Governance Allowance Policy

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1. AIMS

Veritas Multi Academy Trust believes that paying governance allowances, in specific categories as set out below, is important in ensuring equality of opportunity for individuals to serve as Member, Trustees or Governors, for all members of the community. The specific items allowable reflect this objective.

2. DEFINITIONS

This policy applies to Governors within our Local Academy Committees (LAC), our Trustees on the Trust Board and the Members of Veritas Multi Academy Trust.

Any reference to 'Governors' in this policy relates to governors on the Local Academy Committee (LAC), 'Trustees' relates to those on the Trust Board and delegated Committees, and 'Members' of the Trust.

As a collective, they will be referred to under the term 'those governing' where the arrangements for allowances, refer to all.

3. LEGISLATION AND GUIDANCE

As an academy trust, we are mindful about the government's guidance on trustee expenses: what charities can pay as well as the requirements set out in the governance guide for academy trusts and the academy trust handbook.

This policy complies with our funding agreement and articles of association.

4. GENERAL PRINCIPLES

Those governing will be entitled to claim allowances to cover expenditure necessary to enable them to perform their duties.

Those governing may claim reasonable costs for:

- **Childcare or babysitting allowances** up to a maximum of £10 per hour. This is only where those governing do not have an alternative, suitable adult to care for a child(ren) during the time fulfilling their duties. Claims must be pre-limited to reimbursing the actual cost paid to the childcare provider. The Trust will not cover payments to a current/former spouse or part
- **Cost of care arrangements for an elderly or dependent relative** up to a maximum of £10 per hour. Claims must be pre-approved by a request to the Governance Professional and claims will be limited to reimbursing the actual cost paid to a care provider. The Trust will not cover payments to a current/former spouse or partner.
- **Extra costs reasonably incurred** because they:
  - Have a medical need or a disability (and may need, for example, a signer or braille documentation). Note: wherever possible, governors/trustees should inform the Governance Professional about any reasonable adjustments they may need, as soon as possible, so that the adjustments can be put in place where possible

- or because English is not their first language and may need, for example, translated documentation.

- **Travel and subsistence costs**
  - Car and motorbike mileage may be claimed for the purpose of attendance at meetings of the governing board or its committees or other agreed activities. Claims will be reimbursed at a rate not exceeding HM Revenue and Customs' approved mileage rate of 45p per mile (below 10,000 miles).
  - Public transport, at a standard class rate, for the purpose of attendance at meetings of the governing board or its committees or other agreed activities, with prior approval from the Governance Professional, will be payable at the current rates specified by the Secretary of State for the Environment, Transport and the Regions.
  - Car parking or bike storage, for charges that otherwise would not have been incurred
  - Meal/subsistence for meals that would not otherwise have been purchased, up to a maximum of £10
  - Telephone charges, photocopying, stationery, postage etc. However, those governing should use School/Trust facilities prior to making any claims.
  - Any other justifiable allowances deemed reasonable by the Governance Professional, via the Board of Trustees.

- **Staff Governor Time Allowance**

Veritas MAT encourages staff members to serve in governance, either within our own schools as Staff Governors, or within the wider community.

The Trust permits a time allowance of a maximum of 2 working days' paid leave, to allow staff members to conduct their governance roles and duties.

As per the Staff Absence Policy and Procedures, staff should request this time with ample notice via their line manager and formally request this via the Every HR portal.

Monitoring of this may be required from time to time.

Veritas MAT Board of Trustees acknowledges that:

Those governing are not paid attendance allowance

- Those governing are not reimbursed for
    - loss of earnings
    - Travel or accommodation for spouses, partners or family members
    - Excessive costs, for example, on travel
    - Telephone or other communication costs for business unrelated to carrying out their duties
    - Costs of training or training materials that are unrelated to their duties (including those relating to those governing in their professional or academic interests).

Governors wishing to make claims under these arrangements, once prior approval has been sought, should complete a claim form (attaching receipts where possible) and return it to the Governance Professional within two weeks of the date when the expenses were incurred.

If a claim is deemed reasonable, the Governance Professional will submit this to the Finance Team for a review process, prior to reimbursement. All claims can be submitted to the Business Committee for final approval, if required. The Business Group can approve claims up to £500. Claims above this limit will be referred to the Trust Board for final approval.

Claims will be subject to independent audit and may be investigated by the Business Committee if they appear excessive or inconsistent. Claims will also form part of the Trust's annual financial audit.

This policy will be reviewed every two years.

VERITAS MAT online claims form:

Governance online travel and expenses claim form

This form will be allocated for approval to the Governance Professional and progressed for payment by VMAT Finance via **finance@veritasmat.co.uk**