

Value for Money Statement

Organisation name: Sir Robert Geffery's School

Company number: 7700611

Year ended 31 August 2014

I accept that as accounting officer of Sir Robert Geffery's School 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.

Value for Money Statement

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There are four principles of best value:

- Challenge - is the school's performance high enough? Why and how is a service provided? Does the school still need it? Can it be delivered differently?
- Compare - how does the school's financial and pupil performance compare with other schools?
- Consult - how does the school seek the views of stakeholders on school services?
- Compete - how does the school secure efficient, effective and quality services? Is the school getting value for money from suppliers?

Governors' Approach

Governors and school leaders applied 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.

Governors and School Leaders:

- made comparisons with other/similar schools using data provided by the DFE and the Government, e.g. Raise-online, quality of teaching & learning, levels of expenditure;
- challenged proposals, examining them for effectiveness, efficiency, and cost, e.g. setting of annual pupil achievement targets, extended services provision;
- required suppliers to compete on grounds of cost, and quality/suitability of services/products/backup;
- consulted individuals and organisations on quality/suitability of service we provided to parents and pupils, and services we receive from providers, e.g. Energy Management.

This applied in particular to:

- staffing

- use of premises
- use of resources
- quality of teaching
- quality of learning
- purchasing
- learners' welfare and emotional well-being
- health and safety

Improving Educational Results:

We have ensured that resources were directed where they were most needed and most effective in meeting educational requirements, for example achieving our targets. In 2013/2014 our targets were:

- To ensure that children are challenged and learning opportunities planned, that result in at least two levels of progress made for 96% of pupils in Year 6. Challenging targets are set and met for each cohort. To ensure purposeful learning opportunities that engage and enthuse all learners evaluated during learning forums. Standards in spelling and writing are improved.

As a result 96% of children did make two levels of progress

- Maximise learning for those who are at risk of not meeting targets so that they leave primary school with at least expected levels and move from amber to green during review meetings. Provide additional opportunities to extend learning and challenge able learners, ensuring this is well planned and results in 50% of pupils achieving Level 5 at the end of Key Stage 2 in core subjects.

In reading and maths over 50% achieved level 5.

The intervention groups supported learning, and targeted children achieved their targets. The Better Reading Programme was particularly successful this year.

- Staff are well motivated and life-long learners who develop additional skills to meet needs of pupils and support the development of teaching. Lessons and activities observed are of higher quality and 75% of lessons observed have outstanding features. School systems are adhered to, and during monitoring no inconsistencies are apparent.

The school was designated as a 'Teaching School' and six members of staff became Specialist Leaders' of Education and the Headteacher- a National Leader of Education. Support has been given to other schools. The two School Direct students completed their year as outstanding practitioners and were employed for September 2014

- To maximise opportunities for learners to learn both inside and outside, in a safe and enjoyable manner. To explore all options to improve the spaces available, and to maintain and/or improve condition of building. To promote a high quality of learning and the full involvement of the school community, resulting in best value for money being achieved. To improve access and availability of school and resources.

The school won the Outside Learning and Grounds section of Cornwall Schools Sustainability Awards and is a Beacon School for the LINE Project. Many lessons take place outside. Unfortunately our bid for funding for additional classroom space was not successful. We will be resubmitting different plans next year.

Overall the effectiveness of these strategies can be seen in improved pupil outcomes, staff observations and preparations for delivery of a new curriculum.

Financial Governance and Oversight:

Budget monitoring reports, focusing on under and over spends, were produced for the Finance Committee and reported to the full Governing Body each term. Reports were reviewed and challenged by Governors, with further analysis provided at subsequent meetings when required.

All major purchasing decisions were made by Governors and minuted. For capital works or large purchases, a quotation or tender process was followed, in line with EFA recommendations.

Better Purchasing:

Examples of steps taken to ensure value for money when purchasing include:

- Exploring alternative purchasing options both on-line and direct through suppliers to find the best value.
- Beginning to work with other schools in partnership to identify products and services that can be procured across a number of schools in order to drive down cost and/or negotiate favourable rates e.g. assessment data systems
- Better procurement and negotiation to reduce costs throughout 2013-2014 including property management, school insurances and, residential trip costs.
- All contracts are reviewed on an annual basis to ensure they are fit for purpose and best value. For example, grounds maintenance and staff insurance.

Better Income Generation:

Examples of steps to maximize income include:

- Successful bid to become a Teaching School and designation of six staff as Specialist Leaders of Education and Headteacher as National Leader of Education.
- Hosting circa 28 trainee teachers, including School Direct, under graduates and PGCE placements.
- Involvement in delivery of CPD for different organisations

Reviewing Controls and Managing Risks:

The Governors monitor closely the financial position and reserves, and consider this position in advance of the purchasing plans for the year ahead. This has ensured that spending is within budget and forward plans are agreed and implemented when there has been any variance.

Health and Safety reviews and inspections are carried out annually with recommendations forming an action plan that is implemented immediately.

The Academy has comprehensive insurance cover for pupils, staff, governors, property and assets to ensure the continuation of education provision in any unforeseen circumstances.

Future Objectives:

We recognize the need to continue developing relationships with other academies and local schools, in order to benefit from economies of scale in procuring products and services, developing staff and sharing knowledge, skill and expertise. As such, work as a Teaching School will be developed from September 2014, working closely with partners in Devon and Cornwall.

Name: Mrs Julie Curtis
Academy Trust Accounting Officer

Date: 11 Dec 2014