

Value for Money Statement

Academy trust name: St John's Church of England Academy

Academy trust company number: 08026134

Year ended 31 August 2014

I accept as accounting officer for **St John's Church of England Academy** that I am responsible and accountable for ensuring that the academy trust delivers good value in the use of public resources. I am aware of the guide to academy value for money statements published by the Education Funding Agency and understand that value for money refers to the educational and wider societal outcomes achieved in return for the taxpayer resources received.

I set out below how I have ensured that the academy trust's use of its resources has provided good value for money during the academic year.

Improving Educational Results

Governors and school leaders review the quality of children's learning to provide a learning environment which enables children to achieve nationally expected progress e.g. setting of annual pupil achievement targets, based on a minimum progression of 2 national curriculum levels between Years 3 and 6.

We have robust tracking systems to monitor the progress of individual pupils ensuring that interventions and support are targeted and effective, with any underachievement addressed.

Children are identified during termly pupil progress meetings and interventions planned which best 'meet' learning needs. Interventions are monitored and evaluated on a half termly basis to ensure maximum impact.

We are an inclusive school and focus on the differing need of individual pupils. This is reflected in a 100% of pupils making 2 levels progress with a significantly high % making 3 levels progress. Our SEN children also performed better than national.

The academy monitors Pupil Premium expenditure and its impact on improving attainment for Free School Meals. Attainment for this group of pupils was well above national at KS2 and broadly in line with national at KS1.

Governors and school leaders deploy staff to provide best value in terms of quality of teaching and learning, adult-pupil ratios and curriculum management. The Academy Staffing Structure is reviewed annually to ensure the most appropriate provisions for our pupils.

What is Best Value?

Value for money is about achieving the best possible educational and wider societal outcomes through the economic, efficient and effective use of all the resources in the academy's charge.

Governors will apply the four principles of **best value**:

- **Challenge** - Is the school's performance high enough? Why and how is a service provided? Do we still need it? Can it be delivered differently?
- **Compare** - How does the school's pupil performance and financial performance compare with all schools? How does it compare with Darlington schools? How does it compare with similar schools?
- **Consult** - How does the school seek the views of stakeholders about the services the school provides.
- **Compete** - How does the school secure efficient and effective services? Are the services of appropriate quality, economic?

Financial Governance and Oversight

Governors and school leaders will apply the principles of **best value** when making decisions about:

- The allocation of resources to best promote the mission statement, aims and values of our school;
- The targeting of resources to best improve standards and the quality of provision;
- The use of resources to best support the various learning needs of all pupils, staff parents and governors.

They will not waste time and resources:

- on investigating minor areas where few improvements can be achieved
- to make minor saving in costs.
- by seeking tenders for minor supplies and services.

The pursuit of minor improvements or savings is not cost effective if the administration involves substantial time or costs. Time wasted on minor improvements or savings can also distract management from more important or valuable areas.

The Governing Body, Resources Focus approve the annual budget forecast of the academy trust including a review of pupil admissions / forecasts, the medium term financial plan (3 years) and a rolling 12 month cash flow statement to ensure the long term sustainability of the academy and thus that the academy remains a 'going concern'.

On a termly basis the Governing Body, Resources Focus review the budget monitoring reports and updated cash flow forecasts, approve additional expenditure requirements or reductions, and ensure compliance with the academy trust's procurement regulations.

Following the annual audit, the Governing Body receives and reviews the financial statements and the external auditors management report prior to approval.

Value for Money and Efficient Use of Resources

The Academy strives to focus on value for money and understanding the value of our assets and how they can be used to increase our students' rate of progress. Existing service delivery is proactively challenged and alternative provision is evaluated.

The Academy promotes fair competition through quotations and tenders in accordance with its Financial Regulations thus ensuring that goods and service are secured in the most economic, efficient and effective way.

The Head teacher reviews and authorises all invoices on behalf of the Academy and regularly challenges these for efficiency and effectiveness. In turn, the Governing Body reviews the functions of the school, challenging how services are provided and setting targets and performance indicators for improvement.

The Academy continuously shares good practice amongst collaborative schools in order to achieve value for money and the most efficient use of resources.

Maximising income generation

The Academy explores all opportunities to generate additional income including improving catering arrangements, the hire of Academy facilities, offering support to other schools and academies and the submission of appropriate grant applications. All surplus monies are actively managed.

Reviewing Controls and Managing Risks

The Governing Body maintains an oversight of the academy's risk management, value for money framework and governance arrangements.

The Academy appointed Baker Tilly Chartered Accountants as internal auditors who have undertaken system and accounting checks and reported these findings back to the Governing Body. The trust received support during the year from its external partners on accounting practice and compliance.

The Governing Body consider the strategic risks facing the academy including how these risks are managed by implementing a Risk Register and reviewing it on a termly basis.

The Head Teacher and Finance Director review budget monitoring reports on a monthly basis addressing any significant variances against budget.

Name: C Large

Academy Trust Accounting Officer

Date: 10th December 2014