

Schools Financial Value Standard (SFVS)

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Understanding SFVS

Local Authority (LA) maintained schools must submit the Schools Financial Value Standard (SFVS) annually to their LA. The LAs use this information to inform their programme of financial assessment and audit.

Local authorities submit an assurance statement every year to cover all the maintained schools in their area.

The SFVS checklist asks questions of governing bodies in 6 areas of resource management. It links to guidance that provides clarification for each question, examples of good practice, and details of further support available to assist schools in addressing specific issues.

The SFVS checklist guidance and additional resource documents are appropriate for the 2025/26 reporting year. The checklist is identical to that for the 2024/25 reporting year.

The LA feels that the document creates overall governance in schools, provides the right balance between ownership and accountability, protects Business Managers, gives guidance in terms of best practice and better deployment of resources, ensures honest responses are provided and allows schools to reflect where they are and where they need to improve.

The LA continues to expect that School Business Managers will assist in the completion of the return before the document is discussed and signed off by Governors.

The Checklist

Schools financial value standard (SFVS) checklist

The schools financial value standard (SFVS) helps to provide schools with assurance that they are meeting the basic standards necessary to achieve a good level of financial health and resource management.

The SFVS checklist asks a number of questions of governing bodies in six areas of resource management to provide assurance that the school is managing its resources effectively. This can be used to identify possible areas for change to ensure that resources are being used to support high-quality teaching and the best education outcomes for pupils.

The checklist was formerly part of a tool that also contained a dashboard. This is now available on the schools financial benchmarking website. It shows how a school's data compares to thresholds on a range of statistics that have been identified as indicators for good resource management and outcomes, which will help you to complete your checklist.

School name:	Click or tap here to enter text.
School LA/Estab number:	Click or tap here to enter text.

Answer Comments, evidence and proposed actions

A. Governance

		Q1 guidance	Choose an item.	
1	In the view of the governing body and senior staff, does the governing body have adequate and up-to-date financial skills among its members to fulfil its role of challenge and support in the field of budget management and value for money? Is there a plan in place to address any gaps?	Q1 guidance	Choose an item.	
2	Does the governing body have a finance committee, or equivalent, with clear terms of reference and a knowledgeable and experienced chair?	Q2 guidance	Choose an item.	
3	Does the governing body receive clear and concise monitoring reports of the school's budget position at least 6	Q3 guidance	Choose an item.	

The checklist has 30 questions covering six key areas of resource management.

Section A) Financial Management and Governance (5 Questions)

Section B) Strategy (3 Questions)

Section C) Setting the annual budget (5 Questions)

Section D) Staffing (4 Questions)

Section E) Value for money (7 Questions)

Section F) Protecting public money (6 Questions)

Within the checklist on the return, guidance is included which provides clarification for each question ([Blue Links](#)), examples of good practice, and details of further support available to assist schools in addressing specific issues.

Certain questions require evidence to be submitted with your SFVS return, below are the questions and guidance on the evidence expected.

Evidence required when submitting your schools SFVS

All Schools

Question 26 – Are there adequate arrangements in place to manage related party transactions and has a complete list of related party transactions been appended to the checklist document (see template for recording related party transactions).

Evidence required – provide a completed related party transactions template of any value. A nil return is not required.

Only For Schools that ended 2024/25 with a Deficit Carry Forward

Question 3 – Does the governing body receive clear and concise monitoring reports of the school's budget position at least six times a year.

Evidence required - Copies of the **written** financial monitoring reports provided to Governors in advance of the meeting, to include the written report detailing the year-end financial position. This should not be copies of the Governing Body minutes, but the reports presented at the meetings.

The LA does not expect the Finance Committee to meet six times a year, if the Finance Committee meets three times a year and the Full Governing Body meet three times a year (as long as finance is discussed at the Full Governing Body) then this will meet the criteria.

Question 9 – Does the school set a well-informed and balanced three year budget and has this been submitted to the local authority?

Evidence required - copy of the **written** report provided to Governors in advance of the meeting detailing the budget for the year. Please note this should not be the Medium Term Finance Plan (MTFP) or a copy of

the Governor minutes where the budget was approved, but the report that should accompany the presentation of the budget to the Finance Committee or Full Governing Body.


Related Party Transactions (RPTs)

Schools are required to evidence that they have arrangements in place to manage related party transactions. A related party transaction is a contract or agreement between the school and person that has close links to the school. These can be:

- A member of the governing body
- A member of school staff
- A close relative of either a governor or staff

Where any of these people have a stake in a company or organisation that was bidding for a contract to be awarded by the school then the governor or the member of staff concerned must declare this interest as it arises and take no part in the procurement procedure.

The school should have a record of any related party transactions that have been arrived at through the proper procedures and should append a list to the checklist using the published template for recording related party transactions.



Value of all Contracts	£0
Spend in current year	£0

This template should be completed by schools to record any Related Party Transactions (RPTs) that have been arrived at through proper procedures. This should be appended to the SFVS checklist to be submitted to the Local Authority (LA).

An RPT is a contract or agreement between the school and person that has close links to the school. These can be:

- A member of the governing body
- A member of school staff
- A close relative of either a governor or staff

Where any of these people have a stake in a company or organisation that was bidding for a contract to be awarded by the school then the governor or the member of staff concerned must declare this interest as it arises and take no part in the procurement procedure.

This template should be updated each time a school enters into an RPT and submitted to the LA. Additional rows can be added.

For any RPTs over £40k, additional information is required, please see separate tab

Ref No	Cost Centre	School Name	Start date of contract	End date of contract	Value of contract	Spend in current financial year	Name of Supplier	Position of related member of staff/governor	Relationship with supplier	Was an appropriate procurement process followed in accordance with your LA's procurement rules?	Did the governing body approve the RPT?
1											
2											
3											
4											
5											
6											
7											
8											

< >
RPT Template
Additional Info for over £40k
How to embed evidence
+

Create New **Create from File**

File name:

Link to file
 Display as icon

Result

Submission Dates

The LA can determine the submission date.

Completed returns should have been submitted by **13th March 2026** to:

SchoolFinanceReturns@lincolnshire.gov.uk

The form and guidance notes can be found in the following location on the Government's website.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/schools-financial-value-standard-sfvs>