



Best Value Statement May 2025

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Fern Academy Trust Best Value Statement

Introduction

The Governing Board is accountable for the way in which the school's resources are allocated to meet the objectives set out in the school's development plan. Governors 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 school's achievements and services.

What is Best Value?

Governors will apply the four principles of best value:

Challenge – Is the school's/trust's performance high enough? Why and how is a service provided? Do we still need it? Can it be delivered differently? What do parents/stakeholders want?

Compete – To secure economic, efficient and effective services.

Compare – How does the school's/trust's pupil performance and financial performance compare with all schools? How does it compare with similar schools?

Consult – How does the school/trust secure efficient and effective services? Are services of appropriate quality and economic value?

The Governors' Approach

The Governors and the Senior Leadership Team will apply the principles of best value when making decisions about:

- The allocation of resources to best promote the aims and values of the school.
- The targeting of resources to best improve standards and the quality of provision.
- The use of resources to best support the various educational needs of all pupils.

Governors and the Senior Leadership Team will:

- Make comparisons with other/similar schools using data provided by the LA and Government, e.g. DfE benchmarking, quality of teaching & learning, levels of expenditure.
- Challenge proposals, examining them for effectiveness, efficiency, and cost, e.g. setting of classes, use of teaching assistants.
- Require suppliers to compete on grounds of cost, and quality/suitability of services/products/backup, e.g. redecoration, IT services.
- Consult individuals and organisation on quality/suitability of services we provide to parents and pupils, and services we receive from providers, e.g. OFSTED, maintenance arrangements, Hoople, LA services, health provision, psychological services, School Nurse service.

This will apply in particular to:

- Staffing
- Use of premises
- Use of resources
- Quality of teaching and learning
- Purchasing
- Pupil welfare/Safeguarding
- Health and safety

Governors and school managers:

- Will not waste time and resources on investigating minor areas where few improvements can be achieved.
- Will not waste time and resources to make minor savings in cost.
- Will not waste time and resources 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.

Staffing

Governors and school leaders will deploy staff to provide best value in terms of quality of teaching, quality of learning, adult-pupil ratio and curriculum management.

Use of Premises

Governors and school leaders will 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, hall etc.

Use of Resources

Governors and school leaders will deploy equipment, materials and service to provide pupils and staff with resources, which support quality of teaching and quality of learning.

Teaching

Governors and the Senior Leadership Team will review the quality of curriculum provision and quality of teaching, to provide parents and pupils with:

- A curriculum which meets the requirements of the revised National Curriculum, the LA Agreed RE Syllabus and the needs of pupils.
- Teaching which builds on previous learning and has high expectations of children's achievement and meets their individual needs to enhance life choices.

Learning

Governors and the Senior Leadership Team will review the quality of children's learning, by cohort, class and group, to provide teaching which enables children to achieve at/above nationally expected levels, with a focus on appropriate and effective use of pupil premium grants and rigorous/robust tracking of all pupils (individually and by group).

Purchasing

Governors and the Senior Leadership Team will 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 £100,000)
- Procedures for accepting "best value" quotes, which are not necessarily the cheapest (e.g. suitability for purpose and quality of workmanship).
- Procedures which minimise office time by the purchase of goods or services under £10,000 direct from known, reliable suppliers (e.g. stationery, small equipment).

Pupils' Welfare

Governors and the Senior Leadership Team will review the quality of the school environment and the school ethos, in order to provide a supportive environment conducive to learning and recreation.

Health and Safety

Governors and the Senior Leadership Team will review the quality of the school environment and equipment, carrying out risk assessments where appropriate, in order to provide a safe working environment for pupils, staff and visitors.

Monitoring

These areas will be monitors for best value by:

1. In-house monitoring by the CEO, Headteacher and curriculum managers
2. Annual Performance Management
3. Annual Budget Planning
4. CEO's regular financial reviews with administrators & governors.
5. Analysis of school & national pupil performance data, e.g. SATs results, standardised test results, comparison with similar schools.
6. Analysis of LA financial data e.g. LMS & Finance monthly print outs, benchmark data for all schools/ LA schools/ similar schools.
7. OFSTED Inspection reports.
8. Analysis of pupil performance data, e.g. Scholarpack
9. Governors' committee meetings
10. Governors' Annual Finance Review

In the next three years the Governing Board will:

- a. Hold a performance plan meeting to set targets for improving pupil achievement.
- b. Hold an annual development plan meeting
- c. Discuss the "Best Value" statement annually
- d. Consider best value when arranging internal and external redecoration contracts
- e. Review asset management surveys from LA – asbestos, sufficiency survey etc