potential claimant. Where approved in advance, any such claims must be made with a valid receipt.

Where staff are away from the school e.g. to attend courses then they are expected to consume meals and refreshments included in the course fee – there will be no further reimbursement of additional expenditure.

Accommodation

Where approved in advance by the Headteacher (or Chair of Governors/Chair of Finance Committee where the Headteacher is the potential claimant) the School will reimburse its representatives for expenditure incurred on accommodation in respect of journeys on School business. Wherever possible, representatives must return on the day of their business activity, but when this is deemed impractical due to the length of the journey or the need to attend meetings they should book into a 'local to venue' hotel.

In instances where representatives have an over-riding requirement to attend a certain hotel, i.e. conferences, events, etc., then the booking must be placed with the organiser of the event, unless a cheaper rate can be negotiated.

Costs relating to partners or guests will not be reimbursed.

Costs related to the extension of trips for personal reasons will not be reimbursed.

<u>Governor allowances</u>

Introduction

Governing Boards can pay their members' expenses in addition to travel and subsistence, if they so wish and the expenses are necessary for the performance of a member's duties as governor. Attendance allowance and loss of earnings cannot be paid. In accordance with the regulations travelling and subsistence allowances must be shown in the governor's annual finance report.

Allowable Expenses

We have agreed that expenses can (but do not have to be) claimed for:

- Childcare or babysitting allowances (excluding payments to a current/former spouse or partner)
- Cost of care arrangements for an elderly or dependent relative (excluding payments to a current/former spouse or partner)
- The extra costs they incur in performing their duties either because they have special needs or because English is not their first language
- Travel and Subsistence costs, payable at the current rate of 45p per mile associated with attending national meetings or training events, unless these costs can be claimed from the LA or any other source
- Telephone charges, photocopying, stationery, postage etc.
- Any other justifiable allowances

In the case of an allowable expense, or set of expenses, which is likely to cause the budget to be exceeded, the governor will raise the matter with the Chair who will take action as necessary; for example, discuss with the Headteacher; refer to Finance Committee. If a governor is unsure they should approach the Chair.

Claims

All claims made by a member of the school Governing Board, will be made on our agreed form and authorised by the Headteacher or Chair. The Vice-Chair will authorise in the event of claims made by the Chair. The Headteacher, Chair and Vice-Chair will treat all claims as confidential.

<u>Visitor Hospitality</u>

Refreshments during and outside of the school day

Tea, coffee, biscuits and fresh fruit can be provided, at the discretion of the Headteacher, either in advance or during meetings with external visitors likely to be in excess of one hour. Where staff are involved in such meetings hospitality will be provided for them also.

Meals during the school day

At the discretion of the Headteacher, lunch may be provided for visitors during the school day e.g. Ofsted inspectors, school governors on governor open morning or for parents invited for a specific purpose e.g. to support the take up of school meals. Staff may also partake of this hospitality where they are part of the event and cannot benefit from their usual arrangements.

Procedures

The objective of the procedures adopted by the School is to ensure representatives are reimbursed for their approved expenditure on travel and subsistence. Furthermore, it is necessary to ensure that guidelines in respect of the authorisation of such expenditure have been strictly adhered to and the School complies with statutory regulations in the reporting of such expenditure, i.e. taxation rules.

1. Prior Approval of Expenditure

Representatives are required to obtain prior approval from the Headteacher in respect of expenditure to be incurred on the items listed above. Where the Headteacher is the potential claimant then prior approval must be obtained from the Chair of Governors of the Chair of the Finance Committee.

Expenditure relating to alcohol, leaving gifts and staff events must receive prior approval from BOTH the Headteacher and Chair of Governors.

Such approval must be in writing, email authorisation is acceptable.

2. Expense claim Approval

Representatives must complete an ''Expense Claim Form' (Appendix A) in respect of expenditure to be reimbursed with supporting documents including detailed VAT receipt attached to substantiate expenditure where appropriate, and the written pre-approval where relevant.

The claim must always be made by the most senior member of staff present.

Claims should be presented within 4 weeks of the expenditure being incurred.

Expense claim forms must be signed by the Headteacher, or in respect of the Headteacher, either the School Business Manager, Chair of Governors or the Chair of the Finance Committee should sign claim forms.

Budget

The Budget set aside for claims will be £1,000 annually. This will be monitored by our Finance Committee.

Checklist

Representatives should check the following to ensure they are meeting the policy and procedures of the School.

1. Is the claim necessary and wholly and exclusively for school purposes?
2. Has prior approval been obtained where necessary?
3. Has the representative checked public transport before embarking on car travel?
4. Has the representative referred to nominated agents of the School or purchasing schemes/organisations for which the School is a member to ensure value for money is being achieved?
5. Has a VAT receipt been obtained?
6. Has an expenses claim form been completed and submitted?

This policy was adopted by Holy Trinity CE Primary School and agreed by the Finance and Resource Committee and ratified by the Full Governing Board.

Approved by……………………………………………………..on behalf of the School Governing Board.

Signature:………………………………………………………..

Date:……………………………………………………………..

HOLY TRINITY CE PRIMARY SCHOOL

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STAFF PAYMENT CLAIM FORM

Staff Name:- **Supplier ID:**

Invoice No:-

Date of Purchase:

Item(s) Purchased:

I certify that the item(s) purchased were for the use of the school.

Date .... Signed ....

Purchase Authorised ....

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Ecclesiastes 3:12

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