



# **Best Value policy**

**November 2020 – November 2023**

## **Assessment of Policy's Impact**

The effectiveness of this policy and its impact will be assessed by the Finance & Audit Committee who will monitor the outcomes and impact of this policy every 3 years. The evidence base for assessment will be presented as agenda items at the Finance & Audit Committee meetings.

## **Statutory Requirements**

The School Standards and Framework Act (1998) requires schools to set targets, to both raise standards and to spend public money wisely. The Local Government Act (1999) further introduced the policy of 'Best Value' to ensure effective provision of local government services. Schools therefore need to ensure that the principle of best value is taken into account in their administrative procedures. To complement practice in schools Local Authorities (LA's) must also work to the principles of Best Value and publish plans that report on performance and priorities and targets for improvements. Best Value itself is not a statutory requirement for schools or governing bodies, it does not apply in a formal context when delegating and devolving budgets. Governing bodies are however required to set targets in order to raise standards.

## **Best Value**

The principles of Best Value go beyond that of value for money. Additionally, principles of economy, efficiency and effectiveness are also essential. Close partnerships are developed from the core principles of Best Value and it is this effective use of resources that leads to the raising of educational standards and continuous improvement.

### The Core Principles of Best Value

- Challenge – why, how and by whom an activity is carried out.
- Compare – performance against other schools and between parts of each school.

- Consult – involving stakeholders, especially students, parents and the members of the Board of Directors and Local Governing Bodies.
- Compete – as a means of securing efficient and effective services.

The four principles can be considered separately for clarity, but should more usually be applied in combination. Best Value can support and influence all management and decision making activities, including:

- Setting targets.
- Planning for improvement.
- Allocating resources to priorities.
- Managing implementation.
- Monitoring and evaluating the performance of the school.
- Managing the performance of the staff.

### **Best Value Statement**

The Directors of Inspire Education Trust are committed to achieving Best Value in all decisions made. We use the principles of Best Value as they apply in securing continuous improvement in this school and we will:

- Regularly review the functions of The academies within the Trust, challenging how and why services are provided and setting targets and performance indicators for improvement;
- Monitor outcomes and compare performance with similar academies and within the Trust;
- Consult appropriate stakeholders before major decisions are made; and
- Promote fair competition through quotations and tenders to ensure that goods and services are secured in the most economic, efficient and effective way.

We will strive to ensure that Trust is using its resources effectively to meet the needs of pupils.

The principles of Best Value will apply as also outlined in the schools own Finance Policy which is updated and reviewed annually.

The Head of Operations and Head of Finance will undertake a regular schedule of review of the main contracts and services to the academies within the Trust, to include, payroll, HR functions, grounds maintenance, catering, cleaning and resource suppliers. Included within the review will be those services which the school currently purchases as Service Level Agreements from the LA. They will be compared for Best Value against external provision. Within the review the following may be considered;

- The need for the service?
- The level of need of the service?
- Is this service the best use of our resources?
- How important is this service/supply to the running of the school? Is this the best service that we can obtain?
- How can we best measure the quality of service provision? Are there any alternative service providers available?
- What are the budget implications of choice?
- Do we need/can we improve the current level of service?
- Have there been any technological advances that may have an impact on current choice?
- Are those directly involved in use of the end product happy with provision? Could costs be reduced by combining with another school?
- How much management time and resource is consumed by the service?
- Have there been any legislative developments which may impact on choice?
- Could we reduce the levels of service or standard of service?
- Could the school raise its own charges? Were previously set targets met?
- What are our future targets?

## **Value for Money**

The widely accepted definition of Value for Money refers to three elements described as the "three Es":

- Economy
- Efficiency
- Effectiveness

Securing Value for Money means securing good outcomes for pupils and so it also means:

Minimising the costs of running the Academy, including buying goods and services of the right quality at the lowest possible price (Economy). Getting the most out of every pound spent in the school;

Using all resources – staff, buildings and equipment – to best effect and avoiding waste (efficiency) and,

Ensuring that all activities are focused on achieving the schools' goals – outcomes for children and the local community (effectiveness).

Board of Directors and Local Governing Bodies can help achieve the best outcomes for children by placing value for money at the heart of all their planning decisions.

There are seven areas where Board of Directors and Local Governing Bodies can have a significant impact on Value for Money:

1. Supporting and challenging all Academies management;
2. Ensuring the academies has considered the financial implications of its plans;
3. Reviewing academies financial balances;
4. Ensuring that the goods and services that the academies buys are value for money;
5. Ensuring that the academies uses their workforce to best effect;
6. Encouraging greater collaboration with other schools; and
7. Using financial information when making spending decisions

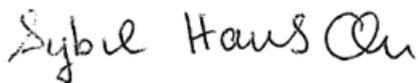
In this way the Directors will ensure that Best Value is achieved throughout all the operations and service conducted within Inspire Education Trust.

Date of approval: TBC Autumn 2020

Signature: Accounting Officer (Lois Whitehouse)



Signature: Chair of Finance and Audit (Sybil Hanson)



Renewal Date: Autumn 2023