

Best Value Statement/Policy

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1. Introduction

The Board of Trustees is accountable for the way in which the academy trust's resources are allocated to meet the objectives set out in the academy trust's development plans.

Best Value is not a statutory requirement and does not apply formally to governing bodies in their use of delegated and devolved budgets. However, Trustees need to secure the best possible outcome for pupils, in the most efficient and effective way, at a reasonable cost. This will lead to continuous improvement in the academy trust's achievements and services.

2. What is Best Value?

- **Value for Money (VFM)** is at the core of 'best value'. VFM is not geared towards accepting the lowest cost but is about getting the right balance between quality and cost.

The three elements of VFM are:

- **Economy:** minimising the costs of resources used.
- **Efficiency:** relationship between outputs and the resources used to produce them.
- **Effectiveness:** extent to which objectives have been achieved.

- **Best Value** goes beyond the value for money principles extending the idea that effective use of resources and close partnership with those served by the Trust. It leads to:

- continuous improvement
- raising standards of education

- **Four principles of Best Value**

Trustees see applying the four principles of best value as an opportunity to improve the ways in which management decisions are made:

a) Challenge

Regularly review the functions of the academy and **challenge**.

Is the academy's performance high enough?

What do we need to achieve?

Why and how is a service provided?

Do we still need it, or can it be delivered differently?

b) Compare

Monitor outcomes of the students and financial performance and **compare**.

What are we achieving and how does it compare with what we should be achieving?

How does the academy's pupil performance and financial performance compare with all academies/schools?

How does it compare with other local academies and LA schools?

c) Consult

Consult appropriate stakeholders before major decisions are made.

How does the academy seek the views of stakeholders:

Internal: pupils/parents/staff/governing body

External: professional associations/LA/DfE/Diocese/Local community/suppliers/neighbouring schools & academies, early years providers/ destinations for leavers such as colleges

about the services the school provides?

d) Compete

Promote fair and open **competition** through quotations and tenders.

How does the academy secure efficient and effective services?

Are services of appropriate quality and are they economical?

Are we maximising on buying power through collaboration within the MAT or with other local schools?

4. The Trustee's Approach

The trustees and academy staff will apply the principles of **best value** when making decisions about the:

- Allocation of resources to best promote the aims and values of the academy.
- Targeting of resources to best improve standards and the quality of provision.
- Use of resources to best support the various educational needs of all pupils

The trustees and academy staff, will:

- Make comparisons with other/similar academies using data provided by the Government, e.g. ASP (Analyse School Performance), quality of teaching & learning, levels of expenditure.
- Challenge proposals, examining them for effectiveness, efficiency, and cost, e.g. setting of annual pupil achievement targets.
- Require suppliers to compete on grounds of cost, quality and suitability of service, product and backup, e.g. provision of computer suite, redecoration.
- Consult individuals and organisations on quality and/or suitability of service we provide to parents and pupils, and services we receive from providers.

This will apply in particular to:

- Staffing
- Use of premises and resources
- Quality of teaching and learning
- Purchasing
- Student's welfare
- Health and safety.

Trustees and academy staff will not waste time and resources:

- investigating minor areas where few improvements can be achieved.
- to make minor savings in costs.
- by seeking tenders for minor supplies and services.

The pursuit of minor improvements or savings is not cost effective if the administration involves substantial time or costs. Time wasted on minor improvements or savings can also distract management from more important or valuable areas.

Trustees and academy staff will:

- **Staffing** - deploy staff to provide best value in terms of quality of teaching, quality of learning, adult-pupil ratio and curriculum management.
- **Use of Premises** - consider the allocation and use of teaching areas, support areas and communal areas; to provide the best environment for teaching & learning, for support services, and for communal access to central resources, e.g. the library.
- **Use of Resources** - deploy equipment, materials and services to provide pupils and staff with resources which support quality of teaching and quality of learning.
- **Teaching** - review the quality of curriculum provision and quality of teaching, to provide parents and pupils with a balanced and broadly based curriculum which satisfies the requirements of section 78 of the Education Act 2002, the LA Agreed RE Syllabus, and the needs of pupils of different abilities; and which builds on previous learning and has high expectations of achievement. Personal, social, health and economic education (PSHE) should also be included, drawing on good practice. For 16 to 19 Academies, 'education' includes vocational, social, physical and recreational training. For Secondary academies, sex and relationship education must also be included. Teachers must take account of the needs of pupils whose first language is not English.
- **Learning** - review the quality of pupils' learning, by cohort, class and group, to provide teaching which enables children to achieve nationally expected progress, e.g. monitoring progress against annual pupil achievement targets.
- **Purchasing** - develop procedures for assessing need, and obtaining goods and services which provide "best value" in terms of suitability, efficiency, time, and cost. Measures already in place include:
 - competitive tendering procedures (e.g. for goods and services above £50,000).
 - utilising supplier frameworks offered through the Crown Commercial Services as recommended by the DfE for which competitive quotations are not required.
 - procedures for accepting competitive quotes based on suitability for purpose and quality of workmanship, between £5,000-£50,000.
 - procedures which minimise office time by the purchase of goods or services under £5,000 direct from known, reliable suppliers (e.g. stationery, small equipment).

Staff and Pupils' Welfare - review the quality of the academy environment and the academy ethos, in order to provide a supportive environment conducive to learning and recreation.

- **Health & Safety** - review the quality of the academy environment and equipment, carrying out risk assessments where appropriate, to provide a safe working environment for pupils, staff and visitors.

5. Monitoring

The Board will set performance indicators as part of their Trustees'/governors Annual Development Plan Meeting. These will be monitored for best value by:

- In-house monitoring by the Headteachers and curriculum managers, e.g. classroom practice, work sampling
- Termly target setting meetings between the Headteachers and curriculum managers
- Annual Performance Management of all staff
- Annual Budget Planning
- Headteacher's monthly financial review
- Regular meetings to review and monitor the budget and report to the Finance committee
- Analysis of pupil performance data, e.g. SATs results, standardised test results, 11+ results against all academies and similar LA schools
- Benchmark data for all academies and LA schools and analyse the results
- Analysis of DfE pupil performance data, e.g. ASP (Analyse School Performance)
- Ofsted Inspection reports
- Trustees'/governors' termly classroom observations
- Trustees' termly committee meetings
- Trustees' full termly meetings
- Trustees' Annual Finance Review
- Trustees' Annual SATs Target Setting Meeting

The Board of Trustees will:

- Hold an annual performance plan meeting to set targets for improving pupil achievement.
- Hold an annual School Development Plan meeting.
- Review the "Best Value" statement annually and discuss how "Best Value" principles are applied within the academy.
- Consider best value when arranging internal and external redecoration contracts.
- Obtain tenders and relevant consultant's advice on the installation of an IT suite, and any large-scale refurbishment of the premises.
- Obtain assessment management surveys.
- Maintain a complete asset register.

6. Links to other policies

This Best Value Policy relates to other relevant academy policies and professional expectations, including:

- Procurement Policy

- Academy Code of Conduct
- Financial Regulations and Financial Scheme of Delegation
- School Operational Procedures
- Capitalisation and Depreciation Policy
- Revenue Reserves Policy