

Value for Money Statement

Academy trust name: The Diocese of Westminster Academy Trust

Academy trust company number: 07944160

Year ended 31 August 2014

I accept that as accounting officer The Diocese of Westminster Academy Trust 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.

Each Local Governing Body through the scheme of delegation works with the Strategic Board to deliver value across the Trust schools. Each Local Governing Body through the scheme of delegation is accountable for the way in which its school's resources are allocated to meet the objectives set out in the school's development plans. The Local Governing Bodies work to secure the best possible outcome for pupils, in the most efficient and effective way, at a reasonable cost. This will lead to continuous improvement in the school's achievements and services. To achieve this the Trust and each Local Governing Body apply 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? What do parents want?
- **Compare** - How does the school's pupil performance and financial performance compare with all schools? How does it compare with LA 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 services of appropriate quality, economic?

These principles have been used during the academic year when decisions have been made on:

- the allocation of resources to best promote the aims and values of the Trust and its schools.
- the targeting of resources to best improve standards and the quality of provision.
- the use of resources to best support the various educational needs of all pupils.

Each Local Governing Body has produced a Value for Money Statement for the period ended 31st August 2014 to support the Trust's summary statement.

Improving Educational Outcomes:

- The deployment of staff to provide best value in terms of quality of teaching, quality of learning, adult-pupil ratio, and curriculum management across the Trust schools.
- Pupil Premium funding and expenditure has been considered by each local governing body and the impact of the intervention programmes run during the academic year have been assessed against pupil progress.
- The Trust through its risk management returns have reviewed the quality of children's learning, by education phase and reviewed the Trust schools performance against national and overall the students have exceed nationally expected progress.

- The pay policy and performance management targets have been reviewed by each local governing body to support the further development of Good and Outstanding Teaching within the Trust.
- The Trust has been successful in securing ACMF grants for improvement of and conditions work, Primary expansion and delivery of Universal Free School Meals for Infants.
- The Trust continue to review the quality of the learning environment and the Strategic Vision and mission of the Trust, in order to provide a supportive environment conducive to learning and recreation through the local governing bodies committee structures. The committees evaluate the impact of financial investments in supporting the pastoral development of the students.

Financial Governance and Oversight

- The Academies Financial Procedures Manual has been updated by the Trust following the revision of the Academies Financial Handbook to ensure all processes, policies and schemes of delegation meet the requirements of the EFA, Charities Commission and Company House requirements.
- A Responsible Officer visit programme operates across the Trust schools and a report is provided to the Audit and Finance committee of the Strategic Board.
- An independent audit of the academies processes and procedures is undertaken by the Trust Auditors and a priority level assigned to any comments reported under the Management Letter in a summary matrix to the Board for all schools within the Trust.
- Regular budget monitoring and cash flow reports are provided for each local governing body from the school financial operating system and FMS Multiview provides an overview report across the Trust schools for the Board.

Better Purchasing

- The Trust has continued to work with Churchmarketplace to look at procurement processes and reducing costs by benefitting from agreed procurement contracts. From this partnership significant savings have been identified in telecommunication costs.
- The Trust schools have an approved supplier list which is reviewed at least annually to ensure Value on pricing structures of suppliers.
- As part of the Trust the schools benefitted from cost savings economies of scale in the provision of:

Inset Training by training as a group rather than individual academies.
Trust level insurance policy with Zurich
Trust level licences
Audit Fees

Maximise Income Generation

- The Trust actively review grant opportunities for its schools to support the improvement of Teaching and Learning for the school community
- Lettings are reviewed annually by each local governing body.

Reviewing controls and Managing Risk

- The Trust requires three termly reports on Risk Management to be provided by each local governing body. For financial scrutiny the Trust also require an Interim and Final Audit and Trust level RO visit to each school by the Trust Auditors copies of these reports are provided to the Board and academy with summary box for action points.

- The Trust undertake an internal review on controls through their independent RO visits
Healthy and Safety consultants visits
Property consultant's reports
Board members school visits

Lessons Learned in making the budget go further

As the Trust has been in operation since March 2012 benchmarking data has been compiled by the auditor to allow the Board and academies to undertake cost comparatives and reasons for variances in key expenditure headings. Trust level contracts for financial systems, Legal and Audit services have identified expenditure savings for schools in the Trust.

Monitoring of Value for Money September 2013 to August 2014

These areas have been monitored for Value for Money by:

1. In-house monitoring by the academies.
2. Responsible Officer visits at local level
3. Annual Performance Management
4. Annual Budget Forecast Plan reviews by the Strategic Board
5. Strategic Board meetings
6. Visit and Performance Review by the School Improvement Partner (SIP)
7. Advice from the Auditor
8. Analysis of school pupil performance data, e.g. Examination results and standardised test results against all schools, LA schools, similar schools
9. Analysis of financial data against bench mark data against similar schools e.g. using the Schools Performance Data
10. Analysis of DFE pupil performance data, e.g. RAISE online
11. Ofsted Inspection reports
12. Finance and Audit committee meetings including reports from the Auditor on school monitoring visits.
13. Risk Management committee termly reports from Local Governing Bodies.
14. Governors' Annual Budget Review and Three year Budget overview
15. Trust wide Pay Policy review, consultation and policy implementation
16. Value for Money Statements from each Local Governing Body (Appendix One)

Signed:

Name: Mr.P.Camoletto

Academy Trust Accounting Officer

Date: 16th December 2014