

All Saints Inter-Church Academy



Procurement Protection Policy

November 2025

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1. Aims and scope

This policy aims to ensure that:

- The school has open and transparent procurement procedures
- Procurement procedures are compliant with procurement legislation
- Value for money (economy, efficiency and effectiveness) is secured
- Conflicts of interest are managed adequately and appropriately
- All staff involved in procurement are aware of the procedures they must follow
- Procurement procedures are compliant with procurement legislation

This policy includes procedures for open tenders. This approach allows any supplier that is qualified and eligible to submit a bid to supply goods, works or services required and offers an equal opportunity to any supplier to submit a proposal.

2. Legislation and guidance

This policy is based on:

- [Department for Education \(DfE\) guidance on buying for schools](#)
- [Department for Education \(DfE\) guidance on the Schools Financial Value Standard \(SFVS\) checklist](#)
- [Procurement Act 2023](#)

This policy complies with our Local Authority's scheme for financing schools.

3. Purchase Procurement thresholds

If it is estimated that the cost of a contract is near to or above the threshold for public procurement spending, the school will seek legal advice to ensure it runs a buying process compliant with the Procurement Act 2023. The current threshold for the supply of goods or services is **£214,904 inclusive of VAT**.

A 'light touch contract', with a higher threshold of **£663,540, inclusive of VAT**, applies for some contracts that are specifically for certain social, health, education and other public services provision. We will seek legal advice to determine if any procurement run by the school qualifies as a light touch contract.

4. Approval authority

CONTRACT LEVEL	CONTRACT VALUE	APPROVAL LEVEL
Low	£1 – £9,999	Headteacher or Deputy Head
Medium	£10,000 – £40,000	Board of Trustees
High	Over £40,000, but below the public procurement threshold	
Over the public procurement threshold	Over £214,904	
'Light touch'	Over £663,540	

5. Preparing to buy

Identify route to buy

Following DfE guidance on buying for schools: how to buy what you need, we will follow 1 of the below 5 routes to buy according to the value of the contract.

- **Route 1:** framework agreement for goods and services (all values)
- **Route 2:** use catalogues (low value)

- **Route 3:** get quotes from at least 3 suppliers (low or medium value)
- **Route 4:** run a buying process inviting suppliers to submit bids for (for high value contracts below the public procurement threshold)
- **Route 5:** run a buying process compliant with the Procurement Act 2023 (high value contracts above the public procurement threshold)

Routes 3, 4 and 5 will only be used if we cannot meet our requirements through a framework agreement.

See section 6 for more detail on each route.

6. Routes to buy

6.1 Framework agreements (route 1)

Where possible, we will use a framework agreement to contract suppliers for purchases of all values.

Framework agreements are arrangements that a contracting authority, such as a public sector buying organisation, makes with suppliers. Framework agreements are the preferred route, as:

- They have already been through a tender process
- They have favourable terms and conditions
- The framework provider may offer advice and support

Depending on the framework we choose, we will either pick the best-value supplier from a list or run a mini-competition between listed suppliers, where we will ask each supplier to submit their bid and we will then select the best one.

In either case, we will follow the DfE guidance on procurement to ensure good practice. The reasons for the choice of framework, and for the choice of supplier, will be clearly recorded.

6.2 Catalogues for purchasing low value goods (route 2)

To buy goods in the low-value threshold, we will use catalogues to compare similar products and choose the supplier that meets our requirements and offers best value for money.

Staff are also free to carry out their own research and find alternative suppliers, if these offer better value for money.

Approval for the purchase must be sought from headteacher before placing any orders with the chosen supplier.

6.3. Getting quotes for low and medium-value purchases (route 3)

We will use this process if we cannot meet our requirements through a framework or a catalogue.

We will secure quotes from at least 3 suppliers. These will be assessed following the process set out in section 7.

All suppliers will be provided with the same information, which will include:

- The specification
- Date by which we require the quote
- When our decision will be made
- How the supplier can ask questions about what we're buying or our buying process
- If needed, a link to the school's terms and conditions

We will assess the quotes using the award criteria provided to the suppliers and proceed to place the order.

6.4 Tendering procedure for high-value purchases under the public procurement threshold (route 4)

The school will only follow this process if our needs cannot be met through a framework agreement.

To ensure we secure good value, we will follow DfE guidance and seek specialist support as necessary.

To initiate the procurement the school will advertise a requirement notice. This notice will be publicly accessible and provide details of the following:

- The specification
- Evaluation criteria
- Submission deadlines, including a timeframe for the clarification period

6.5 Tendering procedure for high-value purchases over the public procurement threshold (route 5)

The school will only follow this process if our needs cannot be met through a framework agreement.

We will follow DfE guidance and seek specialist support as necessary to ensure that the process the school runs is compliant with the Procurement Act 2023.

All members of staff involved in this process must have completed the appropriate [training on the Procurement Act 2023](#).

Tenders will be assessed following the process set out in section 7, taking into account appropriate legal advice and additional requirements for purchases over the public procurement threshold.

7. Assessing bids

7.1 How we will assess bids

Before beginning a buying process that requires quotes or bids to be assessed (routes 1, 3, 4 and 5), we will determine appropriate award criteria to decide which bid best meets the specification and other factors such as price, speed and quality. These award criteria will be made available to all bidders.

The exact criteria may vary depending on the chosen procurement route. For purchases over the public procurement threshold (route 5), we will seek legal advice at this stage to ensure we meet the additional requirements for assessing bids.

Each criterion will be assigned a:

- Range of scores – such as 1 to 5, with 5 the highest
- Weighting – a figure to multiply the score by, depending on the importance of the criterion

Using these criteria, bids and quotes will be assessed independently by at least 2 members of staff, who will then compare scores, discuss any differences and reach a final agreed score.

Bids must be submitted by the deadline specified in the tender notice. Any late submissions will not be considered.

We will:

- Not open any bids/quotes before the deadline
- Treat all bids/quotes fairly and equally
- Record how decisions are made
- Keep confidential, secure, auditable records
- Award the contract to the highest scoring bidder

7.2 Notification of Award

We will notify both successful and unsuccessful bidders in accordance with the notification requirements specified in the applicable guidance for procurements below and above the procurement threshold.

7.3 Contract finalisation

We will work closely with the winning bidder to ensure a smooth transition from the bidding process to contract execution.

There will be no commitment and no work shall begin until both parties have signed the contract.

8. Conflicts of interest

8.1 Register of interests

All staff and governors are required to declare business and pecuniary interests in the school's register of business interests, to avoid any conflict between their business and personal interests and the interests of the school.

The register of interests must be updated as soon as any change in circumstances or interests is declared or identified.

8.2 Identifying and declaring conflicts of interest

The staff responsible for the procurement of goods or services will review the register of interests to identify any potential conflicts of interest before starting the procurement process. A conflict of interest arises in a procurement context where there is a conflict between the interests of the person acting in relation to the procurement process and those bidding in relation to the procurement. It is where someone involved has a personal or professional interest that could influence, or be seen to influence, their decisions.

Any potential conflicts of interest in a procurement, arising from a direct or family connection, must be declared and kept under review, in accordance with our conflicts of interests policy.

Any member of staff or our governing board who believes that a conflict of interest has not been declared must report this to the governing board. .

Any person involved in a procurement process must withdraw from any discussion and must not vote on any procurement decision where they have a conflict of interest.

- Any governor or member of staff with a conflict of interest must not be involved in any part of the procurement process
- Governors will withdraw from discussions and will not vote on any procurement decision where they have a conflict of interest

All reasonable steps will be taken to ensure that a conflict of interest does not put any supplier at an unfair advantage or disadvantage.

8.2 Related party transactions

For the avoidance of doubt, the following are not related party transactions:

- Contracts or agreements with the local authority

Where there is doubt about what constitutes a related party relationship, advice should be sought from an appropriately qualified professional.

Before conducting a related party transaction, we will:

- Perform thorough **due diligence** to ensure the transaction:
 - Is necessary
 - Is in the best interests of the school
 - Does not compromise the school's integrity or cause reputational damage

For all related party transactions, we will:

- Maintain clear, secure, and auditable **records**, including:
 - The identification and nature of the relationship that gave rise to a conflict of interest
 - The measures taken to mitigate it
 - The rationale for the decision to proceed
 - Follow-up actions taken to evaluate the goods or services against the agreed standards
- Report all related party transactions (including ongoing contracts and agreements) on an annual basis, in the template provided for the [Schools Financial Value Standard \(SFVS\)](#)

9. Raising orders

Staff to complete a purchase requisition form signed by the headteacher.

Pass to the school business manager to process on the finance system and create a PO number

Staff to place order when process is complete and a Po number has been acquired.

10. Managing contracts

We will seek legal advice before entering into a contract.

The school maintains a contract register that is regularly shared with governors to make them aware of any upcoming milestones and provide them an opportunity to scrutinise and, if necessary, challenge procurement plans.

11. Record keeping

Records will be kept securely, only for as long as necessary and in line with data protection law.

Records relating to procurement processes over the public procurement threshold must be kept for at least 3 years from the date of the award of the contract.

12. Monitoring arrangements

The headteacher is responsible for the implementation of this policy.

This policy will be reviewed and approved by the governing board yearly. It will also be reviewed whenever public procurement thresholds or legislation changes.