

Schools Financial Benchmarking Service

Financial benchmarking involves using the UK Department for Education's (DfE) tool to compare your child's school spending (on staffing, resources, etc.) with similar schools, providing transparency on public funds and helping identify potential inefficiencies or best practices, thus offering insights into how effectively the school uses its budget for education.

What it is:

- A comparison tool: It allows anyone, including parents, to see how a school's income and spending (e.g., on teaching staff, support staff, premises, ICT) stack up against other schools with similar characteristics (like pupil numbers, free school meal eligibility).
- Data-driven insights: It uses official data from the Consistent Financial Reporting (CFR) return and School Workforce Census to show where money goes.

What it allows you to see:

- Spending Patterns: How much is spent per pupil, on staffing ratios, or on specific subjects/areas.
- Efficiency: Whether a school spends significantly more or less than peers on certain costs, prompting questions about resource allocation.
- Transparency: An open view of how public money is being used, fostering accountability.

How you can use it:

1. Understand Value for Money: See if the school's spending aligns with effective educational outcomes compared to similar schools.
2. Ask Informed Questions: Use the data to discuss spending priorities with school leaders or governors (e.g., "Why are our staffing costs so much higher/lower than other schools?").
3. Identify Strengths: Find schools that are doing well financially and learn from their approaches.
4. Monitor Trends: Track financial health over time to understand stability or potential risks.

Where to find it:

- For Layton Primary School this can be found at <https://financial-benchmarking-and-insights-tool.education.gov.uk/school/119246>