

Best Value

1. This statement is intended to assist schools in considering the relevance of best value principles to the expenditure of funds from their delegated budget share. When submitting annual budget plans, schools are required to say how best value principles are being followed.

2. Best value will be a statutory duty to deliver services to clear standards, covering both cost and quality, the most effective, economic and efficient means available. Legislation is to place a duty on Local Authorities to secure best value in respect of the way in which they exercise their functions. The new duty is not intended to apply to those functions, which are exercised by the governing bodies of Children's Services Authority maintained schools. However, schools will be encouraged to adopt the best value performance management framework.

3. In relation to schools and expenditure from delegated budgets, the main features of best value can be summarised as a need for the governing body of a school to ensure:

a. The existence of a programme of performance review, which will aim for continual improvement. Existing mechanisms such as school development plans and post-OFSTED inspection plans can be developed to satisfy the requirements for review. The reviews should include:

1. Challenging how and why a service is provided (including consideration of alternative providers);
2. Comparison of performance against other schools taking into account the views of parents and pupils;
3. Mechanisms to consult stakeholders, especially parents and pupils;
4. Embracing competition as a means of securing efficient and effective services;

b. The development of a framework of performance indicators and targets which will provide a clear practical expression of a school's performance, taking national requirements into account;

c. That the following are included in school development plans -

1. A summary of objectives and strategy for the future;
2. Forward targets on an annual and longer term basis;
3. Description of the means by which performance targets will be achieved;
4. A report on current performance

d. That internal and external audit takes place ensuring that

performance information is scrutinised. Children's Services Authority oversight of school finances provides external review.

4. The independent inspection and intervention elements of the best value framework will be the responsibility of other bodies and therefore not relevant to demonstration by a governing body of adherence to best value principles.