



Schools financial health checks structure

	Check 1: review/develop capability	Check 2: investigate/prevent	Check 3: resolve/generate solutions
Purpose	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> short financial health check of a school or trust's current position to test if their systems, skills and procedures could be improved and to aid longer term capacity 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> aims to address specific issues or future budget pressures identified by schools or trusts to maintain and improve educational standards 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> aims to provide in depth support to plan and deliver change for schools and trusts if in financial difficulty and have been issued with a financial notice to improve (FNtl)
Support offered	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> help for schools and trusts to review financial management systems and skills identify strengths, weaknesses and opportunities to improve overall capability and sustainability identify routes to train school staff in these areas 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> action planning with schools and trusts to identify the most appropriate ways to address specific financial issues or future budget pressures outlining practical ways to increase efficiency, financial capability and pupil performance and how to ensure impact is delivered when needed 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> action planning and in depth support for schools and trusts to address multiple issues relating to financial health and efficiency identify specific actions to increase efficiency, financial capability, capacity and pupil performance and balance budgets for trusts with a FNtl, identify ways to address specific financial actions specified in the FNtl address how and when the actions will satisfy the conditions so the FNtl can be lifted
Content	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> align financial strategy, curriculum and workforce planning review financial systems including forecasting, compliance, reporting, governance and challenge assessment of current and 3-5 year budget position finance skills and audit of leadership team and governing body business vision, financial strategy, KPIs and dashboard assessment of use of revenue and capital funding efficiency benchmarking of use of top-slice revenue (MAT specific) comparison of staffing structures and spending against other schools review and evaluation of a due diligence assessment (MAT specific) assessment of efficiency of central office functions (MAT specific) evaluation of any proposed growth trajectory (MAT specific) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a review of specific financial issues (eg deficit, pupil numbers, procurement, income generation, restructuring) review of financial structures and capability and capacity (eg budget management, financial strategy, reporting and governance, capacity building and curriculum led financial planning) 3-5 year budget planning and forecasting help schools to identify opportunities where they can make workforce efficiencies assess the long term budget impacts of different options for staffing structures assessment of options to address issues joint development of an action plan for schools and trusts to address their issues 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a review of financial systems, including forecasting and reporting support for the implementation of the 3-5 year budget plan review of schemes of delegation and systems of internal control to ensure compliance with the Academies Financial Handbook (AFH) or local authority financial control procedures financial skills audit of leadership team and trustees review of financial governance, including full skills audit of trustees and leadership team and effectiveness of committee structures review of internal policies to ensure compliance with AFH and funding agreement (eg recruitment, safeguarding and whistleblowing) help schools to implement workforce efficiencies and changes to the staffing structure advice on HR, legal and stakeholder management for staff development, performance management and restructuring effective action planning for trustees to develop skills and tools to agree and implement an action plan
Audience	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> maintained schools, academy trusts, MATs as part of business planning maintained schools in preparation for academy conversion new schools or trusts in pre-opening stage maintained schools, academy trusts and MATs wanting to review budgets in light of future cost pressures against likely funding 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> maintained schools or academy trusts/MATs with identified financial issues but not in significant or immediate financial difficulty (eg in light of future cost pressures against likely funding) maintained schools in preparation for academy conversion new schools or trusts in the pre-opening stage maintained schools carrying a deficit academy trusts or MATs carrying a deficit 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> maintained schools, academy trusts or MATs wanting to make significant changes (eg staffing or governance structures) trusts that have been issued with a FNtl maintained schools in financial difficulty (eg being brokered to become academies and those being issued with a notice of concern by a local authority) maintained schools, academy trusts or MATs carrying a deficit
Cost/time	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> approximately 1 to 2 consultancy days 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> approximately 3 to 5 consultancy days 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> approximately 6 to 10 consultancy days