

Schools Financial Value Standard (SFVS)

Introduction

Schools manage many billions of pounds of public money each year. Effective financial management ensures this money is spent wisely and properly, and allows schools to optimise their resources to provide high-quality teaching and learning and so raise standards and attainment for all their pupils. The SFVS replaces the Financial Management Standard in Schools (FMSiS) and has been designed in conjunction with schools to assist them in managing their finances and to give assurance that they have secure financial management in place.

Who is the SFVS for?

The standard is a requirement for all local authority maintained schools. Governing bodies have formal responsibility for the financial management of their schools, and so the standard is primarily aimed at governors.

What is the role of local authorities (LAs)?

Unlike FMSiS, the SFVS will not be externally assessed. LAs should use schools' SFVS returns to inform their programme of financial assessment and audit. LA and other auditors will have access to the standard, and when they conduct an audit can check whether the self-assessment is in line with their own judgement. Auditors should make the governing body and the LA aware of any major discrepancies in judgements.

What do the Standard consist of?

The standard consists of 23 questions which governing bodies should formally discuss annually with the head teacher and senior staff. The questions are in four sections

- The Governing Body and School Staff
- Setting the Budget
- Value for Money
- Protecting Public Money

The questions which form the standard are in sections A to D and each question requires an answer of Yes, In Part, or No with supporting details, hyperlinks and remedial action where relevant. In Section E, governors should summarise remedial actions and the timetable for reporting back. Governors should ensure that each action has a specified deadline and an agreed owner.

The governing body may delegate the consideration of the questions to a finance or other relevant committee, but a detailed report should be provided to the full governing body and the chair of governors must sign the completed form.

Details of submission are set out on the Barnet SFVS form also on this website.

Further information is contained on the DfE website includes support notes for each question, which governing bodies can use if they wish. The notes provide clarification of the questions, examples of good practice and information on further support to assist schools in addressing specific issues.

Timetable – key dates

For all maintained schools, the DfE require completion of the Standard by 31 March 2013; and an annually thereafter. However Barnet schools are asked to submit their completed forms to the local authority **by 1 December** each year for checking.