

Value for Money Statement

Academy trust name: ...Great Marlow School

Academy trust company number: 07690054

Year ended 31 August 2014

I accept that as accounting officer of **Great Marlow 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.

Introduction

The Governing Body is accountable for the way in which the school's resources are allocated to meet the objectives set out in the school's improvement plan. Governors seek to secure the best possible outcome for students, in the most efficient and effective way, at a reasonable cost, through continuous improvement in the school's achievements and services.

What is Best Value at Great Marlow School?

Governors and staff of the school apply the 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 similar schools both locally and nationally?
- **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 value?

And have regularly reviewed the three components of value for money

- **Economy** – minimizing the costs of resources used for a good, service or activity
- **Efficiency** – the relationship between outputs and the resources used to produce them
- **Effectiveness** – the extent to which objectives have been achieved

The Governors' Approach

The Governors and Leadership Team have applied 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.

Governors and Leadership Team have:

- Made comparisons with other/similar schools using data provided by the DfE, eg Raise online, quality of teaching & learning, benchmarking of levels of expenditure and income.

- Challenged proposals, examining them for effectiveness, efficiency and cost, e.g. setting of annual student achievement targets, review of admission policy.
- Required suppliers to compete on grounds of cost, and quality/suitability of services/products/backup, e.g. building of new sports centre, replacement roofing, provision of services such as HR consultancy, payroll
- Consulted individuals and organisations on the quality/suitability of service we provide to parents and students, and services we receive from providers, e.g. Ofsted, student, staff and parental surveys.
- Regularly evaluated services provided/levels of provision eg catering provision.

This has applied in particular to:

- Staffing
- Use of premises
- Use of resources
- Quality of teaching
- Quality of learning
- Purchasing
- Student's welfare
- Health and safety

Governors and school managers:

- Will not waste time and resources on investigating minor areas where few improvements can be achieved or only minor savings in costs can be made
Will not waste time and resources by seeking tenders for minor supplies and services.

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

Staffing

Governors and Leadership Team have deployed staff to provide best value in terms of quality of teaching, quality of learning, adult-student ratio, and curriculum management

Use of premises

Governors and Leadership Team have considered the allocation 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 canteen, learning resource centre.

Use of Resources

Governors, Leadership Team and staff have deployed equipment, materials and services to provide students and staff with resources which support quality of teaching and quality of learning. In order to improve IT access across the school site wide wireless has been installed together with new servers which will also provide an effective back-up provision. These facilities will enable future development of BYOD (Bring Your Own Device)

Teaching

Governors and Leadership Team have reviewed the quality of curriculum provision and quality of teaching, to provide parents and students with:

- A curriculum which best meets the needs of the students of the school
- Teaching which builds on previous learning and has high expectations of student's achievement.
- For 6th form students the school is part of a local partnership where provision for specific courses is shared across a number of schools

Learning

Governors and Leadership Team have reviewed the quality of student's learning, by cohort, class and specific learner groups, to provide teaching which enables students to achieve or exceed their target grades

Purchasing

Governors and Leadership Team have set and followed procedures for assessing need and obtaining goods and services which provide 'best value' in terms of suitability, efficiency, time and cost. Measures already in place include:

- Competitive procurement procedures .
- Procedures for accepting 'best value' quotes, which are not necessarily the cheapest (e.g. suitability for purpose and quality of workmanship).
- Procedures which minimize office time by the purchase of goods or services under £1,000 direct from known, reliable suppliers (e.g. stationery, small equipment).
- Use of finance office staff to research best sources in procurement and pooling purchases across departments in purchasing items such as exercise books

Students' Welfare

Governors and Leadership Team have kept under 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 school managers have kept under 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.

Monitoring

The areas above have been monitored for best value by:

- In-house monitoring by Head Teacher and Leadership Team, eg classroom practice, work sampling
- Appraisal procedures for staff
- Budget Planning and regular reviews
- Analysis of school performance data
- Analysis of pupil performance data
- Analysis of financial data
- Benchmarking of financial data against similar schools
- Monthly reviews of departmental procurement against budget
- Reviews by Leadership Team of bids for additional capitation expenditure which evidences priority against both Departmental and School Improvement Plans
- Departmental review meetings between Line Manager and Heads of Department
- Ofsted Inspection reports
- Governors visits and reports
- Governor full board and committee meetings
- Governor reviews of budget and contracts

Signed:

Name:

Academy Trust Accounting Officer

Date: