



Dame Alice Owen's School  
The Dame Alice Owen Foundation - 1613

# PURCHASING POLICY

Agreed by the Governing Body Resources  
Committee  
To be reviewed

March 2026

Spring 2028

*(reviewed every 2 years)*

To be monitored by the SBM and Governing Body Resources Committee

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Please refer to the Schedule of Delegation, which highlights the key aspects of the purchasing requirements.

1. The Chair of Governors has been appointed as Chief Officer to authorise orders and approve the purchasing procedures on behalf of the Governing Body. The Headteacher/Accounting Officer (or in their absence, the Deputy Head-Progress) has been appointed as Commissioning Officer and the School Business Manager (SBM) has been appointed as Contracts Officer. All purchasing appraisals and single tender permission forms must be signed by all the above.
2. The Governing Body have agreed to delegate the authority to contract goods and services to the Headteacher/Accounting Officer of the school for all purchases under £25,000.
3. Contracts and purchases up to £10,000 can be signed by the SBM. Between £10,000 and £20,000 contracts and purchases can be signed by the Deputy Head - Progress; contracts and purchases over £20,000 must be signed by the Headteacher (in addition to the normal requisition signature of the SBM).
4. Contracts and purchases over the sum of £25,000 will require the prior approval of the Finance and Audit Committee or Chair of Governors, in addition to the two school signatures. Contracts and purchases over £175,000 must be approved by the Full Governing Body.
5. Where the estimated cost for the supply of goods or services is in excess of £5,000 two quotations will be required and where the estimated cost is between £15,000 and £25,000 three quotations will be required. Quotations are to be given for

consideration to the Headteacher and SBM for contracts between £5,000 and £25,000 and the Finance and Audit Committee for contracts exceeding £25,000. The lower quotation will normally be accepted. The quotation other than the lowest may be accepted but only with the approval of the Chief Officer with reasons clearly noted.

6. For most high value tenders the school will use a consultant to run the tender procedure to ensure compliance with tender fairness rules. If the school deems a consultant unnecessary for the tender process, where tenders have been invited, the contractors will be told when and where to return the tenders and the tenders must only be opened at the appointed time and with at least one Governor and the Headteacher present. The results of the tender must be recorded, a report written and submitted to the Finance and Audit committee who will make the decision. Reasons for the decision must be recorded.
7. If it is estimated that the cost of a contract is above the Public Contracts Regulations (PCR) threshold for procurement, the School will seek legal advice and assistance, normally from Hertfordshire County Council, to ensure we run a PCR compliant procurement process. The current PCR threshold for all goods and most services is £214,904.
8. The value of a contract will be determined by calculating the estimated whole-life value of the goods, works or services, including any related fees.
9. Large value tenders will be evaluated against the criteria and weighting outlined in the tender document. Criteria may include: cost, quality, delivery times, performance, risk. Additional criteria may be included depending on the type of tender and will be outlined in the tender document.