

Shireland Collegiate Academy Trust

Best Value Statement

Committee and Date Approved	Resources Board – April 2026
Category	Operational Regulations
Next Review Date	Every three years unless change in legislation – Autumn 2029
Policy Availability	Trust Website
Officer Responsible	CFO of the Trust

The Trust, all Academies within the Trust and Shireland Learning Limited must comply with this policy.

Purpose and Trustee Accountability

The Trustees of Shireland Collegiate Academy Trust ('the Trust') are responsible and accountable for ensuring that public funds are used effectively, efficiently and economically, and that resources are deployed to secure the best possible educational outcomes for pupils.

This Best Value Statement provides formal assurance that Trustees discharge their value-for-money responsibilities in line with:

- The Academy Trust Handbook
- DfE expectations
- Good governance practice within the academy trust sector.

Trustees recognise that best value is central to financial sustainability, educational improvement and public accountability.

What Best Value Means for the Trust

Best value is defined as the optimum combination of cost, quality and sustainability, taking account of:

- Educational impact,
- Financial efficiency,
- Workforce wellbeing, and
- Social and environmental considerations.

Best value does not mean lowest cost. Trustees acknowledge that in many circumstances investing appropriately in staffing, provision or infrastructure delivers greater long-term value and improved outcomes.

Core Principles of Best Value

The Trust applies the nationally recognized Four Principles of Best Value:

1. **Challenge** – Trustees and senior leaders continually challenge:

- How services are delivered,
- Whether outcomes justify expenditure,
- Whether alternative models could deliver better value.

2. **Compare** – the Trust benchmarks:

- Educational outcomes,
- Financial performance,
- Staffing costs and structures

Against

- Trust-wide comparators,
- Similar academy trusts,
- National data published by the DfE.

3. **Consult** – the Trust considers the views of key stakeholders, including:

- Pupils and parents,
- Staff,
- Schools and Trust leaders,
- External specialists where appropriate.

4. **Compete** – the Trust uses competitive procurement proportionately, ensuring suppliers are selected on the basis of quality, suitability and cost, in line with agreed financial regulations.

Trustee and Executive Roles

The Trustee role is one to provide assurance and challenge. Trustees:

- Set the Trust's strategic priorities,
- Approve financial regulations and tendering thresholds,
- Scrutinise financial and educational performance,
- Challenge executive decisions where value for money is not evidenced, and
- Provide assurance to Members and external stakeholders.

Senior leaders within the Trust:

- Deploy resources in line with Trustee-approved budgets,
- Ensure compliance with procurement and financial regulations,
- Deliver operational improvements and educational outcomes, and
- Provide accurate and timely information to Trustees.

This separation ensures strong governance, transparency and accountability.

How Best Value Is Applied In Practice

Trustees expect best value considerations to be embedded in decisions relating to:

- Staffing structures and deployment,
- Curriculum design and delivery,
- Estates and accommodation usage,
- Procurement and contract management,
- Educational improvement strategies,
- Pupil welfare and inclusion, and
- Environmental and sustainability considerations.

The Trust recognizes that pursuing marginal savings is not best value where the administrative or opportunity cost outweighs the benefit.

Staffing

Staffing is the Trust's most significant investment. Trustees:

- Approve staffing structures for each academy,
- Monitor staffing costs against benchmarks,
- Ensure staffing decisions support curriculum delivery and pupil outcomes, and
- Balance efficiency with sustainable workload and workforce stability.

Procurement and Contract Management

The Trust:

- Follows Academy Trust Handbook requirements,
- Operates clear tendering thresholds (e.g. formal quotes above £10,000),
- Uses framework agreements where appropriate,
- Adopts centralised procurement where this delivers demonstrable value, and
- Reviews supplier performance periodically.

Procurement decisions are documented and auditable.

Educational Outcomes and Resource Allocation

Trustees evaluate value for money by considering:

- Pupil progress and attainment,
- Attendance and inclusion,
- Effectiveness of deployed interventions, and
- Improvement trends over time.

Funding decisions are assessed on their impact on outcomes, not solely on cost.

Best Value

Monitoring and Assurance

Best value is monitored through a structured framework including:

- Termly financial and educational reports to Trustees and Members of the Standards and Performance Committee,
- Three-year financial forecasts,
- Budget planning and scrutiny,
- Internal scrutiny and external audit,
- Performance management processes,
- Trust-wide and academy-level development planning, and
- Ofsted inspection outcomes and actions.

Trustees receive sufficient information to enable effective challenge and informed decision-making.

Trustee Assurance Statement

The Trustees are satisfied that:

- The Trust has robust arrangements in place to secure best value,
- Public funds are used appropriately and transparently,
- Resources are aligned to strategic priorities,
- Spending decisions support improved outcomes for pupils, and
- The Trust complies with statutory and regulatory requirements.

This Best Value Statement will be reviewed regularly to reflect changes in legislation, Trust growth and sector best practice.