



LIGHTHOUSE SCHOOLS PARTNERSHIP

CORE SERVICE CHARGE POLICY

Policy Approved by the Board of Trustees

Signed: *A Haysom*

Date: 25 February 2021

Name: Adele Haysom

Chair of Board of Trustees

Authorised for Issue

Signed: *Gary Lewis*

Date: 25 February 2021

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Chief Executive

Document History

Version	Author/Owner	Drafted	Comments
1.0	Clare Sanders/TJM	June 2016 Published 3- August 2016	Based on Gordano School model - original source not recorded
2.0	Louise Malik/Tim Monelle	August 2018	Updated to reflect GDPR and latest requirements
3.0	Louise Malik	December 2019	Various updates
4.0	<i>Louise Malik</i>	<i>January 2021</i>	<i>Annual review</i>

Date Policy Adopted	
Review cycle	Annual
Review date	Winter 2021

This Policy applies to all schools and employees within the Lighthouse Schools Partnership.

The Core Services Charge Policy (topslice)

1. The Academies Financial Handbook, 2019 (Education and Skills Funding Agency) states in section 5.29 that 'A MAT can amalgamate GAG for its academies to form one central fund. This can be used to meet the running costs at any constituent academies within the trust'. This known as pooling GAG and is not the practice adopted in the Lighthouse Schools Partnership. Instead the Trust collects a percentage of individual schools' GAG funding to create the MAT's central budget. This is sometimes referred to as 'topslicing' and, for the Lighthouse Schools Partnership, is called the Core Services Charge.
2. For the financial year 2021-22 The Lighthouse Schools Partnership will retain 4% of a schools funding. This will apply to all funding the schools receive with the exception of:
 - Pupil Premium Funding
 - Year 7 Catch Up Funding
 - PE Sports Grants
 - Early Year Funding
 - Universal Free School Meals Funding
 - Other non-GAG Government Funding
 - Student Financial Support Funding
 - Rates Relief
 - Top-Up Funding for special educational needs (SEN)
 - Additional funding for a disproportionate number of high needs students
 - Other income generated by individual academies
 - Teaching School Income
 - Capital funding
 - Income for rent of premises to deliver the national curriculum
3. The Trustees will review the Core Services Charge policy on an annual basis in advance of the start of the following financial year. Where appropriate the Core Services Charge may be adjusted to reflect the changes to the services provided by/via the Central Team, predicted increases in costs or anticipated cost savings.
4. A statement calculating the Core Services Charge will be issued to schools in the Trust no later than 31 August for the next financial year detailing the funds to be retained to fund core services.

5. The Core Services Charge will be levied on individual school budgets by the end of September during the financial year in question.
6. The Core Services Charge will be adjusted during the financial year to reflect changes in the relevant funding streams for individual schools within the Trust.
7. The Core Services Charge will be used to fund expenditure on behalf of the schools within the Trust as set out in Appendix A.
8. The Trustees should not plan to overspend the Central Budget. Should an overspend be predicted the Trustees must take action to reduce the risk of an overspend wherever possible. If an overspend on the Central Budget does occur, it will be carried forward to the following financial year and a plan approved by the Board of Trustees to recover the deficit.
9. Should an underspend on the Central Budget occur the underspend, up to a maximum of 10% of the planned Central Budget, will be held in reserves by the Board of Trustees until its use is agreed. Any underspend above this level will be returned to the schools in the Trust in proportion to the value of their Core Services Charge for the financial year in question.

Appendix A

Core Services 2021-22

The Lighthouse Schools Partnership (LSP) provides a range of services centrally, in order to deliver the best possible value for money to our schools. As well as those services provided from within the Core Services Charge ('Core Services'), other goods and services are procured centrally in order to maximise the potential economies of scale, whilst being charged out to schools separately. The LSP also recognises that the needs of each school can vary, so a range of optional services are also offered, again charged separately.

The list below provides an overview in each of these three categories, however, please note that this list is will continue to evolve, in consultation with our schools, as additional needs and opportunities are identified.

A significant change affecting our Core Services in 2021-22 relates to Teaching Schools. Our Teaching Schools currently receive grant funding of approximately £80,000 p.a. This grant funding will cease at the end of the 2020-21 financial year. The activity and support provided by our teaching schools is an instrumental part of our school improvement strategy and is something that Trustees wish to prioritise as we plan our budget for the coming financial years. We are proposing to include a budget for £80,000 in the Core Services Budget for this purpose, replacing the grant funding. At this stage we are not proposing to increase the Core Services Charge to cover this additional budget. Instead, we propose to fund this for the 2021-22 financial year from reserves. This will provide us with a period of time to establish a strategic vision and funding model for the future service based on an Institute Model, combining our delivery model for both primary and secondary into one model, starting from September 2021. A full consultation will be undertaken to seek your views on this proposed model and how it can be funded in future years.

Costs

Core Services - these are funded from within the Core Services Charge, which is set annually by the Trustees

Centrally procured/required (Non-negotiable) - a schedule of these costs will be provided to all schools each year during the budgeting process and additionally as opportunities arise during the year. The services listed as 'non-negotiable' are where schools are required to purchase, for either statutory, compliance or economic reasons. Please note this cannot always be achieved from the point of conversion, as schools may already have contracts in place. *

Centrally procured (Optional) - This is a schedule of services that schools can choose to participate in in order to gain best value through central procurement. This option offers services that can give schools flexibility to purchase at differing levels to meet their individual requirements. The list of these services will continue to expand as our central procurement function develops. *

**Where services are charged to schools on the basis of pupil numbers, the numbers used will be those included in the schools GAG statement for the relevant year*

Additional services - the intention is to provide schools with the flexibility to address their own particular requirements; the cost of these services will therefore vary and will be quoted on a case-by-case basis.

School Improvement

Core Services (Annual % Core Services Charge)	Centrally procured/required - chargeable (Non negotiable)	Centrally procured - chargeable (Optional)	Additional Services on offer subject to availability (price available on application)
Education Improvement & Standards strategy, advice, oversight			
School Improvement Partner			
CPD core programme provided by Teaching Schools	CPD additional credits - via Teaching Schools		
A core delivery of networks and assessment programmes	Insight Tracker and NFER		
Challenge Partners			
Funding for limited number of National Professional Qualifications			

Finance and Legal

Core Services (Annual % Core Services Charge)	Centrally procured/required - chargeable (Non negotiable)	Centrally procured - chargeable (Optional)	Additional Services on offer subject to availability (price available on application)
Strategic Finance Support (including specified financial training for new staff and on new systems)			Additional Financial training

Attend interviews for School Business Managers at schools if requested			
Deliver financial management support and challenge to schools			
Coordinate and contribute to a multi-disciplinary team to develop and deliver an action plan for schools that are unable to set a balanced budget			
Accounting services provided by Trust finance/payroll staff			Finance office service (day to day financial administration including central processing of orders and invoices, journals etc or business management)
PS Financials (Finance accounting system) & support			Finance office service (payroll administration and reconciliation)
Orovia (Budgeting and staffing software) & support			
Provide assumptions upon which budgets should be produced			
Financial returns (ESFA, RSC)			
Bank reconciliations and administration, treasury management			
BACs payments for all invoices etc.			
Consolidation and submission of VAT returns			

Central payroll service liaison, coordination, oversight, compliance, guidance & support	Payroll provider - FS4S Cost invoiced six monthly April and October by FS4S based on number of payslips issued		
Local Government pension administration including monthly financial returns			
Teachers' Pension administration including monthly financial returns			
Preparation of Annual Teachers Pension Audit			
Internal Audit (i-west)			
External audit and preparation of annual Trust accounts (Bishop Fleming) (with some information provided by schools)			
Companies House and Charities returns			
Centralised Procurement services - advisory, joint tender & selection exercises, benchmarking support			
Legal support - Browne Jacobson Quickcall			Legal support and intervention services - Specific issues requiring additional support - Browne Jacobson

Human Resources including Staff wellbeing and recruitment

Core Services (Annual % Core Services Charge)	Centrally procured/required - chargeable (Non negotiable)	Centrally procured - chargeable (Optional)	Additional Services on offer subject to availability (price available on application)
Strategic HR Support (including producing & maintaining a Workforce Strategy)			
Support for change management processes including multi-disciplinary meetings, management of consultation process etc			
Management of redeployment process including attending interviews for potential redeployees			
HR advice, compliance, administration e.g. employee relations case work, management of investigations and hearings/appeals, single central record and performance management etc			HR Legal support and intervention services - Specific cases requiring additional support - Browne Jacobson
Provide HR focussed training/induction visits in the first year to new Headteachers or School Business Managers			
HR - Contracts, variations,			Pre employment checks
Staff recruitment advice			Job Evaluation

Staff recruitment subscription - ETeach			
Management of payroll contract			
Management of pensions			
Coordinate remuneration and other HR policies & advice			
Gender pay gap reporting			
LSP Benefits Programme incl. administration, childcare vouchers, cycle to work scheme, etc			
	DBS checks		
Employee Assistance Programme	Occupational Health		
Unions: Employee Liaison Committee, RPTA Contingency			Specific union representation for change management
Apprenticeship Levy - for secondary schools	Apprenticeship Levy for primary schools		
		Insurance policies for staff cover such as sickness and maternity	
Long Service Awards			

Governance & Leadership services

Core Services (Annual % Core Services Charge)	Centrally procured/required - chargeable (Non-negotiable)	Centrally procured - chargeable (Optional)	Additional Services on offer subject to availability (price available on application)
Company Secretary and Clerk to the Members/Board of Trustees			
National Governors Association membership for all Trustees and LGB members (standard membership)		Upgrade to gold membership for LGBs	
The Key - Leadership advice			
Confederation of School Trusts			
Programme of leadership meeting across the Trust for Headteachers, Deputy Headteachers and School Business Managers			
Training programme for LGB members and Trustees			

Premises

Core Services (Annual % Core Services Charge)	Centrally procured/required - chargeable (Non-negotiable)	Centrally procured - chargeable (Optional)	Additional Services on offer subject to availability (price available on application)
Maintain the estates strategy, policy and associated procedures.			

Strategic premises support (advice and guidance on safety, compliance, site improvement, capital grant bids, support for capital projects etc).	Premises Contracts including: Utilities Grounds Maintenance Compliance Services (to be specified annually) Annual Asbestos Inspection Cleaning Contract Catering Contract	3 rd Party Capital Funding support Premises Contracts including: Refuse Hygiene Services Tree Management Risk Assessment	Line management of school based premises staff
Develop and deliver a training programme across the Trust. Provide training to all new Site Managers/Caretakers in their first year.			
Attend interviews for caretakers or other site staff in schools if requested.			
3 rd Party School Conditions Assessments			
Operational maintenance advice and guidance			Caretaker services (permanent or absence cover)
Complete data collection as required by the MAT/ESFA (with some information provided by schools)			
Health and Safety advice and monitoring including external consultant	Cost of capital grant bidding process and		Key holder service (out of hours calls)

	professional support in preparing bids		
Health and Safety - Fire Risk Assessments, CLEAPPS & Evolve			Lone worker monitoring
Compliance Software - 'Every'			
Maintain preferred supplier details on 'Every'			

I.T. including licences

Core Services (Annual % Core Services Charge)	Centrally procured/required - chargeable (Non-negotiable)	Centrally procured - chargeable (Optional)	Additional Services on offer subject to availability (price available on application)
Strategic IT Support and leadership			
Capita Licence	Support for management information systems		
Microsoft Licence			
LSP Web Hosting		School website hosting and support	
LSP file sharing			
IT Security Audit			
	School Broadband		
	Infrastructures improvements		
	Parent Payments System		
	Telecoms		
	Hardware		

	Server upgrades		
	External IT Technician Support Contract and associated helpdesk software		

Other - Pupil Services

Core Services (Annual % Core Services Charge)	Centrally procured/required - chargeable (Non-negotiable)	Centrally procured - chargeable (Optional)	Additional Services on offer subject to availability (price available on application)
Admissions			
Admissions appeals			
		Behaviour Support - Lead teacher for engagement	
		Education Psychology and Advisory Teacher support	
Education Welfare			
Safeguarding - CPOMS Licence			
Careers Coordination			

Other

Core Services (Annual % Core Services Charge)	Centrally procured/required - chargeable (Non-negotiable)	Centrally procured - chargeable (Optional)	Additional Services on offer subject to availability (price available on application)
	Premises and liability Insurance		
	Routine plant inspections (where necessary)		
		Insurance policies for staff cover such as sickness and maternity	
Data Protection Officer (DPO) and advice and guidance for GDPR			
Policy development and updating			
Business Partnership Scheme			