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Department for Education

Guidance
Supporting excellent school resource management

Updated 17 April 2019

Contents

This guidance is for:

- local authorities
- school leaders, school staff and governing bodies in all maintained schools, academies and free schools

It summarises the help and support the department is making available to help schools reduce cost pressures and make every pound count.

Managing school workforce

Staff costs make up over 70% of spending for a typical school. We know that schools want to recruit, retain and deploy staff effectively.

Current support:

- check the workforce planning guidance for help with reviewing staffing structures - it provides prompts and questions, linked to evidence, on effective use of staff
- check out the toolkit for schools to help reduce unnecessary workload, developed and tested by school leaders and teachers
- consider how well your school is planning its curriculum and finances together,

and whether [video guidance](#), the (secondary) [planning tool](#) and [a case study example](#) could help

- review the [step-by-step guide](#) that explains the apprenticeship levy and helps schools access their allowance

Next steps:

- we have introduced the agency supply framework to bring transparency to agency mark-ups and hold agencies to standard levels of practice, including on temp-to-perm fees - [request more information](#), if your school isn't already exploring this framework
- watch out for our free teacher vacancy listing which will help schools reduce the costs of recruitment advertising - we are piloting in two areas and, over the coming months, we will work with more schools and teachers to develop the service

Better value procurement

Each year, schools spend about £10 billion on their non-staff costs. Schools want to get the best value when purchasing goods and services - including working together to leverage procurement spend, skills and expertise.

Current support:

- the [Risk protection arrangement](#) (RPA) provides an alternative to commercial insurance for academies and free schools and it has already generated significant savings - there are new dedicated RPA account managers and the RPA General Annual Grant (GAG) deduction will remain at £20 per pupil until August 2019
- review the range of [recommended deals](#), which help provide the best value on regular purchases - deals include IT hardware and services, energy supply, energy efficiency and multi-functional devices, and more will be added on a regular basis
- if you are in the [north west](#) or [south west](#), register with a regional schools' buying hub – these offer free tailored support, including phone and face-to-face advice to help schools get better value for money

Next steps:

- to save you money on insurance: from September 2018, at no additional GAG deduction, new [Risk protection arrangement](#) covers will apply on overseas travel (including winter sports) and cultural assets (including a free valuation service)
- to save you money on regular purchases: keep checking the range of [recommended deals](#) in good time before your contracts end, as the list will continue to expand

Data and transparency

Schools want to have good quality, accurate and timely data to make informed decisions on how to manage resources efficiently.

Current support:

- review the [top 10 planning checks for governors](#) - these cover the key metrics and information that governors and trustees should consider in order to ensure that the school is operating efficiently
- look at your school's relative performance and use of resources by using the [schools financial benchmarking service](#) - this lets you quickly and easily compare your spending with other, similar schools, and includes contact information, so you can make contact with your comparator schools and share best practice

Next steps:

- watch out for updates to the schools financial benchmarking service - we are continuing to develop this, including improving data collection and timescales
- watch out for new features and tools we are developing to help schools identify areas to improve resource management, including making it easier for schools to compare themselves with the schools that are most efficient

Financial skills

School leadership teams will want to be sure they have the financial skills to manage their resources effectively.

Current support:

- to help schools plan: review the range of [support on strategic financial planning](#) and [guidance on financial efficiency with curriculum planning](#) available to help school leadership teams, including this [curriculum planning tool](#)
- to highlight the benefits of strong school business professionals (SBPs): consider the [case studies](#) showing the value that SBPs can deliver for a school
- to help SBPs access support and information: encourage SBPs to join or help to create a [network](#)
- make use of the financial expertise within your governing body or with neighbouring schools

Next steps:

- school business professionals can [register their contact details](#) to receive updates on our products and guidance
- we will continue to work with the Institute of School Business Leadership, supporting the development of qualifications (including apprenticeships) available to school business professionals
- we will improve entry routes into the profession by developing high quality qualifications, and work to raise the status of SBPs among school leaders

Oversight, intervention and targeted support

We will provide direct support to schools where it is required, particularly when schools are at risk of falling into financial difficulty.

Current support:

- to provide hands-on tailored advice and support: we are piloting the provision of school resource management advisers - these are serving, expert school business leaders who work with schools and trusts to provide tailored advice on managing cost pressures and using resources effectively

Next steps:

- to expand this provision: we are procuring a longer-term, larger-scale cohort of school resource management advisers, to provide support to more trusts and schools

Improving the infrastructure of the school estate

We are committed to investing in the school estate. We will continue to work with the sector to provide support to reduce school running costs and ensure that school places are available in the areas which need them.

Current support:

- we are making funding routes available to support capital works and drive down running costs, including Salix loans
- we have published Good estate management for schools, including the fundamentals that we would expect all responsible bodies to embed into their practice

Next steps:

- look out for further guidance on capital procurement in an update to the Buying for schools manual
- we will extend our work with the sector to look at efficiency in the management of the existing estate by both academy trusts and local authorities, in order to increase value for money
- we will work with local authorities to deliver the places they need, and work with them to manage spare capacity in their areas and will work closely with local areas when considering free school applications
- improving data on the school estate from the Condition Data Collection will help us target funding even more effectively

Schools can sign up to our school business professionals contact list to receive occasional updates from DfE on topics and products related to school resource management.

Prepare for EU Exit

Prepare your business or organisation for the UK leaving the EU

Prepare for EU Exit if you live in the UK

Living in Europe after the UK leaves the EU

Continue to live in the UK after it leaves the EU

Services and information

Benefits

Births, deaths, marriages and care

Business and self-employed

Childcare and parenting

Citizenship and living in the UK

Crime, justice and the law

Disabled people

Driving and transport

Education and learning

Employing people

Environment and countryside

Housing and local services

Money and tax

Passports, travel and living abroad

Visas and immigration

Working, jobs and pensions

Departments and policy

How government works

Departments

Worldwide

Services

Guidance and regulation

News and communications

Policy papers and consultations

Transparency and freedom of information releases