

Service Description

The purpose of the School Buyers' Network (SBN) is to bring school buyers and sellers together in the marketplace. This brokerage service offers general advice and access to tailored procurement solutions, via membership of a network, which addresses school-specific needs.

The Network's aims are:

- ▶ to promote actively an open market of potential suppliers (internal and external) to schools in order that schools can exercise Best Value, obtain Value for Money and achieve savings.
- ▶ to facilitate schools in operating as groups, clusters or in any other model in order to organise, stimulate and purchase goods and services that are relevant to the education sector, are pre-evaluated and quality assured.
- ▶ to assist schools by ensuring that they have the relevant information, knowledge and skills to be better purchasers of goods and services which are fit for purpose.
- ▶ to ensure that the support given remains completely independent with no commercial interests involved or commissions to earn.

Given that schools can use their delegated budgets to buy from a wide range of suppliers, the key principle behind this service is to facilitate the delivery of the best goods and services to members, regardless of who the provider is.

The MKC Corporate Procurement team works in tandem with the Children & Families' (C&F) Brokerage team. If schools have individual procurement needs or queries, these should be submitted to the Brokerage team, in the first instance. Should transactional or specialist support then be required from the Corporate Procurement function, the Brokerage team will make a referral to appropriate colleague(s).

What The School Buyers' Network Will Do

We will:

- ▶ meet regularly with suppliers to review what they can offer. In particular those suppliers that are able to provide a definitive level of quality assurance and/or discounted pricing e.g. they have contracts with MKC or other LAs, the Central Buying Consortium, the PRO 5 Group or the Government Procurement Service - Buying Solutions. We will issue regular newsletters and supplier profiles to member schools to share this information;
- ▶ identify, on an on-going basis, goods and service areas that may be suitable for brokered / aggregated procurement and that will deliver savings as a result of purchase volumes. The interest of member schools in potential procurement areas will be gauged via full consultation;
- ▶ fulfil the role of Client Officer by organising group or cluster purchasing arrangements on behalf of member schools - via framework arrangements or central contracts. SBN members can choose to take part in group procurement arrangements that are of interest to them but do not have to participate in others;
- ▶ undertake on-going monitoring of suppliers' goods and services against the specification and evaluation criteria, for brokered procurement arrangements, on behalf of member schools;
- ▶ host an annual conference for school finance / bursarial staff on topics of current interest, including access to and presentations from potential / new suppliers of goods and services;
- ▶ give advisory support to school secretaries, bursars and business managers in relation to services provided by external companies, MKC departments and the Council's strategic partner. Act as a first point-of-contact for schools when seeking help with operational queries and addressing service provision shortfalls that are causing concern;

- ▶ schools that have an individual procurement requirement will be supported by the Council's Corporate Procurement team within the scope of the School Buyers' Network. If a school wishes to issue an individual tender, the Brokerage team will first be able to give general guidance on your writing of a tender specification and drawing up MEAT criteria, as well as providing schools with generic terms and conditions of contract, prior to referral to appropriate colleague(s) in Corporate Procurement. The Corporate Procurement team will then provide specialist advice to schools (e.g. compliance with OJEU regulations) and e-tendering processes via MKC's e-tendering portal, In-Tend. **This 'pay as used' support is provided at an hourly rate of £40 p/hr from the Corporate Procurement Team.**
- ▶ goods and services can be purchased more economically than by a school individually and can deliver substantial savings to a school's budget because of the potential economies of scale that are achievable by group procurement;
- ▶ using the knowledge and experience of school procurement available via the C&F Brokerage team (which in turn is backed up by MKC's strategic and technical Corporate Procurement function), means that schools do not have to develop their own expertise in a less comprehensive and cost effective way;
- ▶ members will have the reassurance that the procurement information and support provided will help schools to comply with their statutory and financial obligations.

What The Client Will Do

The School Client will:

- ▶ make best use of the procurement advice given;
- ▶ make purchasing decisions in accordance with MKC's procurement procedural rules or those which apply to academy schools;
- ▶ negotiate timescales for support from the Brokerage and Corporate Procurement teams.

Benefits of the School Buyers' Network

The main benefits are:

- ▶ membership of the Network will save schools' time in sourcing, dealing and evaluating service providers, especially in specialist and technical areas of supply;
- ▶ goods and services purchased by schools, as a result of information provided by the Network, should present less risk in that suppliers will have been pre-evaluated via tender processes and / or a level of quality assurance will have been sought;

Price of The Service in 2012/2013

Price freeze! There are 3 membership bands for the School Buyers' Network (subject to fair use) for maintained, voluntary aided, foundation and academy schools:

Small Schools / PECs (with under 105 pupils)	£498 p.a.
Medium Schools (primary & special sector with more than 105 pupils)	£995 p.a.
Large Schools (secondary sector)	£1990 p.a.

In 12/13 we can provide the School Buyers' Network service to a CLUSTER of PRIMARY schools. We are able to offer a quotation for this membership option. Please contact us for more information by e-mail to: SBN@milton-keynes.gov.uk.

Method and Timing of Payments

Clients will receive one invoice in September.

Length of Agreement and Notice Period

Membership is offered as a 1 year Fixed Term contract. No notice period is available for this service.

Additional Option - For SBN Members

Occasional Business Use Insurance

This is an OPTIONAL extra available to SBN member schools ONLY via the Brokerage Team

The Brokerage team has an agreement with Marsh Brokers Ltd, in order that they can provide member schools with the above cover – via a group arrangement – administered by us. Marsh provides a policy – Occasional Business Use Insurance – that covers school staff when using their cars on school business.

The policy's main benefits are:

- ▶ it covers school staff (including full and part-time), spouses of staff, governors, parents and guardians when using their private cars off site on school business. This includes off site journeys on behalf of the school and when transporting pupils. The cover is provided on a comprehensive basis, for a financial year;

- ▶ examples of when this cover would apply are:
 - taking a pupil to hospital/home in an emergency,
 - travelling to a meeting or conference in relation to school business,
 - transporting children to a school football match, on behalf of the school.
- ▶ the policyholder is the school and individual details of those to be covered are NOT required. An indication of the number of staff members to be covered by the policy each year is a pre-requisite. This makes the application/administration process simple.

School Buyers' Network will forward your application for cover to Marsh and policy documentation will be issued via SBN. We will pay Marsh Brokers direct under the group arrangement and will then recover the cost - on an individual footing - from each school after 1 April 2012.

Please note, if claims are made, they are dealt with directly by Marsh NOT SBN. Information about who to contact in Marsh when making a claim will be issued to participating schools.

Pricing starts from just £100 to cover up to 10 staff, please contact us for further information on the above policy and pricing levels.

Contact Point

Contact: School Buyers' Network /
The Brokerage Team
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Email: SBN@milton-keynes.gov.uk

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& Business Dev Manager
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