

The Great Schools Trust



# Credit Card

**Approved by the Trust Board on 06/02/2020**

**Applicable from 07/02/2020**

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## **1. INTRODUCTION**

1.1 The Great Schools Trust is moving towards a 'cashless system' in order to ensure efficient and effective means of tracking finances and maintain the necessary controls when using public money.

## **2. PURPOSE**

2.1. To allow Trust and Academy personnel access to efficient and alternative means of payment for approved expenses or purchases, while maintaining the necessary controls over the use of academy or Trust funds.

2.2. To improve managerial reporting related to credit card purchases.

2.3. To improve efficiency and reduce costs of payables processing.

2.4. To reduce the need for petty cash.

## **3. SCOPE**

3.1 This policy applies to everyone employed by the Trust, whether permanent, full time, part time or on a temporary / fixed term contract

## **4. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

4.1 The Trust Board accepts its legal and moral responsibility to take due care when spending public funds. This responsibility is delegated through the Chief Executive to the Chief Finance Officer. All Principals and Heads of Centres are delegated to appoint credit card holders in their establishments but remain the person responsible for the safe and wise use of the credit card.

## **5. USE OF CARDS**

5.1. Wherever possible, all academy purchases should be made via a purchase order from the academy and paid through the BACS system on receipt of an invoice. Where online purchases via credit card are deemed necessary a requisition should be raised and approved according to the local scheme of delegation before any payment is made.

5.2. Each academy should have a maximum of two credit cards. Additional cards can be approved by the Chief Finance Officer with the agreement of the Chief Executive in his / her role of Chief Accounting Officer.

5.3. The day to day operation and control of the institution's purchasing cards, credit and debit cards are the responsibility of the academy Principal but may be delegated to the lead finance officer

5.4. Holders of cards must use them only for the purposes for which they have been issued and within authorised purchase limits.

5.5. The misuse of such cards shall be grounds for disciplinary action.

5.6. Cards must not be loaned to another person, nor should they be used for personal or private purchases.

5.7. Cardholders should obtain approval to purchase from the relevant budget holder and should ensure that there is sufficient budget available to meet the costs, record of approval to be retained.

5.8. The following purchases are expressly prohibited:

- Alcoholic beverages/tobacco products
- Items or services on term contracts
- Any other items deemed inconsistent with the values of the Academy

5.9. Cash advances on credit cards are *not* allowed under any circumstances. This includes the use of any form of cash withdrawal or cash back facility.

5.10 Cardholders will be required to sign a Cardholder Agreement indicating they accept these terms.

5.11 Individuals who do not adhere to this policy risk revocation of their credit card privileges and possible disciplinary action.

## **6. PROCEDURES FOR USING CREDIT CARDS**

6.1. Credit cards may be requested for prospective cardholders by written request to the Chief Finance Officer in the first instance, subject to a maximum of two per academy. Additional cards to be approved by the Chief Executive.

6.2. Credit cards to be issued subject to the requirements of the bank signature mandate for the academy. Recipients of credit cards to sign Card-holder Agreement Form (attached) confirming adherence to this policy.

6.3. Monthly credit card statements will be downloaded by the Central Finance Office and distributed to the relevant academy. Receipts should be provided by the card user. The Principal must approve and sign the Credit Card Monthly Statement Cover Sheet (attached), supported by the credit card statement and receipts. In the event of the absence of the required post-holder, approval signature must be obtained from the Chief Executive.

6.4. VAT receipts must be retained and attached to the monthly statement.

6.5. The monthly credit card statement for the trust will be paid by direct debit. It is, therefore, important that any discrepancies on the statements are notified to the central finance office as soon as possible.

6.6. All card holders/finance staff are responsible for promptly processing the expenditure on the finance system.

6.7. All credit cards, with the exception of that issued to the Principal will be held in the school safe and will be issued to card holders at their request as and when needed. The credit card will be signed in and out and a record kept within the Finance Office.

### **Link to other policies**

This Credit Card policy should be read in conjunction with the following Trust and academy policies:

- Staff Code of Conduct
- Financial Regulations
- Disciplinary Procedure
- Gifts and Hospitality Policy
- Equality, Diversity and Inclusion
- Travel and Expense Policy

### **Review**

This policy

**Card Holder Agreement Form**

I, \_\_\_\_\_ hereby acknowledge receipt of the following credit card:

\_\_\_\_ - \_\_\_\_ - \_\_\_\_ - \_\_\_\_ (insert card number)

I understand that improper use of this card may result in disciplinary action as well as personal liability for any improper purchases. As a cardholder, I agree to comply with the Trust Credit Card Policy and other applicable policies.

I will strive to obtain the best value for the Academy when purchasing merchandise and/or services with this card.

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_  
(Cardholder)

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_  
(Principal)

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_  
(Chief Finance Officer)6

**Credit Card Monthly Statement - Cover Sheet**

Name of cardholder:

Month/year

Statement attached                      Yes / No

Amount for travel and subsistence expenses

Amount for other purchases

Total bill per attached statement