



CHARGE CARD POLICY

Reviewed by: Finance Committee

Approved: April 2015

Next Review Date: April 2017

Charge Card Policy

From time to time the school may be offered an opportunity to purchase goods or arrange for services for the school from companies that shall not invoice but shall only accept a direct payment. In order to make use of these offers the school holds a charge card. The Principal Finance Officer will ensure that there is budgetary provision for all purchases and that there is a sufficient balance available in the bank to cover the expenditure.

The primary method of payment remains invoicing and this shall generally be used in preference to card purchases where such is offered by the supplier.

- The Trustees may authorise the Headteacher, member of SLT or office staff with financial responsibilities in each school to be a cardholder:
- The charge cards shall be issued by Lloyds Bank, the Trust's bankers
- Each card shall be stored in each school safe when not in use
- The PIN number shall remain with the cardholder and not disclosed in any way. The card holder will be the only person with knowledge of the PIN number
- In the event of loss of the pin number the bank will be able to provide cardholders only with the information.
- Should the card be lost or stolen the loss shall be reported by the cardholder to the issuing bank, the police, the Accounting Officer immediately.
- Should fraud or misuse be suspected, the bank should be informed immediately so that the appropriate action can be taken.
- The charge card balance shall be settled in full automatically each month by direct debit thereby avoiding credit card interest charges.
- The charge card transaction should be entered in the accounts as soon as possible, to ensure the completeness of the accounting records and ready to be reconciled when the bank statement reaches the school.
- All payments shall be authorised by the budget holder or Principal Finance Officer.
- The cards shall not be used for personal expenditure under any circumstances & cash withdrawals will not be required or permitted.
- In the event that a card is used for personal expenditure, a full investigation will be undertaken and the findings reported to the Accounting Officer or Principal Finance Officer.
- All orders placed using the Charge cards must only be placed by authorised Finance Staff and then only if they have the written approval of either the budget holder or Principal Finance officer in the form of a signed purchase order.
- All authorised users of the Charge card shall sign to accept that they have personal responsibility for transactions made on the card which are not conducted with the approval of the school in accordance with this policy (refer to Appendix 1 attached)
- Finance staff using the card authorize the school to recover the cost of any unauthorised transactions and where reimbursement is not received then the school is authorised to make a salary deduction for the unauthorized amount
- Cardholders shall be made aware of the action to take in the event of a card being stolen, lost or missing
- A VAT (if applicable) receipt must be obtained

- Cardholder must present the receipt for goods/service to the Finance Manager
- Purchasing records must allow correct coding in accounts
- All orders must be delivered to the school address
- If online ordering using the security code the cardholder must have a purchase order signed in advance by the Budget Holder.

Separation of duties is fulfilled by the following:

- If staff require goods via the internet they must liaise with the Finance Department to place the order on line providing they have sufficient budgetary provision and get the budget holder to authorise the purchase
- The Finance Manager records expenditure on the schools accounting system
- The Finance Manager to reconcile direct debit on bank account statement against credit card statement; or the debit entry on the bank statement created via use of the debit card
- The Finance Director to check and approve the reconciliation

Appendix 1

West Norfolk Academies trust Charge Card ["the Card"] Card User Consent Form

I consent to being an authorised user of the charge card on the Lloyds Bank account held by West Norfolk Academies trust

Credit/Debit Card Issuer: _____

Card Number: _____

I confirm that I have read the West Norfolk Academies trust Charge Card Policy ["the Policy"] and that I will abide by its terms and conditions.

In particular I acknowledge and agree that:

1. I will use the account only to purchase items/services on behalf of the School and not use the account for any personal expenditure.
2. I will only purchase items/services in accordance with the Policy.
3. I will take care of the card whilst in my possession to avoid its loss or theft.
4. I will not disclose to any other person the Card PIN number.
5. I will only use the Card security number for online purchases where a security number is requested and only on a secure (indicated by padlock symbol) internet website.
6. I will not use the Card to withdraw cash.
7. I understand that upon discovery of loss or theft of the Card, I must as soon as possible notify the cardholder so they can contact:
 - a. the issuing bank; and
 - b. the Finance manager
 - c. the police (only in the event of theft)
8. I understand that I am personally liable for all charges on the Account which relate to transactions which have not been conducted in accordance with the Policy.
9. I accept that I must reimburse the School promptly should I cause the Account to incur any unauthorised charges and in the absence of prompt reimbursement, I authorise the School to recover all unauthorised charges by deduction from any amounts otherwise owing to me by the School ,including but not limited to, salary and expenses.
10. I agree that, when not required for purchases, I will return the Card for safekeeping in the School safe.
11. I agree that if I cease to be employed by the school I will return the card to the Finance manager immediately.

Agreed by Card User

Name

Date

Signature