

## Frequently Asked Questions

### What is classed as capital spending?

Schools can use their capital funding in areas such as building improvements, purchases of ICT, or any building refurbishments. The spend must be over a certain monetary value (capitalisation limit). This value can be set locally and will therefore vary throughout the country. Maintained schools have their capitalisation limit set for them by their local council. Academies set their own limits; this should be done by governors and the limits are reported in the annual financial statements.

If you are an Entrust customer and are unsure about whether a specific purchase you are planning can be classed as capital or not, please contact our helpdesk for further advice and assistance.

### Where can I find out more about government grants eg Sports Premium?

The best way to check which grants you are eligible to as a school is to check on the DfE website [www.gov.uk](http://www.gov.uk). Use the search box to search on the area to need to know more about. An example could be the PE and Sports Premium funding. To find out more about this funding you just need to type PE and Sports Grant funding into the search box on the home page. On these pages you will be able to check the criteria and, in some cases, view the actual funding allocations for your school. Users can sign up on [www.gov.uk](http://www.gov.uk) to receive email updates on a daily or weekly basis for maintained schools and/or academies.

Customers of Entrust all receive regular email updates and newsletters which contain all the latest school funding information in one handy document.

If you are interested in community or other organisation funding one of the websites that you can go to is Grants Online [www.grantsonline.org.uk](http://www.grantsonline.org.uk). Here you can view a list of funding programmes that are available that you may be eligible for. The website also allows you to filter your search to certain categories, but you may need to subscribe to view all the grants.

### What funding levels do we build in for future years?

School funding inflation is always a hard factor to judge as there are many contributing factors.

Our recommendation is to model many different scenarios to see what effect each percentage of additional/reduced income would have on the school. By doing such exercise, the school can then be prepared should such a change come to fruition.

A good tool to complete this scenario planning is the ICFP tool. This can be quickly updated to see what effect the change of income will have on the curriculum. To purchase Entrust's ICFP Tool please visit <https://www.schoolresourcemanagement.co.uk/digital-products>

### When can I use my procurement card?

Procurement cards are an important and useful tool in ensuring staff can achieve value for money when purchasing for the school. Purchasing cards allow the school to purchase appropriate goods/services efficiently and cost-effectively. They should be used to make appropriate, low-value, ad-hoc purchases without the need to raise a purchase order.

Some purchasing card examples are noted below:

1. The purchase is expected to be a one-off from a supplier not already set up on the school Finance System or where the school are required to pay by card to secure the price on offer.
2. The supplier only accepts card payments.
3. For staff needing to make purchases when offsite i.e. a school trip.
4. Purchases for staff business travel and accommodation.
5. The purchase cannot be made in a more cost-effective way

There is normally a transaction limit on the value of goods that can be purchased using the card and a monthly limit on expenditure. The card must be used in accordance with the terms and conditions set out by the card provider and school's Financial Procedures policy and Scheme of Delegation.

### **What percentage should my staffing costs be?**

A common figure given to this question is that staffing costs should be 80% of your total expenditure but the honest answer is that it depends on what phase/type of school you are. Your best option is to use benchmarking resources such as the DfE website (<https://schools-financial-benchmarking.service.gov.uk/>) to see what the percentages of statistically similar schools to yours are, and see how your own school compares to that.

### **Can I change my support staff from whole year to term time?**

Yes, this change can be made, but we strongly advise that you seek advice from your HR advisor to ensure the correct process is followed.

### **How long can I keep a member of staff on a temporary contract?**

To ensure that the employer is not in breach of any contractual rights, we strongly advise that you contract your HR advisor, if you have staff that are on temporary contracts for a considerable period.