

## Policies and Procedures

<b>Title:</b>	Travel Expenses
<b>Associated Policies and Procedures:</b>	Petty Cash
<b>1</b>	<b>Aims</b>
	<p>Northampton School for Girls is committed to ensuring that all staff and governors who travel on school-related business are reimbursed fairly and in accordance with best financial practices. This policy sets out clear guidelines on the reimbursement of travel expenses incurred while carrying out official school duties, ensuring transparency, accountability, and value for money.</p> <p>Our aim is to facilitate necessary travel in a cost-effective manner while upholding the school's financial integrity and compliance with relevant regulations. Travel should be undertaken only when essential, and staff should seek the most economical means of transport available. All claims must be supported by appropriate documentation and approved in line with the school's financial procedures.</p> <p>This policy aligns with the school's commitment to prudent financial management, fairness to employees, and compliance with applicable statutory obligations.</p>
<b>2.</b>	<b>Procedures</b>
	<p>To ensure a fair and transparent process for reclaiming travel expenses, the following procedures must be followed by all staff and governors seeking reimbursement for school-related travel:</p> <p><b>2.1. Pre-Approval for Travel</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>All travel requiring reimbursement must be approved in advance by the Headteacher or an authorised budget holder.</li> <li>Where possible, staff should use the most cost-effective travel options available.</li> <li>Staff should consider virtual alternatives before arranging travel, where practical.</li> </ul> <p><b>2.2. Eligible Expenses</b></p> <p>Reimbursement will be provided for the following travel-related expenses incurred while carrying out official school duties:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Public transport:</b> Standard class fares only. Receipts or tickets must be provided.</li> <li><b>Mileage for personal vehicle use:</b> Mileage will be reimbursed at the current HMRC-approved rate.</li> <li><b>Parking fees:</b> Reimbursable with a valid receipt. Fines and penalties will not be reimbursed.</li> <li><b>Taxi fares:</b> Only reimbursed with a valid receipt and in exceptional circumstances where no other reasonable transport is available, and prior approval has been obtained.</li> </ul> <p><b>2.3. Submission of Claims</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A <b>Travel Expense Claim Form</b> must be completed, to include details of the journey, purpose, and total expenses claimed. Forms are available from the Trust Finance Office.</li> <li>All claims must be submitted to the Finance Office within <b>two months</b> of the travel date. Late claims may not be processed unless exceptional circumstances apply.</li> <li>Claims received by the 15<sup>th</sup> of the month will be processed and paid as part of the payroll within the same month.</li> </ul>

- Original receipts, tickets, or invoices must be attached to the claim form as proof of expenditure. Photocopies will not be accepted unless pre-approved.
- Claims must be authorised by the Headteacher or designated approver before processing.

#### **2.4. Eligible Mileage**

- Only school-related travel may be claimed, which can include:
  - Attending off-site training, meetings or conferences
  - Transporting students or materials as part of official duties
- Regular commuting from home to school is not claimable
- Mileage must be claimed from base to venue unless home to venue is a shorter distance. In all cases start and finish points must be shown on the claim form.

#### **2.5. Payment of Claims**

- Approved claims will be processed through payroll and reimbursed via bank transfer in the next available payroll cycle.
- Claimants will be notified if any adjustments are required or if a claim is not eligible for reimbursement.

#### **2.6. Compliance and Auditing**

- All travel expense claims are subject to internal and external auditing. Any discrepancies or false claims may result in disciplinary action.
- Staff and governors must act responsibly and ensure that all claims reflect legitimate school business travel only.

These procedures are designed to ensure efficiency, fairness, and accountability in managing travel expenses, supporting the school's commitment to responsible financial management.

Reimbursement for expenses not relating to school-related travel should be made through the school Petty Cash Procedures.

### **3. Internal controls**

To ensure accountability, transparency, and the proper use of school funds, the following **internal controls** are in place for the **Travel Expenses Policy**:

#### **3.1 Pre-Approval and Authorisation**

- All travel requiring reimbursement must be pre-approved by the Headteacher, Business Manager or authorised budget holder.

#### **3.2 Documentation & Record Keeping**

- Travel Claim Forms must be completed in full supported by relevant original receipts, invoices or tickets.
- Copies of all submitted claims and supporting documents will be retained for auditing and compliance purposes.

#### **3.3 Verification and Approval of Claims**

- All claims must be signed off by the Headteacher or designated approver before processing.
- All claims must be checked by the School Business Manager to ensure expenses are valid and align with school business, the costs are reasonable and within agreed limits and the appropriate supporting evidence has been provided.
- Claims without sufficient documentation or exceeding approved limits may be rejected or require further justification.

	<p><b>3.4 Separation of Duties</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The Headteacher or authorised budget holder, School Business Manager and Senior Finance Assistant will handle different aspects of the process to ensure no individual has complete control over the entire reimbursement process, reducing the risk of fraud and errors.</li> </ul> <p><b>3.5 Audit and Compliance Monitoring</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>All travel expense claims are <b>subject to internal and external audits</b> as part of the school's financial controls.</li> <li>Any irregularities, false claims, or non-compliance with the policy may result in disciplinary action.</li> </ul> <p><b>3.6 Budgetary Control and Reporting</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Travel expenses are monitored regularly against the school budget to ensure financial sustainability.</li> <li>Any excessive or unnecessary travel costs may lead to policy adjustments to enhance cost-effectiveness.</li> </ul> <p>By implementing these internal controls, the school ensures that travel expenses are managed responsibly, reducing the risk of financial mismanagement while supporting necessary travel for school business.</p>
<b>5.</b>	<b>Monitoring and Review</b>
	<p>This policy is reviewed and updated annually to ensure that it is managed in accordance with current requirements and regulations.</p>