



pb Price Bailey
CHARTERED ACCOUNTANTS

ESTATES MANAGEMENT STANDARDS

Level 1-4 self-assessment checklist

Price Bailey LLP
Causeway House
1 Dane Street
Bishop's Stortford
CM233BT

Self-assessment checklist

Below is a practical Level 1–4 self-assessment checklist translating the DfE School Estate Management Standards into clear, testable questions. It is designed for academy trusts including boards and estate leads as a governance self-review.

The checklist should be read in conjunction with the full DfE standards guidance found [here](#).

Academy trusts should be securely meeting all Level 1 requirements, actively progressing through Levels 2 and 3, and using Level 4 selectively where it adds strategic value.

Level	What it means
Level 1 – Baseline	The minimum essential controls that all schools should have in place
Level 2 – Transitioning	Building consistency and improving planning beyond basic compliance
Level 3 – Fully effective	Estate management is planned, risk-based, and governed effectively
Level 4 – Advanced	Strategic, system-level estate leadership and innovation

✓ = fully in place ● = partially in place ✗ = not in place

1. Strategic Estate Management

Level 1

- Estates responsibilities and governance arrangements documented and understood
- Estates strategy (3–5 years) in place
- Asset management plan (AMP) in place
- Estates strategy and AMP formally approved by trustees

Level 2

- Clearly articulated estates vision understood by senior leaders in place
- Climate action plan in place that links to estate priorities

Level 3

- Formal strategic estate reviews carried out on a scheduled cycle

Level 4

- The asset management plan and estate vision align with the budget management cycle

2. Planning and organising estate resources

Level 1

<input type="checkbox"/>	Named individual(s) responsible for the school/trust estate
<input type="checkbox"/>	Governing board maintains oversight of the estate
<input type="checkbox"/>	Budget forecasts in respect of estates management are accurate, based on realistic assumptions
<input type="checkbox"/>	Estate procurement processes demonstrate regularity, propriety and value for money
<input type="checkbox"/>	Continuity plans in place to cover any emergencies related to the estate

Level 2

<input type="checkbox"/>	Governing board understand its estates responsibilities and skills gaps
<input type="checkbox"/>	Contractor due diligence carried out consistently
<input type="checkbox"/>	Continuity plans are detailed and include relocation, climate impacts and cyber incidents

Level 3

<input type="checkbox"/>	Trustees challenge and review progress against estate strategy objectives
<input type="checkbox"/>	Climate adaptation – plans in place to respond to events that may occur due to climate change such as overheating
<input type="checkbox"/>	Identified and documented cyber risks and have effective controls in place to prevent cyber-attacks. Plan in place to respond to cyber-attacks.
<input type="checkbox"/>	Flood/storm awareness – use of data from the Environment Agency to determine the flood risk, carry out inspections and react and respond to media bulletins
<input type="checkbox"/>	Continuity and mitigation plans tested and regularly reviewed

Level 4

<input type="checkbox"/>	Designated trustee or committee lead for estates
<input type="checkbox"/>	Full cost of owning and operating the estate over time is understood
<input type="checkbox"/>	The estate budget is represented in the overall budget planning cycle
<input type="checkbox"/>	Performance of the estate is understood and used to challenge and demonstrate value for money

3. Understanding and managing the land and buildings

Level 1

<input type="checkbox"/>	Accurate and complete asset register held covering all buildings and land
<input type="checkbox"/>	Statutory compliance register held
<input type="checkbox"/>	Basic building information held (age, type, use)
<input type="checkbox"/>	Key plans/floor plans available
<input type="checkbox"/>	Understanding of the condition of all the land and buildings in the estate
<input type="checkbox"/>	Awareness of the terms under which you occupy the land and buildings
<input type="checkbox"/>	Adequate levels of commercial insurance in place or are a member of DfE's Risk Protection Arrangement (RPA)

Level 2

<input type="checkbox"/>	Condition information held and reviewed periodically
<input type="checkbox"/>	Condition data actively used to prioritise maintenance, asset management and capital spend

Level 3

<input type="checkbox"/>	Condition data used to prioritise investment
<input type="checkbox"/>	Data quality is reviewed and validated
<input type="checkbox"/>	Use of digital Building Information Modelling (BIM) to support approach to effective estate management

Level 4

<input type="checkbox"/>	Analyse estate data for trends and long-term risks
--------------------------	----------------------------------------------------

4. Maintenance of the Estate

Level 1

- Maintenance arrangements in place to ensure estate is safe, warm, weatherproof and provide a suitable learning environment
- Adherence to The Health and Safety Executive's (HSE) guidance on safe maintenance of the estate
- Urgent health and safety issues responded to
- Responsibility for authorising works is clear

Level 2

- Planned maintenance schedule in place
- Maintenance prioritised based on risk and condition
- Budget monitoring for estates works

Level 3

- Backlog maintenance understood and managed proactively
- Recurring issues analysed and addressed

Level 4

- Maintenance strategy optimised using whole-life costing
- Proactively invest to reduce long-term condition risk

5. Health & Safety Compliance

Level 1

- Health and Safety policy in place
- Risk assessment register in place
- Statutory checks identified and scheduled
- Risk assessments carried out within the last 12 months
- Compliance documentation retained
- Responsible person(s) clearly identified
- Register held of all plant and equipment that requires statutory inspection
- All land and buildings within the estate are structurally safe.
- Compliance with Control of substances hazardous to health (COSHH) regulations

Level 2

- Statutory compliance monitored
- Risk assessment register reviewed regularly
- Overdue actions escalated

Level 3

- Structural stability - inspect buildings for damage. Periodic internal checks or spot-testing undertaken.

6. Fire Safety

Level 1

- Fire risk assessments in place, up-to-date and reviewed covering the whole trust
- Fire alarms, evacuation and drills carried out
- Fire alarm system should be serviced every 6 months
- Fire evacuation procedures clearly displayed

Level 2

- Fire risks reviewed following changes or incidents
- Remedial actions prioritised by risk

Level 3

Routine reporting of fire safety compliance to trustees

7. Asbestos Management

Level 1

- Up-to-date asbestos management survey
- Asbestos register in place (where applicable) – reviewed annually
- Asbestos management plan in place (where applicable) – reviewed annually

Level 2

- All staff where required received asbestos awareness training in accordance with Control of Asbestos Regulations 2012
- Asbestos register regularly reviewed and updated
- Works planned around asbestos risk

Level 3

- Trustee visibility of asbestos risk where required
- Long-term asbestos risk strategy in place
- Asbestos risks embedded into permits-to-work and project planning

Level 4

- Updated the asbestos register with photographs and material assessment scores and any new actions resulting from reinspection
- Carried out an emergency response exercise to test procedures in the event of accidental disturbance
- Subscribed to the free asbestos updates via eBulletin from HSE

8. Water Hygiene / Legionella

Level 1

- Up-to-date legionella risk assessments completed
- Control measures identified to reduce, eliminate or control any identified risks
- Ensure inspections are logged and carried out regularly
- Records maintained

Level 2

- Monitoring regime in place

Level 3

- Central oversight and reporting

9. Sustainability & Climate Considerations

Level 1

- Awareness of energy use and environmental risks
- Basic energy monitoring (e.g. energy use, CO2 emissions and energy costs)

Level 2

- Sustainability considered in estates decisions
- Energy efficiency improvements identified

Level 3

- Whole-trust approach to combat climate change which includes carbon reduction and nature recovery
- There is a nominated sustainability lead
- Sustainability integrated into estates strategy
- Climate resilience risks assessed

Level 4

- Credible decarbonisation pathway aligned to national targets
- Governing board reviewed the affordability and feasibility of reaching net zero

Engage with the [National Education Nature Park](#)

10. Digital Technology & Estate Data

Level 1

Estate records stored securely and access controlled

Evidence easily retrievable

Level 2

Consistent templates and processes used across sites

Use of DfE platforms (e.g. Manage Your Education Estate) understood

Level 3

Consider digital technology requirements as part of effective estate management

Estate data supports assurance, planning and reporting

Clear ownership and data governance

Level 4

Are digital tools used to predict risk, optimise spend and improve assurance

11. Other Statutory and Site Controls

Level 1

A valid Display Energy Certificate and advisory report in place

The school perimeter is secure, and access is controlled accordingly

There is separate, clearly marked access routes for pedestrians and vehicles

Parking and playground area are separate

Trees are routinely inspected

Plan in place to limit the exposure to radon gas (if applicable)

Level 2

Site risks reviewed following incidents or estate changes

Level 3

Site risks included in trustee assurance reporting

Level 4

Site controls optimised as part of estate master planning

Overall Self-Assessment Summary

Area	Level achieved (1–4)	Key gaps/commentary	Target level
Strategic Estate Management			
Planning and organising estate resources			
Understanding and managing the land and buildings			
Maintenance of the Estate			
Health & Safety Compliance <i>(no level 4)</i>			
Fire Safety <i>(no level 4)</i>			
Asbestos Management			
Water Hygiene / Legionella <i>(no level 4)</i>			
Sustainability & Climate Considerations			
Digital Technology & Estate Data			
Other Statutory and Site Controls			