

Date: 15th July 2019
Enquiries to: Schools' Accountancy Team
Tel: 01473 265626
Email: sat@suffolk.gov.uk



To: Headteachers and Chairs of Governors of Maintained Schools and PRUs

LMS Document No. 2019/05

Dear Colleagues

2019 SFVS REQUIREMENTS

This letter contains a summary of the details for the 2019 SFVS requirements.

2019 SFVS

The 2019 SFVS consists of a new template and set of questions for Schools to complete. The standard for consists of a checklist and a dashboard, the checklist asks 29 questions of governing bodies over 6 areas of resource management. While the dashboard shows how a school's data compares to thresholds on a range of statistics identified by the Department for Education (DfE) as indicators of good resource management and outcomes.

The DfE website contains checklist and dashboard guidance to provide clarification and explanation of the Questions and statistic indicators.

Schools and governors are reminded that Section 2.16 of Suffolk's [Scheme for the Financing of Schools](#) requires that the 2019 SFVS is submitted to the Schools' Accountancy Team by **31 December 2019**. This requirement applies to all maintained schools (including Highfield Nursery) and PRUs, except where an exemption is permitted by the DfE.

Governor responsibilities

The SFVS **must** be discussed by the **full governing body/management committee**, even where it has already been considered by a committee. We recommend that governors arrange for the 2019 SFVS assessment to be completed and presented as soon as possible and ideally before the October half-term, in order to allow sufficient time for additional work to be done and brought to a second meeting before the 31 December deadline if needed. This is especially important, as the 2019 SFVS has a new format to previous years, and may require additional work to be carried out.

SFVS Follow UP

The SFVS follow up is documented in the [LMS letter 2019/04](#).

In order to improve the way that the data is used, we would like further assurance that any remedial actions as set out in section E of the SFVS returns, are completed by the deadlines agreed in the document. In addition, schools must provide a progress update against the actions recorded in previous year's Self-Assessments. This would demonstrate to the local authority that the work has been completed or is in the process

of being completed and would add to the assurance framework the Section 151 officer would like to see in place. As part of this the responses from schools are shared with Janice Lee Strategic Lead within Education and Learning who has strategic oversight of maintained school budgets.

Arrangements for 2019 SFVS

The deadline for the SFVS remains unchanged, and is **31st December 2019**.

The new SFVS Template from the DfE, which can be found on the [DFE SFVS webpage](#), consists of a number of tabs within the Excel document. Each tab of the template has an introduction of the purpose of its function, and also contains links to the website for further guidance. The first three tabs are compulsory for the SFVS return.

In summary each tab is as follows:

Tab '**Introduction and Outcomes**' is a summary sheet, and signature page for the whole document, and must be completed.

Tab '**Checklist**' is a list of 29 questions covering six areas of resource management to help provide assurance that resources are being managed effectively. As in previous years, all 29 questions need to be answered as YES, NO or IN PART, and for each question comments, evidence and proposed actions should be provided in the relevant boxes.

Tab **Dashboard** should also be completed to help identify areas that could be improved upon for better resource management. The template will automatically compare key indicators, showing if areas are in line with other schools with similar characteristics.

Optional – input Raw Data tab can be used to input raw spend data, calculating Ratios and percentages required in the Dashboard tab. By completing this tab with the data, the Dashboard tab will auto populate with the percentages.

RAG rating data for your school, this tab shows the Ratings for the type and size of school you have indicated in the Dashboard tab.

RAG rating data for all schools, this tab shows the Ratings for all schools. You will need to unprotect the sheet, and expand the data for relevant type of school.

The SFVS submission must include the completed 'Introduction and outcomes', 'Checklist' and 'Dashboard' tabs. The document can be sent **electronically** to the Schools Accountancy Team via email to sat@suffolk.gov.uk. Please ensure that the document is completed in full before sending, and ensure that you send the document before the deadline of **31st December 2019**.

As in previous years details of schools successfully submitting the SFVS will be published on [Suffolk Learning](#) register of School returns. The Schools' Accountancy Team will refresh the data weekly in the Autumn Term and it is each school's responsibility to ensure that they have checked their submission has been recorded correctly.

Federations with a single budget issued across two or more schools are only required to complete one SFVS assessment for the federation, the submission will be recorded against the 'Lead' school.

Any school/PRU required to submit the 2019 SFVS and failing to do so successfully by 31 December 2019 could be subject to additional intervention measures; these could include the issue of a Notice of Financial Concern in extreme cases.

- The chair of governors or Headteacher should contact the Schools' Accountancy Team at the earliest opportunity, and **before 22nd November 2019**, if the school wishes to apply for an extended deadline.
- Extensions will only be granted in extenuating circumstances as schools and governors are expected to have contingency arrangements to cover situations such as absence/resignations of staff.

Support for schools

Guidance to aid in the completion of the SFVS template can be found on the [DfEs SFVS webpages](#), however if you cannot find the answers you need, then please get in contact with the Schools' Accountancy Team on:

E-mail: sat@suffolk.gov.uk
Phone: 01473 265626

Yours sincerely

Kirsty Spurgeon
Service Accountant