

Value for Money Statement

Organisation name: Henley-In-Arden Church of England Primary School

Company number: 8644320

Year ended 31 August 2014

I accept that as accounting officer of Henley-In-Arden Church of England Primary 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.

Improving educational outcomes

After conversion to an academy on 1st September 2013 the existing Head Teacher retired and a new Principal was appointed effective 1st September 2014 along with an additional Assistant Head Teacher – responsible for SEND and intervention.

After a rigorous recruitment process Mrs Pam Hayes was selected by the Board of Governors to promote a secure foundation from which to achieve high standards in all areas of the school's work. The school vision has been developed to ensure that all members of the school community share a common goal.

The staffing structure is reviewed continuously to ensure maximum educational impact for pupils with the minimum of wasted resources.

The school has continued to develop the assessment, tracking and monitoring processes to ensure data is used to inform planning, target interventions and support differentiation: We include regular internal and Senior Leadership Team meetings to review progress and impact of interventions for different groups of pupils.

The effectiveness of these strategies can be seen in maintaining high standards in pupil outcomes and teaching and learning.

The school has invested substantial time in reviewing and rewriting the curriculum to take into account the national changes and school priorities. This was trialled in Summer 2014 and will be reviewed on an on going basis by the subject leaders and the senior management team.

The school has continued working with the local cluster of schools and the newly formed Stratford consortium of schools to identify shared good practice and common areas for development.

Targeted improvement

We have ensured that resources are directed where they are most needed and most effective in meeting educational requirements, for example by:

- Targeting resources in key subjects such as literacy and numeracy
- Monitoring the needs of particular pupils including SEND & those in receipt of Pupil Premium Grant and ensuring the support they receive is relevant to them.
- Monitoring the performance of staff and ensuring that relevant action is taken to address weaknesses.
- Teaching Assistants are deployed in areas of defined pupil need.
- Appointed a new SIAMS leader in the school who has undertaken a review of current practice and produced an action plan which will be implemented in 2014/2015
- Creation of an outdoor learning environment which includes a shaded area with natural seating which can be used as an outdoor classroom and an environmental area with bug houses to encourage natural diversity. This is used to enhance teaching across all areas of the curriculum.

Focus on individual pupils

Class teachers meet with the senior management team half termly to discuss pupil progress and attainment. Adult intervention can then be targeted towards under attaining or under performing children.

Additional booster classes were arranged to prepare children for the Level 6 SATS papers in addition to providing extra support for children to achieve Level 4.

Collaboration

The school's lead teachers for literacy and numeracy continue to work with the Gateway Alliance in sharing good practice across Warwickshire.

Other external agencies such as the Coventry Diocese and Prospects were used to support the acting principal throughout 2014.

New initiatives

The school employed a sports apprentice this year to assist with delivery of the PE curriculum and increase the number of sports clubs offered at lunchtimes. We continue to employ our own sports coach to deliver high quality PE lessons. As a direct result of this the school has created more opportunities for children to be active, particularly at break times.

Quantifying improvements

Achievements in the period of the academic year 2013/2014 have seen success in the following areas;

Early Years Foundation Stage

Progress has been assessed against 17 Early Learning Goals (ELG) across seven areas of learning. Children are assessed at Level 1 – emerging, Level 2 – expected or Level 3 – exceeding.

We have improved our overall assessment score from 2012/2013 with 67% of our children achieving a good level of development this year. This compares favourably with both Warwickshire and National figures of 60%. Our average total assessment score was 36.6 compared to Warwickshire which was 33.7 and nationally 33.8.

KS1

83% of Year 1 pupils achieved a pass in the phonics screening check, up from 76% the previous year which reflects the additional targeted teaching in the spring term and the development of the role of parents in supporting their child's learning.

In year 2 the pupils gained a good set of results. 93% of the pupils achieved a level 2+ in reading, with 86% in writing and maths. 29% of children achieved level 3 in reading, and 21% achieved level 3 in maths, only 7% of pupils achieved level 3 in writing which is a focus area for improvement in 2014/2015.

KS2

Achievement at Level 4 or above exceeded the local and national average. Although scores were slightly down on the 2013 results, this was due to an exceptional cohort in that year. Compared with a similar cohort in 2012 the children showed an improvement in reading, writing and maths.

Teacher assessment indicated that 65% of the children were working at Level 5 or above in Reading. However, this was not reflected in the test results. Raising the % of pupils making more than expected progress in reading is a focus area for 2014/15. Further information can be found on Page 7 of the Trustees' Report for year ending 31st August 2014.

Attendance for the year 2013/2014 was at 96.45%, which is continually monitored and remains good across the school.

The senior management team continue to monitor the behaviour of the children, which also remains good across the school.

Financial governance and oversight

The academy benefits by having suitably qualified personnel who are responsible for the day to day control of the finances of the Trust. Governance is achieved via the Finance committee and the Board of Governors. In addition a suitably qualified auditor was appointed to review financial policies, systems and procedures and reported its findings back to the Finance Committee.

Better purchasing

The academy continued to purchase a number of support services from Warwickshire County Council during the first year as an academy. These are assessed annually on the basis of cost and level of service against alternative providers.

Tender exercises are carried out to ensure that contracts are assessed against the marketplace on a regular basis

to ensure that long term contracts remain competitive.

Jerrons Accountants were selected for the provision of auditing and other financial services based on competitive tendering process and although not the cheapest it was agreed that the collaboration process followed for the SAGE tendering process would offer economies of scale if they were to provide advice relevant to all of the schools.

During the financial year 2013/14, the academy was successful in its bid for funding from the Educational Funding Agency for a kitchen refurbishment. The school recognises its responsibility to obtain value for money at each stage of the project. As such, formal tenders have been undertaken for the architectural and project management services, as well as the main building contract and kitchen appliances. Good management of the contract ensured the works came in on budget and on time.

Benchmarking

Salary scales of the Assistant Head Teachers were reviewed prior to the recruitment process against the pay of other schools in LA of similar size.

Options appraisal

Contracts that we felt were not beneficial to the school were ceased i.e. specific maintenance services provided by Warwickshire County Council. After an assessment of building works required for the summer we did decide to employ an individual to complete these tasks

Economies of scale

The school has developed links with three other primary academies based in Solihull and Warwickshire. A joint procurement process of a new financial accounting system enabled us to share cost and best practice in implementing the new system.

Maximising income generation

The school actively looks to generate additional income for the school whilst serving the local community. This included;

- Consultancy services to local schools and the Local Authority.
- PGCE placements
- Sale of old kitchen equipment
- Use of the school for community events
- Local clubs for the school and wider community such as Lego, Badminton & Aerobics

Reviewing controls and managing risks

The review of controls and procedures is an on going process. Quality and cost of services and goods are measured for their value for money. The responsibility for pursuing value for money lies with all staff not just those with financial duties. The Principal reviews and signs every purchase order on behalf of the academy and regularly challenges these for efficiency and effectiveness.

The school works closely with three other local convertor academies and shares good practice between the finance and business management. The Academies have worked together on joint procurement as well as informally offering support as the Responsible Officer. In 2014/15 a formal reciprocal arrangement is to be considered for the role of Responsible Officer in the form of peer-to-peer review. This will jointly enable the Academy to fulfil its internal audit function, whilst sharing best practice with regard to its financial management processes.

To ensure best value the school benchmarks itself against other similar schools. This is an area of development for the academy in 2014/15.

Cash flow after conversion needed careful monitoring whilst reserves were with the Local Authority. Full payment terms were taken with suppliers. It is recognised by the Academy any cash surplus in 2014/15 should to be reviewed with Business Manager and Finance Committee, and where considered appropriate invested in short term deposits, with the bank, at a more beneficial interest rate than the standard rate offered.

The Principal, School Business Manager, Finance Committee and Board of Governors regularly review budget reports, including future recommendations. This ensures that spending is within budget and forward plans are agreed and implemented when there has been any variance.

Actions taken to manage risk include the purchase of an appropriate level of insurance cover, following consultation with the school's broker. Professional advice (for example from suitably qualified trustees, auditors and the HR and legal service providers) has also been sought when needed.

Lessons learned (reviewing operations to maximise resources)

We recognize the need to continue developing relationships with other academies and/or local schools, in order to benefit from economies of scale in procuring products and services, developing staff and sharing knowledge, skill and expertise.

Name: Mrs Pamela Hayes
Academy Trust Accounting Officer

Date: 19 Dec 2014