

Governing the finances (maintained schools)

What are you budgeting for?

Basic and more advanced skills for planning and monitoring

Rory McCormack



18th January 2023

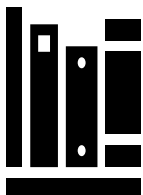


*“Annual income twenty pounds,
annual expenditure nineteen pounds,
nineteen and sixpence, result
happiness.*

*Annual income twenty pounds, annual
expenditure twenty pounds, ought and
sixpence, result misery.”*

Mr Micawber in Charles Dickens' 'David Copperfield'

Session Objectives



- Understand your duties as a Governor re. funding
- Understand why schools are financed in the way they are
- Understand how school finances are generated
- The key points to be aware of relating to school budgets and funding.
- Basic understanding of budget plans and what they contain
- What to look for in budget plans
- Understand what the budget is for and are we getting value for money
- Areas to be aware of/investigate/question/understand following “Covid related” situation

Role of Governors



Governance handbook

**Academy trusts and maintained
schools**

October 2020

Role of Governors

Effective Governance

- Ensuring clarity of vision, ethos and strategic direction;
- Holding executive leaders to account for the educational performance of the organisation and its pupils, and the effective and efficient performance management of staff; and
- **Overseeing the financial performance of the organisation and making sure its money is well spent**

“Governance Handbook”; p.13

Role of Governors

Effective governance is based on six key features:

1. Strategic leadership that sets and champions vision, ethos and strategy.
2. Accountability that drives up educational standards and financial performance.
3. People with the right skills, experience, qualities and capacity.
4. Structures that reinforce clearly defined roles and responsibilities.
5. Compliance with statutory and contractual requirements.
6. Evaluation to monitor and improve the quality and impact of governance

“Governance Handbook” p.13

3rd Key strategic role;

Key financial roles:

- Manage the school budget-these are public funds
- Decide on how to spend the delegated school budget, depending on any conditions for maintained schools (set out in the local authority scheme for financing schools) or academies
- Be consulted by their local authority on funding
- Ensure accurate school accounts are kept
- Determine the number & type of staff & a pay policy in accordance with the School Teachers' pay & Conditions
- Act as a `critical friend` to the headteacher by providing advice, challenge & support

Strategic Financial Tasks

- Approval of the Annual budget
- Approval of the Financial Management Plan/Policy
- Setting financial priorities through the School development plan
- Determination of the staff complement and pay policy for the school
- Approval of a Best Value statement
- Internal financial procedures - authorisation of non budgeted expenditure and virements, *based on the Financial Management Policy (see above)*



Age Group	Percentage
18-24	10%
25-34	20%
35-44	25%
45-54	20%
55-64	15%
65-74	10%
75-84	5%
85+	5%

- Governors have collective responsibility for important financial decisions in the schools and are answerable to parents and the wider community.
- Do you have the right financial skills on the Governing body?
- How do you know?
- <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/schools-financial-value-standard-sfvs>

Financial, legislative & system oversight																
Financial planning/management (e.g. as part of your job)	E	3	5	4	4	2	2									5
Experience of procurement/purchasing	D	3	5	4	4	2	2									3
Experience of premises and facilities management	D	3	3	3	3	3	2									3
Formal Health & Safety experience (e.g. risk assessments)	D	2	3	2	2	3	2									3
Legal Insight (ideally within an educational environment)	D	3	4	3	3	5	2									2
ICT and/or management information system planning	D	3	4	2	3	1	2									5
Knowing your school and community																

Financial Skills

Guidance

Schools financial value standard (SFVS)

The standard helps schools and local authorities meet basic standards for good financial health and resource management.

From: [Department for Education](#)
Published: 28 February 2019
Last updated: 8 March 2021, [see all updates](#)

Applies to: **England**

Documents



[Schools financial value standard](#)

XLSM, 178KB

This file may not be suitable for users of assistive technology.

► [Request an accessible format.](#)



[Checklist guidance](#)

HTML

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

SFVS checklist

Introduction to the 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.

Outcome of schools financial value standard (SFVS)

Summary of agreed action and timetable for reporting back:

Signature: (Chair of governing body / management committee)	Click or tap here to enter text.
Full name of signatory:	Click or tap here to enter text.
Date SFVS agreed by full governing body / management committee:	Click or tap here to enter text.
Date SFVS submitted to local authority for review:	Click or tap here to enter text.

Schools financial value standard (SFVS) checklist

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School name:	Click or tap here to enter text.
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How is finance delivered - 1

- Funding Formulae – local and national
- National funding formulae

“Under a ‘soft’ system, we use the national funding formula to set notional budgets for each school. These are aggregated to give the total schools block & budget for each local authority. You can see the notional budget for each school, and the aggregated schools block funding for each local authority, published alongside this document. For the next two years, local authorities will continue to set a local formula to distribute their schools block funding, in consultation with their local schools and their schools forum.

“The national funding formula, DfE 2023/24”

- Each school then sent its allocation via the funding certificate from the Local Authority.
- Governors + HT + School Business Manager then allocate the funding as they feel it should be.

How is finance delivered - 2

- Mainly determined by numbers on roll
 - Census taken every term but October one primarily determines funding (**maintained schools**)
 - Age of children can be a factor – basically older children worth more – Early Years?
 - Other factors in local formulae e.g. :
 - Condition of premises
 - Small school protections etc
- Govt want to get away from these localised factors using a national funding formula

Big picture – school formula funding -includes



The national funding formulae for schools and high needs

2023-24

July 2022

National Funding Formula

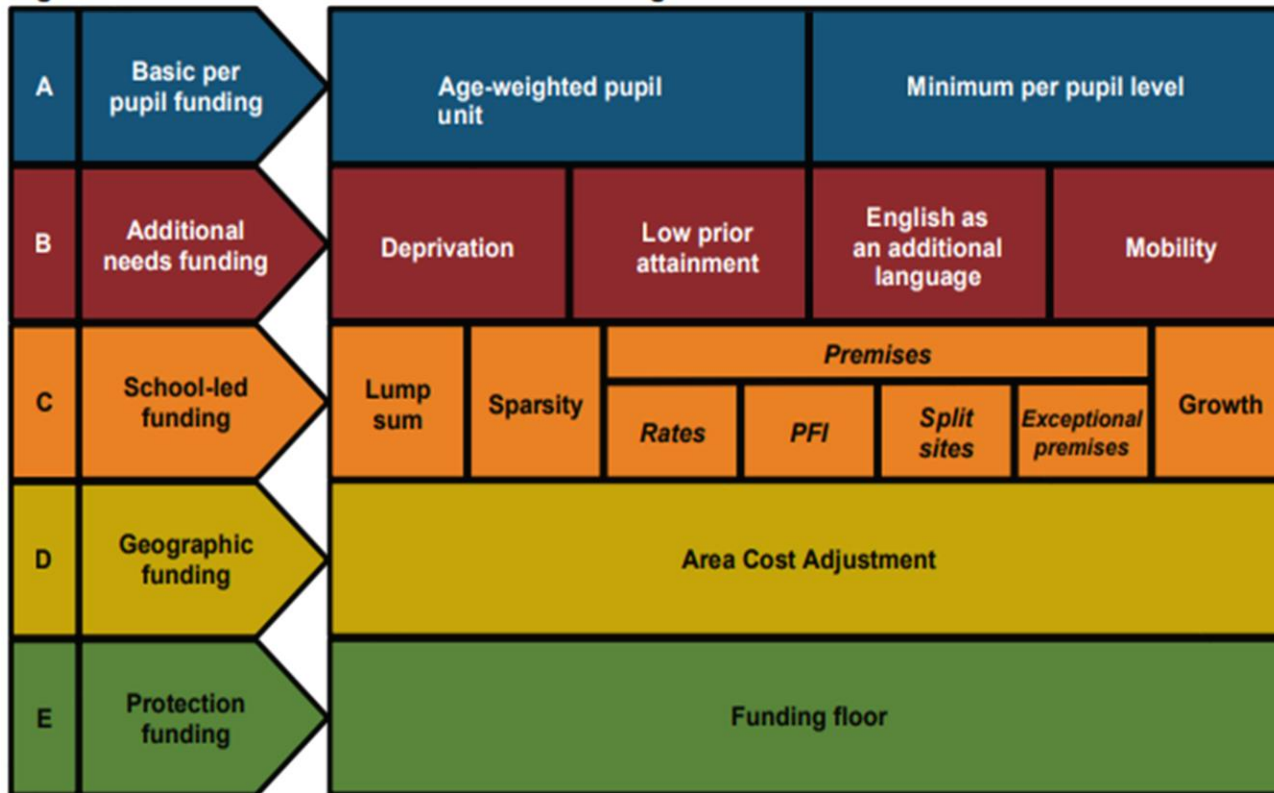
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Factors in the national funding formula

Figure 1: Factors in the schools national funding formula



https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/838394/National_funding_formula_policy_document_-_2020_to_2021.pdf

National Funding Formula – 2023 - 24

“The national funding formula for schools

The basic structure of the schools national funding formula (NFF) is not changing in 2023-24. For 2023-24, we have changed a small number of the existing features of the formula. These are outlined below. A full description of the 2023-24 formula, in light of these changes, is set out in Annex A.

NFF 2023/24: p.6

National Funding Formula – 2023 - 24

2023-24 will also be our first year of transition to the direct schools NFF – with our end point being a system in which, to ensure full fairness and consistency in funding, every mainstream school in England is funded through the same national formula without adjustment through local funding formulae.....

.....In 2023-24, local authorities will only be allowed to use NFF factors in their local formulae, and must use all NFF factors, except any locally determined premises factors.

Local authorities will also be required to move their local formulae factors 10% closer to the NFF values, compared to where they were in 2022-23, unless they are already mirroring the NFF.

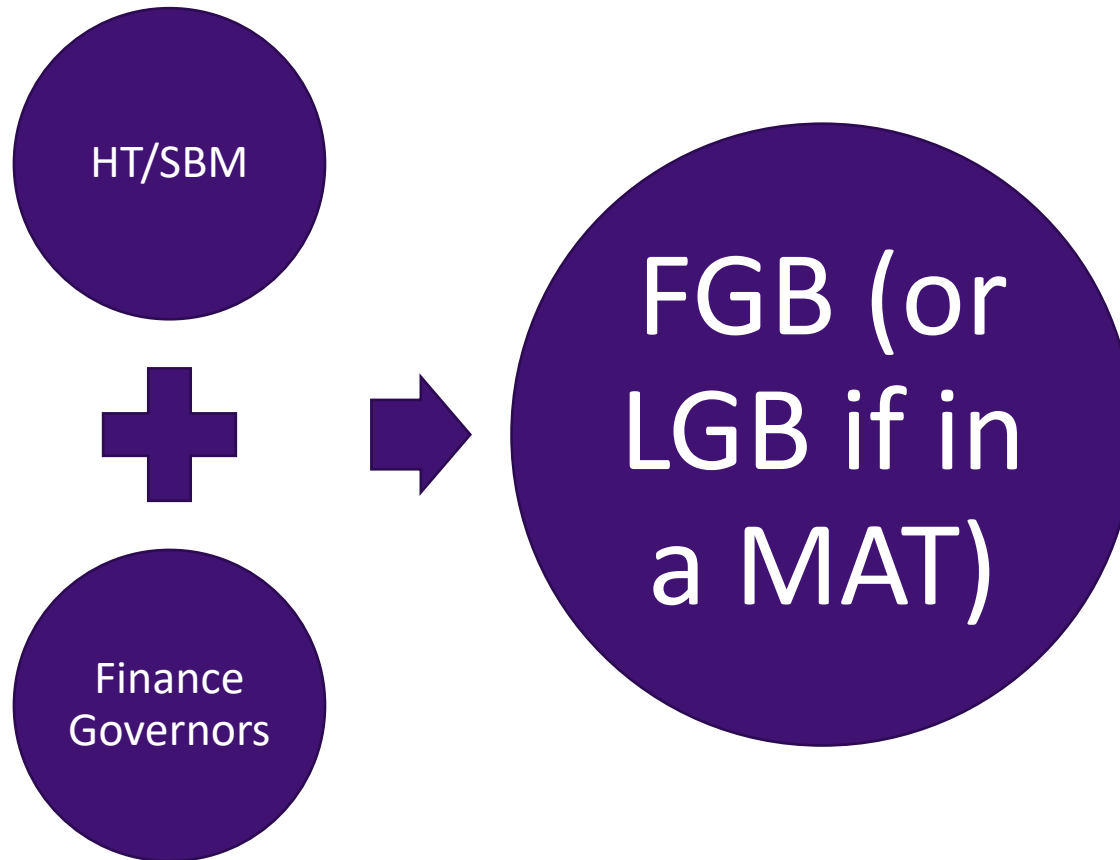
NFF 2023/4: para 5, p.5

Who sets the budget?

Setting the budget should be done through a process of co-operation and discussion with budget-holders

1. Led by School Business Manager/Bursar/Head teacher
2. Finance Committee(s) approves the budget plan
3. Full Governing body/Academy Trust/Local Governing Body agrees the final budget for individual schools.

Who sets the budget?



Who sets the budget?



Setting the school budget –annual cycle

The school's budget is the school's plan of how it intends to allocate resources to achieve its agreed educational objectives and priorities

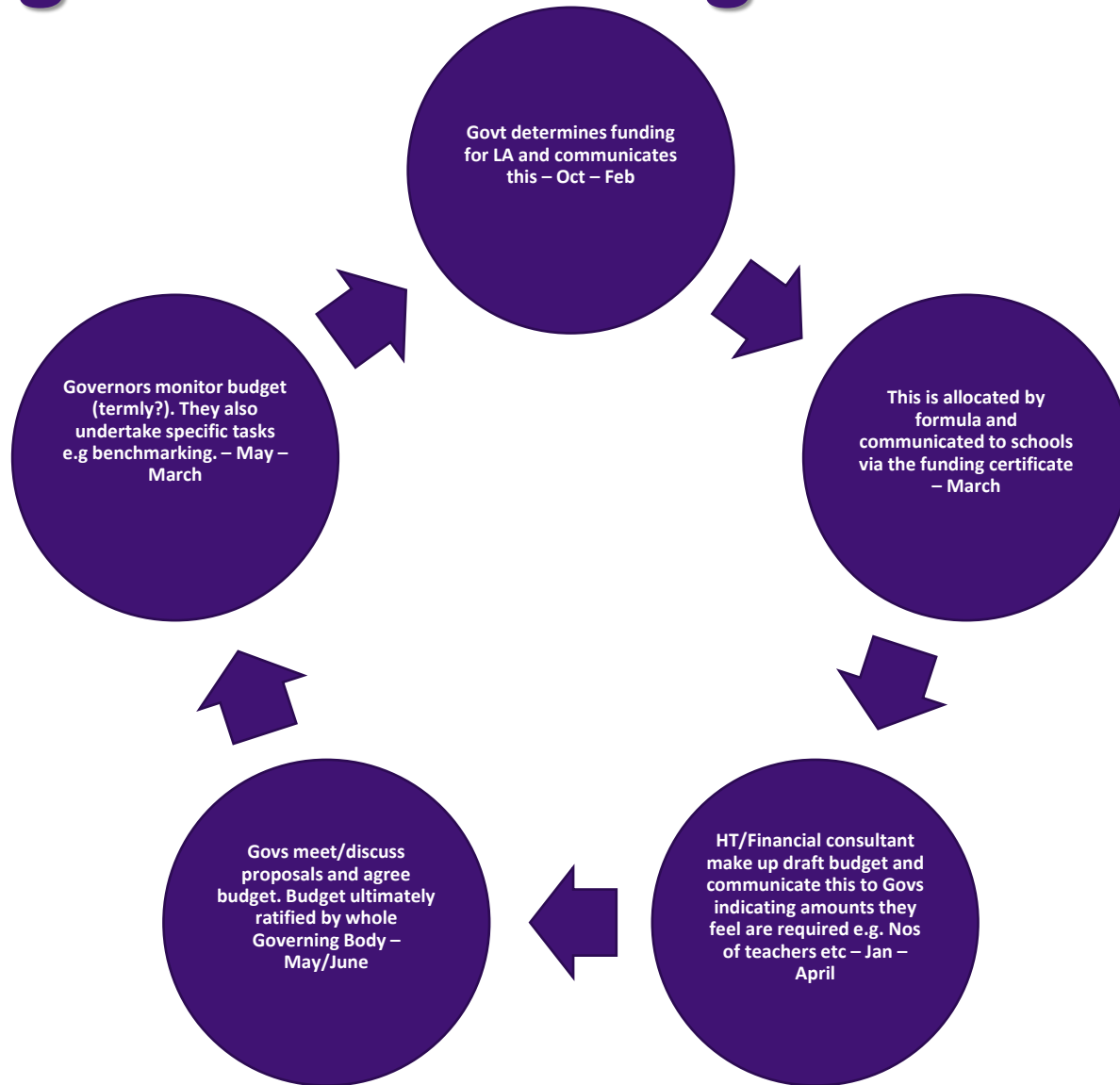
Maintained schools

TASK	TERM
Review current year's budget	Autumn
Assess and review outline budget	Autumn/Early Spring
Receive LA funding/approve final	Spring/Early Summer

Academies

TASK	TERM
Review current year's budget	Early spring
Assess and review outline budget	Spring /Early Summer
Receive funding/approve final	Summer/Early Autumn

Setting the school budget – annual cycle



Financial Processes

There is no set process for governing boards to monitor a school's finances. How governors choose to do this will depend on a range of factors, including:

- Whether it is an academy or maintained school
- The size of the school and the budget
- The structure of the governing board



Task

With the financial management policy or your school policy discuss :

- a) What are the variables?
- b) What tasks does the policy set out for Governors?
- c) What tasks does the policy set out for Headteachers?
- d) What tasks does the policy set out for Admin Officers/School Business managers?

What are you budgeting for?

1. Educational Outcomes

What are we trying to achieve? Where is our school currently?
What do we know about our school standards?

☐ *Task – discuss – do I know? If not how can I find out?*

2. School Development plan

☐ *Task – discuss – what is in it? Why? What are we trying to achieve?*

☐ *Is it costed?*

Developing a budget



- “zero-based” budgeting, whereby governors start with a blank sheet of paper and work up costs from nothing to support the aims and policies of the school?
- “incremental budgeting”, where the individual elements of the budget are increased or decreased depending on the funding received and the pressures of cost inflation.

Education & Skills Funding Agency

Top 10 planning check for Governors

1. Staff pay as percentage of total expenditure
2. Average teacher cost
3. Pupil to teacher ratio (PTR)
4. Class sizes
5. Teacher contact ratio
6. Proportion of budget spent on the leadership team
7. 3 to 5 year budget projections
8. Spend per pupil for non-pay expenditure lines compared to similar schools
9. School improvement plan priorities and the relative cost of options
10. List of contracts with costs and renewal dates

Balances and reserves

Task : What if you can't afford everything you want to do?

-What about balances and reserves?

1. What is a “reasonable” balance to carry forward?
2. Planning for the use or retention of balances
3. Protecting private funds
4. Deficits

What is worrying you? (if any of these!)



Value for Money

- **Benchmarking** -The Department for Education (DfE) has created a tool to provide schools in England with an indication of how financially efficient they are. The tool analyses per-pupil income and pupil progress data, and gives an efficiency rating by comparing the results with those of similar schools.

<https://schools-financial-benchmarking.service.gov.uk/>

- **Contracts/Leasing**
- **Planned maintenance**

Schools financial benchmarking

Compare a school or trust's income and expenditure with similar establishments in England.

You can view your school or academy trust's financial data, see how it compares with others and use the information to establish relationships with other schools or multi-academy trusts.

Find a school [Find an academy trust](#) [Compare with no default school](#)

Search schools by:

- ☐ Name, URN or LAESTAB code
- ☐ Location
- ☐ Local authority

Guidance

[Self-assessment dashboard guidance](#)

[Data Sources and Interpretation](#)

[Do you have a school or trust data query?](#)

Value for Money

Financial management Policy – what does it say (if anything) about:-

- Purchasing procedures
- Planned maintenance
- Income
- School Private fund and its auditing (annually and to be reported to Governors)

Financial Management Policy

St Jude's Catholic Primary School

AIM

To manage the finances in an efficient, controlled and cost-effective manner which will support the school's efforts in raising pupils' achievement.

OBJECTIVES

- To clearly define the areas of responsibility for Governors, Head Teacher, other staff and Local Management Support Limited.
- To show how income and expenditure are controlled.
- To identify how the budget is set and how the priorities for the financial year are arrived at.
- To enable Governors to identify a clear, direct link between the financial priorities and the School's Improvement Plan.
- To identify the security procedures for cash control, computerised procedures, data storage and documentation.
- To identify the procedures for implementing the LEA's Financial Regulations.

Value for Money

Auditing:

1. School budget
2. Private fund (s)
3. SFVS

Budget Content

Always monitor and be aware of:

- Pupil Premium
- Sports Premium
- “catch up” premium

These are ring fenced allocations and so need to be planned for and monitored accordingly.



Budget Content

Task: Using the Budget Plan
Create (at least) 5 questions
based on what you have
learned today that you would
wish to ask the Headteacher
(HT)/School Business Manager
(SBM) regarding this plan (10
mins)



Liability – maintained schools

55. The department provides funding for [clerking development](#). All school, academy or trust board clerks, including new clerks, who are currently supporting one or more boards can attend one of the programmes.

4.5 Liability

56. The board bears legal responsibility for the school(s)' actions. However, individuals are generally protected from personal liability when acting in the course of their duties. Provided they act honestly, reasonably and in good faith, any liability will fall on the board even if it exceeds its powers, rather than on individuals.
57. Schools and academy trusts must have adequate commercial insurance cover to comply with their legal obligations or have the option to join the [risk protection arrangement \(RPA\)](#), the department's alternative to commercial insurance.

- “In relation to Governing Bodies the governors benefit from a partial protection in statute. In summary, **the governors do not have any personal liability in respect of anything done in good faith** in spending the school delegated budget and delegating responsibilities to the head teacher.”
- **Wrigley’s Solicitors**

Liability – academy trusts

“The liability of Governors is limited as they cannot be personally held responsible for the debts of the Academy Trust that have been properly incurred. They can become personally liable if they act in breach of their duties and/or statutory/regulatory obligations. However, the circumstances in which payment would actually need to be made are very limited. This view is supported by the Department for Education which states on its website that “Personal liability will not arise if governors carry out their duty acting in good faith.”

Wellers Law group

Statutory obligations and focusing on finance.....

Guidance

*“The board’s third core function is to **oversee financial performance and make sure money is well spent**. It should do this by ensuring it has at least one individual with specific, relevant skills and experience of financial matters. **However, everyone on the board should have a basic understanding of the financial cycle and the legal requirements of the school on accountability and spend**. This is important in all schools, but particularly important in MATs or large schools or federations. Their larger budgets and greater complexity make it even more critical that the board not only **oversees delivery of the best possible education for pupils**, but also provides robust governance to ensure the viability and efficiency of the organisation through effective business and financial planning.”*

Statutory obligations and focusing on finance.....



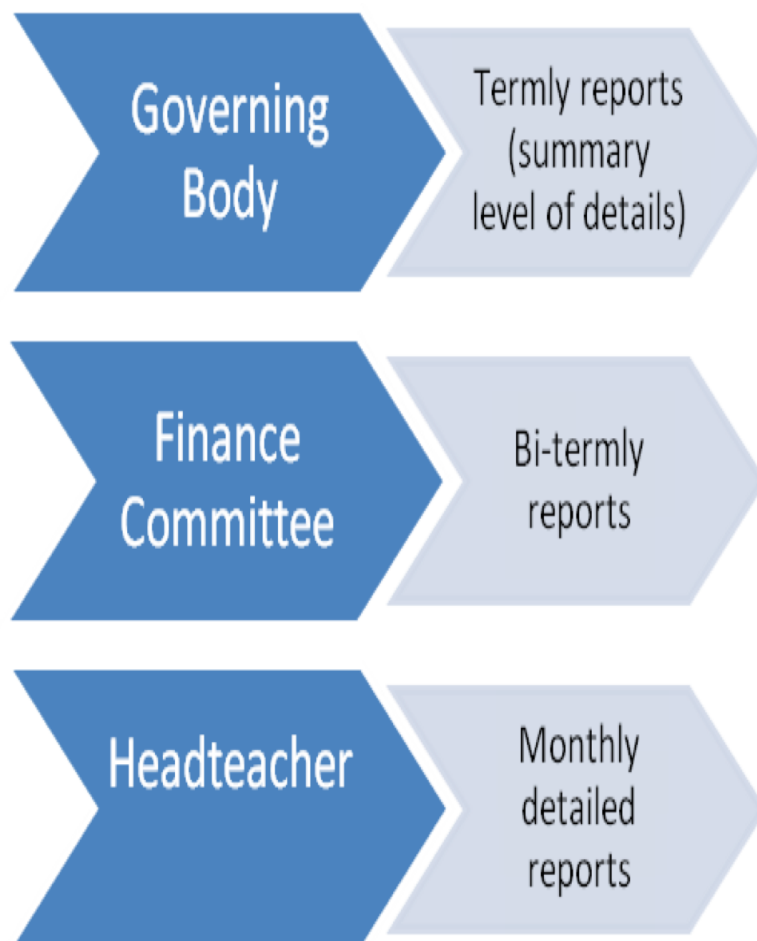
- Clarity of vision
- Holding the Headteacher to account
- Overseeing financial performance
- Increasing concern about financial management
- Audit, Schools Financial Value Statement (SFVS) and Financial Management and Governance Self Assessment (FMGS)

Monitoring the budget

- Review expenditure against the planned budget.
- Revise expenditure plans where appropriate in the light of changes.
- Take corrective action to ensure planned intentions are achieved.

Clear, accurate and timely management information is required. The Governing Body and Finance Committee should be presented with budget monitoring reports on school spending against approved expenditure on a regular basis.

Monitoring the budget



Activity:
review
monitoring
information +
notes and
formulate
questions/plans
for meeting

Monitoring the budget

REPORT NUMBER: V1-PRI5

EAST RIDING OF YORKSHIRE COUNCIL

RUN DATE: 09/10/2015

PAGE: 0001

EMAIL : ANYWHERE.HEAD.PRIMARY

BUDGET MONITORING REPORT

SCHOOL COST CENTRE: 3111

FOR: ANYWHERE PRIMARY
FOR: PERIOD 6 SEPTEMBER 2015/16

This is period 6 (September), when it would be expected that approximately 50% of the budget to have been spent

	BUDGET FOR YEAR A	BUDGET TO DATE B	ACTUAL TO DATE C	VIATION TO DATE C-B	BUDGET REMAINING A-C	% OF BUDGET UTILISED C/A X 100 ?	LAST YEAR TOTAL
REVENUE							
EMPLOYEE EXPENSES							
E01 TEACHING STAFF	740,361	361,142	362,909	1,767	377,452	49.02	682,227
E02 SUPPLY STAFF	1,000	360	986	626	14	98.60	6,502
E03 EDUCATION SUPPORT STAFF	251,076	125,538	127,399	1,861	123,677	50.74	262,522
E04 PREMISES STAFF	19,480	9,738	6,711	3,027	12,769	34.45	19,389
E05 ADMIN & CLERICAL STAFF	79,772	42,416	41,132	1,284	38,640	51.56	80,732
E06 CATERING STAFF	19,890	9,948	10,329	381	9,561	51.93	21,234
E07 OTHER STAFF	37,081	18,540	10,782	7,758	26,299	29.08	26,202
	1,148,660	567,682	560,248	7,434	588,412	48.77	1,098,808
19316 RECRUITMENT ADVERTISING	0	0	380	380	380	.00	0
19338 CRB POLICE CHECKS COSTS	960	355	365	10	595	38.02	1,579
	960	355	745	390	215	77.60	1,579
E08 INDIRECT EMPLOYEE EXPENSES							
19209 TRAINING EXPENSES	6,350	2,796	475	2,321	5,875	7.48	4,065
E09 STAFF DEV & TRAINING	6,350	2,796	475	2,321	5,875	7.48	4,065
19360 SUPPLY TEACH COVER INSURANCE	12,076	12,076	12,076	1	1	100.00	14,832
E10 SUPPLY TEACHER INSURANCE	12,076	12,076	12,076	1	1	100.00	14,832
19361 NON-TEACH ABSENCE INSURANCE	3,209	3,209	3,209	0	0	100.00	4,134
E11 STAFF RELATED INSURANCE	3,209	3,209	3,209	0	0	100.00	4,134
	1,171,255	586,118	576,753	9,365	594,502	49.24	1,123,418
TOTAL EMPLOYEE EXPENSES							
PREMISES EXPENSES							

See Page 10 – provides a summary of catering income and expenditure

Will all of this budget be required? Could any excess be vired to a code which is overspending?

Budget Content

Two handouts :-

1. Budget Plan Summary
2. Budget Plan

Task: Using the Budget Plan Summary

- What do we learn about school('s) priorities?
- What questions could we as Governors be asking based on this summary?

BUDGET PLAN SUMMARY			
Schools	PLAN	One a	2018/19
	DATE	10th May 18	
REVENUE	£	%	
EXPENDITURE		%	
STAFF RELATED COSTS	2,478,524	76.52%	
PREMISES COSTS	144,617	4.44%	
CURRICULUM	88,000	2.75%	
OTHER SUPPLIES & SERVICES	154,235	4.80%	
IN & OUT BUDGETS	3,000	0.09%	
CATERING COSTS	231,943	7.18%	
DIRECT REVENUE FINANCING (CONTRIBUTIONS TO CAPITAL)	0	0.00%	
OTHER EXPENDITURE	137,053	4.25%	
EXPENDITURE TOTAL	3,239,772	100.00%	
INCOME			
SCHOOLS & EARLY YRS BLOCKS less de-delegation & EAL (TE04)	-2,716,779		
HIGH NEEDS SEN income	-6,643		
PREMIUM income (Pupil / Early Years / LAC / Services / Sports)	-116,275		
OTHER income	-248,940		
INCOME TOTAL	-3,088,634		
INCOME minus EXPENDITURE	151,138		
BALANCES FROM LAST YEAR - Revenue			
BALANCE B/F - Committed	-152,490		
BALANCE B/F - Uncommitted	0		
BALANCES TOTAL	-152,490		
REVENUE - TOTAL FUNDS REMAINING	-1,355		
COMMITTED FUNDS IN REVENUE BALANCE	0		
PLANNED UNCOMMITTED REVENUE BALANCE at YEAR END	UNDER -1,355		
CAPITAL			
EXPENDITURE	602		
REVENUE FINANCING OF CAPITAL	0		
INCOME	0		
INCOME minus EXPENDITURE	OVER 602		
BALANCES FROM LAST YEAR			
BALANCE B/F - Devolved Formula Capital	-602		
BALANCE B/F - Other Capital	0		
BALANCES TOTAL	-602		
PLANNED CAPITAL BALANCE AT YR END	UNDER 0		
COMMUNITY FOCUSSED			
EXPENDITURE	194,949		
INCOME	-137,824		
INCOME minus EXPENDITURE	OVER 57,125		
BALANCES FROM LAST YEAR	-60,053		
PLANNED COMMUNITY FOCUSSED BALANCE AT YR END	UNDER -2,928		

Post Covid

Hopefully we are getting to the end of this pandemic or at the very least beginning to see an end to it

- The same skills and questions still apply.
- The pandemic/school shutdowns was almost exactly 1 financial year for maintained schools (2 for academies).
- However, what specifically has been affected during the various lockdowns?
 - ☐ Have we as a school incurred extra costs e.g extra cleaning, equipment such as laptops, staffing costs
 - ☐ Have we as a school received any additional funding?
 - ☐ What is the net impact of both of the above on our overall balance?
 - ☐ What is the situation going into the new financial year?
 - ☐ Will we continue to incur extra costs? If so for how long – have we budgeted for this?



Covid related issues: example of a large budget line e.g. staffing

REVENUE	£	%
		of TOTAL
EXPENDITURE		EXPENDITURE
STAFF RELATED COSTS	2,478,924	76.52%
PREMISES COSTS	144,617	4.46%
CURRICULUM	88,000	2.72%
OTHER SUPPLIES & SERVICES	156,235	4.82%
IN & OUT BUDGETS	3,000	0.09%
CATERING COSTS	231,943	7.16%
DIRECT REVENUE FINANCING (CONTRIBUTIONS TO CAPITAL)	0	0.00%
OTHER EXPENDITURE	137,053	4.23%
EXPENDITURE TOTAL	3,239,772	100.00%

This is from the Budget summary which is included with your handouts...

- You can see that in this example the budget is expressed both as “actuals” and as a percentage.
- Staffing is the vast majority of your budget (£2,478,924/76.52%). Therefore any variation in terms of staffing will have a disproportionate impact
- In reality most schools staffing is around 80%

Covid related issues: example of a large budget line e.g. staffing

EXPENDITURE		EXPENDITURE
STAFF RELATED COSTS	2,478,924	76.52%

Its worth running through a hypothetical example just to illustrate the point:

1. We are monitoring the budget this term with information up to December 2020
2. In a maintained school this is Month 9 (75% of the financial year) – Academies month 4 (33.3% of the financial year)
3. Staffing if on plan should be at 75% of £2,478,924 = £1,859,193
4. If staffing is on 77% appears to be virtually on target however 77% of £2,478,924 = £1,908,771 – a difference of £49,578 (£1,908,771-£1,859,193)

The impact of changes in staffing is potentially enormous, even if the percentage change is very small

Our questions would/could be:

- a) Why is this?
- b) Is this change specifically related to Covid?
- c) Have we any extra funding we can apply for/receive to offset this?
- d) Is this going to continue for the rest of the financial year. If yes, what will be the “actual” impact on the end of year?
- d) Can we vire funding from other areas to offset this?
- e) What other budgets have been directly affected by Covid? – e.g. Cleaning, Resources (go through same process)
- f) What is the overall impact on our “bottom line?”

What to expect from your school....

- Your role
- The financial calendar
- Rules/policy
- The budget- summary, plan
- Reports – termly – how do we receive them in our school?
- Benchmarking information.....
- The opportunity to ask questions, and obtain answers from the right people

Best practice

- *Asking probing questions*
- *Appoint link governors* with a financial focus to monitor areas of school finance e.g. pupil premium, internal controls, SEND and its budget
- *Undertake finance training*



Next steps

- So what are you going to do when you get back to school?
 - **Activity/Task:** Based on what you have thought about tonight prioritise 5 key tasks/actions



Questions to ask

- Do ask them!
- How is it going?
- Questions to ask about the budget
- Questions to ask about monitoring reports
- Questions to ask about audit , SFVS and FMGS



Questions to ask me!!!

Questions?





Governor Support Service
Based in Hillingdon and
supporting governors and clerks
throughout the borough and beyond

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