

Value for Money Statement

Academy trust name: Katherine Lady Berkeley's School

Academy trust company number: 7696921

Year ended 31 August 2013

I accept that as accounting officer of **Katharine Lady Berkeley'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.

(A) Improving educational results

▪ Staffing Structure

- Within the overall aim to ensure the best possible outcomes for all students, there are particular emphases on:
 - 1) Enabling disadvantaged students to achieve as well as other students through the effective use of pupil premium funding
 - 2) Improving the progress made by students with Special Educational Needs
 - 3) Placing a greater focus on literacy across the curriculum in order to improve students' access to the curriculum and raise achievement
 - 4) To improve the progress made by less able students in mathematics
- Staffing structure changes have been made to reflect items (1), (2) and (3) above. Our Leadership Team has been extended by the internal appointments to two Assistant Headteacher posts, one to take responsibility for the leadership and management of support and monitoring the progress of disadvantaged students and the other to promote our SENCO to the Leadership Team. Both appointments enable consideration of the issues affecting the students concerned to be included directly into the strategic leadership of the school.
- We have also appointed a whole school literacy coordinator to promote the development of literacy across the curriculum.
- To further support vulnerable children, the trust has moved from contracting the Local Authority to provide Education Welfare services to employing its own Education Welfare Officer.

▪ Focus on individual pupils:

- The main focus of our pupil premium coordinator is to provide one to one and small group tuition support for disadvantaged students. As these structures have developed, it is been possible to extend the support to other students who are vulnerable.
- The most able students in the school are supported by our Coordinator for Gifted and Talented students who work with the students concerned and support subject teachers in ensuring that there is suitable stretch and challenge.

- We are developing our monitoring systems to better identify students who are underachieving in order to identify suitable intervention strategies to provide suitable support.
- **Collaboration:**
 - The trust works with other Gloucestershire schools through the active Gloucestershire Association of Secondary Head teachers. This provides a range of support, including financial and resource benchmarking which helps the trust to ensure that the various aspects of the operation are resourced appropriately.
 - The school also works with the PiXL group of schools which provides a range of support to help students to achieve the best possible grades at GCSE and at A level.
- **New initiatives:**
 - The new Leadership Appointments referred to above, which will enable better support for vulnerable and the least able students, have been possible by the more efficient deployment of teaching staff across the curriculum which enabled a reduction in the number of teaching staff.
- **Quantifying improvements:**
 - The gap in three levels of progress in English for students eligible for the pupil premium has fallen from 25% to 15%.
 - The level of persistent absence for students eligible for the pupil premium has fallen from 21% to 12%.
 - The value added score for students eligible for the pupil premium has risen from 927 to 969.
 - The value added measure for students on School Action Plus has risen from 952 to 969.
 - The value added measure for students with a statement of Special Educational Needs has risen from 966 to 1010.

(B) Financial governance and oversight

- The school's Management Committee endorses (before formal approval by the Full Governing Body) the annual budget plan which is prepared jointly by the Head teacher (Accounting Officer) and Finance & Business Director taking into account priorities identified in the School Development Plan
- The Management Committee receives regular budget reports showing the latest and forecast financial position, as well as planning and progress reports on all capital spend. The governors' Responsible Officer role is currently held by a chartered accountant who regularly challenges financial reports and undertakes periodic reviews to check the robustness of financial systems and control
- The Finance & Business Director is responsible for counter-signing all orders/invoices and routinely reviews how resources are being spent
- The school holds an annual general meeting at which the school's income and expenditure is described together with any particular issues which have or are affecting the school's funding or costs

- **Better purchasing:**
 - **Fitness for purpose:**
 - Some £30,000 has been saved in the last 18 months from renegotiated service contracts, undertaking some capital projects and management time in-house, installation of utilities efficiency devices (e.g. installation of water saving devices, Sensor Lighting Motion)
 - All contracts are subject to review in advance of the renewal date in order to provide opportunity for renegotiation or alternative more competitive prices
 - **Benchmarking:**
 - The school has recently reviewed national/regional benchmarking data/information provided by two independent sources, as well on-going comparisons with other Gloucestershire schools. This data is being used to supplement the school's own financial information in identifying savings opportunities as part of its medium-term financial planning process which has identified the need to make budgetary reductions from 2014/15 due to falling pupil numbers
 - **Options appraisal:**
 - The school's Finance Policy requires at least three written quotations for all orders between £1,000 and £50,000 to identify the best source of goods/services. All goods/services ordered with a value over £50,000, or for a series of contracts which in total exceed £50,000 are subject to formal tendering procedures. The tender process includes the setting out of a clear "needs specification" to ensure VfM is achieved when comparing quotes and taking decisions on whom to award contracts to.
 - All spending decisions are founded upon securing the correct quality, quantity and time scale for delivery at the best price possible
 - The creation of a Capital Asset Development Plan, using prioritisation criteria (costs, benefits, impact upon curriculum delivery, condition, risk) ensures all significant improvement works are effectively evaluated before commissioning
 - **Economies of scale:**
 - The school has recently negotiated bulk order purchasing with its paper supplier which has reduced administration costs and avoided stock-holding costs through a 'call-off' arrangement (i.e. stock is regularly delivered based upon an assessment of demand)
 - The Finance & Business Director will be reviewing the internal procurement process to produce a "preferred supplier" list. This will improve VfM and reduce administration costs significantly
 - As part of the school's strategy to further improve its links to local primary schools, opportunities for joint procurement will be explored
- **Better income generation:**
 - The school has undertaken a number of capital improvements during 2012/13 with a gross value of £0.74M. Proactive grant bidding and negotiations with benefactors, to generate additional donations, generated some £0.59M (80%) towards overall costs
 - The school is also in the process of reviewing its management arrangements for the letting of its sports' facilities and in doing so is will be reviewing expenditure data, to

ensure charges are set accurately. Marketing of these facilities is expected to generate additional demand to further increase revenue

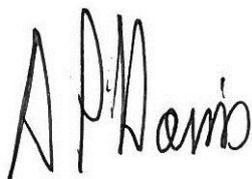
▪ **Reviewing controls and managing risks:**

- Regular management reports are received by the school's Management Committee (see Financial governance and oversight section)
- The school regularly reviews its cash balances to identify any opportunities for short-term investment
- The current 3-year insurance contract is due for renewal in 2014 and this will be put out to tender following a reassessment of the required cover levels and risks
- Major purchases of furniture and equipment are controlled by the Finance & Business Director and all purchasing decisions are based upon an understanding and assessment of need. Surplus furniture is recycled internally wherever possible

▪ **Lessons learned:**

- Having an understanding of how investment of cash and staff time affects the school's effectiveness (in terms of impact upon academic attainment) and efficiency (in terms of maximising resources) is fundamental to strong governance and management. This will need to continue to be a necessary focus in future planning, setting of priorities and investment.

Signed:

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'A Harris'.

Name: Andrew Harris Academy Trust Accounting Officer

Date: December 2013