

Value for Money Statement

Organisation name: John Warner School

Company number: 7555066

Year ended 31 August 2014

I accept that as accounting officer of John Warner 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.

Governors and senior members of staff apply the principles of best value when making decisions about:

- The allocation of resources to best promote the aims and values of the school,
- 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 students.

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

- Do not waste time and resources on investigating minor areas where few improvements can be achieved,
- Do not waste time and resources to make minor savings in cost,
- Do not waste time and resources seeking tenders for minor supplies and services.

Governors and senior members of staff do:

- Make comparisons with other/similar schools using data provided by central government and other appropriate bodies, e.g. quality of teaching and learning, levels of expenditure.
- Challenge proposals, examining them for effectiveness, efficiency, and cost, e.g. setting of annual student achievement targets.
- Require suppliers to compete on grounds of cost, and quality/suitability of services/products/backup.
- Consult individuals and organisations of quality/suitability of service we provide to parents and students, and services we receive from providers, e.g. student reports, OFSTED, energy consultant, student welfare service, external auditors.

This applies in particular to:

Staffing

Governors and senior members of staff deploy staff to provide best value in terms of quality of teaching, quality of learning, adult-student ratio and curriculum management.

Teaching

Governors and senior members of staff review the quality of curriculum provision and quality of teaching, to provide parents and students with a curriculum which meets the requirements of the curriculum set by the school, National Literacy Strategy, National Numeracy Strategy, and the needs of the students and to provide teaching which builds on previous learning and has high expectations for student's achievement.

Learning

Governors and senior members of staff review the quality of student learning by year, class and group, to provide teaching which enables students to achieve above nationally expected progress, e.g. setting of annual student achievement targets and striving to improve on or maintain previous years' exam results and attendance.

Use of Premises

Governors and senior members of staff consider the allocation and use of teaching areas, support areas and communal areas, to provide the best environment for teaching and learning, for support services, and for communal access to central resources, e.g. The John Warner Sports Centre.

Use of Resources

Governors and senior members of staff deploy equipment, materials and services to provide students and staff with resources which support quality of teaching and quality of learning. The Academy benefits from an independent Responsible Officer (RO) who is also a governor at the school. The RO reviews key financial policies, systems and procedures.

Purchasing

Governors and senior members of staff have procedures in place for assessing need and obtaining goods and services which provide "best value" in terms of suitability, efficiency, time and cost. These include:

- A competitive tendering procedure for goods and services above £50,000,
- Three written quotes for goods and services between £10,001 and £50,000,
- Two written quotes for goods and services between £5,001 and £10,000,
- Tender exercises are undertaken to ensure that high value contracts are assessed against the marketplace to ensure that long term contracts (3 to 5 years) remain competitive,
- Procedures for accepting "best value" quotes which are not necessarily the cheapest (e.g. suitability for purpose and quality of workmanship),
- Procedures to minimise office time by the purchase of goods or services under £5,000 direct from reliable suppliers (e.g. stationery, small equipment),
- An annual budget prepared in line with the needs identified within the School Development Plan,
- Regular monitoring and review of all aspects of finance through the Finance and Resources Committee, with detailed financial statements discussed.

Income Generation and Surplus Balances

Governors and senior members of staff explore every opportunity to generate income through various means such as working with the National College of Teaching and Leadership, Initial Teacher Training programme, Schools Direct and the hiring of Academy facilities. Governors and senior member of staff ensure that all surplus cash balances are invested in interest bearing accounts to maximise interest earning potential.

Student Welfare

Governors and senior members of staff review the quality of the school environment and the school ethos, in order to provide a supportive environment conducive to learning and recreation.

Health and Safety

Governors and senior members of staff review the quality of the school environment and equipment, carrying out risk assessments where appropriate, in order to provide a safe working environment for students, staff and visitors.

Examples

Educational Outcomes – Whole School

Across the school, our spending is guided by The Sutton Trust-EEF Teaching and Learning Toolkit (<http://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/toolkit/>). This provides a summary of educational research and so offers guidance for teachers and schools on how to use their resources to improve the attainment of disadvantaged

pupils, both in terms of making an initial choice between strategies, and in implementing a strategy as effectively as possible.

The authors acknowledge that 'the relationship between spending and pupil outcomes is not simple' and that 'at school level, it is clear that different ways of spending school budgets can have very different impacts on pupil attainment, and choosing what to prioritise is not easy'. They accept that 'even once a decision to implement a particular strategy has been taken there are a wide variety of factors which determine its impact'.

We have made our decisions based on the average impact of a particular strategy on attainment, the strength of the evidence supporting the claim of impact, and the related cost, as set out in the toolkit, together with our own knowledge of the specific needs of eligible pupils. Further details about the impact of this are available under 'Pupil Premium' on our website.

Educational Outcomes – Sixth Form Attendance

Through internal restructuring we have appointed a new Sixth Form secretary and administration support officer. The outcome of her appointment has been a rapid and substantial improvement in all aspects of attendance and absences which have seen significant improvement by all indicators. It was mentioned at our last Ofsted that attendance and lateness at sixth form was an issue in our school and this has now been addressed to such an extent that we are now a centre of best practice with low levels of absences. This outcome has been achieved for a relatively small outlay in terms of salary, and has also improved the link between parents, the school and the students by providing a single point of contact. This has reduced pressure on the main office allowing the main school office to carry out other duties. In addition to her work with lateness and absence, this key member of staff monitors and facilitates the distribution of cover materials when staff are absent, which has led to an improvement in the engagement of students, ensuring no loss of learning if colleagues are ill or absent for any other reason. The impact is both educational and cultural, affecting real change in measurable outcomes for negligible expenditure and therefore represent excellent value for money.

Better Purchasing

The school has recently completed a new Design and Engineering centre which was funded by the EFA, local sponsors and the PTA. The building was designed to replace temporary accommodation and address a real curriculum need within the school.

The building was constructed without interruption to the normal school business day, extremely high cost controls were placed on the project and the building was delivered with no additional costs to the funding agency. This facility is set to be the centre of an initiative between the University of Hertfordshire, our school and the local business community.

It provides best value for money in that it replaced outdated, dilapidated buildings with new energy efficient rooms which provided a first class teaching environment for the use of the school and wider community in time, on budget and bringing about sustainable curriculum efficiencies in the coming years.

Monitoring of Best Value

Monitoring of these areas for best value took place:

- In-house by the Leadership Team and by other senior members of staff e.g. through classroom practice and work sampling,
- By target setting meetings between member of the Leadership Team and other senior members of staff,
- In Annual Review meetings,
- In the Annual Budget Planning process and the preparation of the Annual Accounts,
- In the School Development Plan,
- Through the analysis of in-house and external student performance data
- Through the analysis of RAISE on-line student performance data,
- Through the analysis of financial data,
- In OFSTED Inspection reports,
- In classroom observations,
- In Governing Body meetings (Full Governing Body and Committee meetings),
- By providing information to parents via the school website, email and newsletters.

Name: Mr David Kennedy
Academy Trust Accounting Officer

Date: 17 Dec 2014