

The assessment form

School name: Lakeside School

Local authority and school DfE numbers: 850/7014

List of questions	Answer (yes/in part/no)	Comments, evidence and proposed actions
A: The governing body and school staff		
1. In the view of the governing body itself and of senior staff, does the governing body have adequate financial skills among its members to fulfil its role of challenge and support in the field of budget management and value for money?	Yes	The Governors conduct regular skills' reviews to ensure a broad range of skills are represented. Where gaps arise training is sourced through HCC Governors' Services or Governors with specific skills are recruited/co-opted. M Atkinson's appointment this year has provided additional skills within Finance and Business Administration.
2. Does the governing body have a finance committee (or equivalent) with clear terms of reference and a knowledgeable and experienced chair?	Yes	The Governors have clear terms of references which are reviewed annually. Budget monitoring is a standing agenda item at each Governors' meeting and the Governors follow the Southern Internal Audit Partnership's Internal Control Check Lists (School Communication SCO15345) to

		ensure the school complies with best practice.
3. Is there a clear definition of the relative responsibilities of the governing body and the school staff in the financial field?	Yes	The Governors' terms of reference defines responsibilities. The Scheme for Financing Schools was reviewed this year and approved by the Governors in January 2019. The Headteacher and Business Manager are aware of their signing limits which are reviewed in line with the changing needs of the school.
4. Does the governing body receive clear and concise monitoring reports of the school's budget position at least three times a year?	Yes	An annotated budget monitoring report is provided as part of a standing agenda item at each Governors' meeting. This supports the Governors' understanding of the budget and enables them to ask informed questions relating to the school's financial position. In May Governors approve a three year school budget and in October they approve any revisions to this.
5. Are business interests of governing body members and staff properly registered and taken into account so as to avoid conflicts of interest?	Yes	The declaration of pecuniary interests is a standing agenda item at each Governors' meeting. Pecuniary interest forms are completed annually and revised as necessary throughout the year for all Governors, Senior Managers and Budget Holders.

<p>6. Does the school have access to an adequate level of financial expertise, including when specialist finance staff are absent, e.g. on sick leave?</p>	<p>Yes</p>	<p>The Business Manager attends regular training and network meetings to ensure CPD. This is cascaded to the finance and admin team to ensure critical cover is in place. The School subscribes to an SLA with HCC Education Financial Services which provides advice and support as required. The Business Manager has introduced a buddy system to ensure the continuity of vital tasks in the absence of specialist finance and admin staff.</p>
<p>7. Does the school review its staffing structure regularly?</p>	<p>Yes</p>	<p>The Governors review staffing costs twice a year as part of the bi-annual budget review. Headcount & FTE are reviewed annually. Pupil:Staff ratios are reviewed annually as part of bench marking and throughout the year as required when staff/pupil number change.</p>
<p>8. Have your pay decisions been reached in accordance with a pay policy reflecting clear performance criteria?</p>	<p>Yes</p>	<p>Members of the Pay and Personnel Committee audit a sample of performance management files to ensure compliance with the school's pay policy which is based on the model policy produced by HCC and reviewed annually. The HT provides regular updates to the Governors regarding progress against agreed targets.</p>

9. Has the use of professional independent advice informed part of the pay decision process in relation to the headteacher?	Yes	The School pays for specialist support from the LA to provide advice regarding the performance management of the headteacher.
B: Setting the budget		
10. Is there a clear and demonstrable link between the school's budgeting and its plan for raising standards and attainment?	Yes	The School Improvement Plan is a dynamic document reviewed regularly by Governors and SLT at Governors' meetings and Governor School visits. Raising standards and attainment is integral to the SIP and budget setting process.
11. Does the school make a forward projection of budget, including both revenue and capital funds, for at least three years, using the best available information?	Yes	A three year budget plan is agreed by the Governors in May and reviewed in October against pupil, staffing and the SIP.
12. Does the school set a well-informed and balanced budget each year (with an agreed and timed plan for eliminating any deficit)?	Yes	The School presents a balanced budget for approval by the Governors in May. This forms the bench mark for the financial year ahead and is used by Governors to evaluate the school's progress against the agreed budget plan.
13. Is end year outturn in line with budget projections, or if not, is the governing body alerted to significant variations in a timely manner, and do they result from explicitly planned changes or from genuinely unforeseeable circumstances?	Yes	The end of year outturn is in line with budget projections and where a variance exists the Governors are alerted to this at the earliest opportunity. All variances are highlighted in

		the annotated monitoring reports presented at each Governors' meeting (6 times a year).
C: Value for money		
14. Does the school benchmark its income and expenditure annually against that of similar schools and investigate further where any category appears to be out of line?	Yes	The Governors review annually benchmarked data provided by the School. The school uses the HCC benchmarking tool for this exercise.
15. Does the school have procedures for purchasing goods and services that both meet legal requirements and secure value for money?	Yes	The School complies with HCC's Scheme for Financing Schools and best practice guides provided by HCC. Value for money is a key focus for the school all significant purchases over 10k are referred to Governors and where possible 3 quotes are sourced.
16. Are balances at a reasonable level and does the school have a clear plan for using the money it plans to hold in balances at the end of each year?	Yes	Balances are small and planned for. They provide a contingency against the unexpected. The Devolved Capital Budget is often carried forward from one year to the next to provide funds for capital projects. For example replacing ovens, windows and refurbishing bathrooms.
17. Does the school maintain its premises and other assets to an adequate standard to avoid future urgent need for replacement?	Yes	The site and assets are well maintained. Priority is given to the safety of the premises and other assets. Due to the age of the school premises general maintenance costs increase exponentially so funds available for

		improvements and the modernisation of the premises are scarce.
18. Does the school consider collaboration with others, e.g. on sharing staff or joint purchasing, where that would improve value for money?	Yes	The Outreach programme provides many opportunities for the school to raise funds while sharing best practice with other schools. The Team Teach and MiDAS trainers support other schools providing additional funding for the school. The Student Social Worker programme provides an additional resource for the school whilst generating income.
19. Can the school give examples of where it has improved the use of resources during the past year?	Yes	The sitting room in the boarding house has been refurbished and new mattresses and bedding supplied as part of a rolling programme of improvements. The Social Workers area, Horizons, PE class and Y6 areas have been refurbished. An Outreach classroom has been created and furnished. The main school photocopier has been replaced providing a multifunctional machine allowing for the in-house printing of the school magazine at a fraction of the cost.
D: Protecting public money		
20. Is the governing body sure that there are no outstanding matters from audit reports or from previous consideration of weaknesses by the governing body?	Yes	The school has not been audited however, the reports from themed audits carried out by

		<p>HCC are scrutinised and where necessary the school modifies its procedures to ensure it is compliant with best practice.</p> <p>Recent OFSTED inspections confirm the school remains outstanding and all recommendations from these inspections are included within the SIP.</p>
21. Are there adequate arrangements in place to guard against fraud and theft by staff, contractors and suppliers (please note any instance of fraud or theft detected in the last 12 months)?	Yes	No cases of fraud have been detected. There are clear segregation of duties and approval processes in place. The Governors follow the recommended schedule of internal audits and pecuniary interests are declared at each GB meeting.
22. Are all staff aware of the school's whistleblowing arrangements and to whom they should report concerns?	Yes	The school uses the HCC model policy for Whistle Blowing which is reviewed and adopted annually. Copies of the policy are on the notice board in reception, staffroom and boarding house. A copy is also included in the policy file.
23. Does the school have an accounting system that is adequate and properly run and delivers accurate reports, including the annual Consistent Financial Reporting return?	Yes	The school subscribes to an SLA with HCC to provide a robust and suitable accounting system that meets the needs of the school and the annual CFR return.

24. Does the school have adequate arrangements for audit of voluntary funds?	Yes	The School does not have any unofficial accounts.
25. Does the school have an appropriate business continuity or disaster recovery plan, including an up-to-date asset register and adequate insurance?	Yes	The School has a disaster recovery plan including IT back-up and insurance through SLAs with HCC. The school uses software provided by Parago to main an inventory of all items over £250 or attractive and portable.

Outcome of self-assessment

E: Summary of agreed remedial action and timetable for reporting back

Signature: _____ Chair of Governors / Management Committee

Print full name of signatory: _____

Print date SFVS agreed by full governing body/management committee: _____

Date SFVS submitted to LA for review: _____