

Value for Money Statement

Academy Trust name: All Saints Academy Dunstable
Academy Trust company number: **06853140**.



Year ended 31 August 2013

I accept that as Accounting Officer of All Saints Academy Dunstable 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 results for our students remains our key priority. The Academy has taken the following steps to support school improvement for our students and to raise their attainment and aspirations. The Academy is committed to supporting our students achieving their full potential through academic achievement, extra-curricular opportunities and extended learning to develop the whole person to help prepare them for higher education, further training or work.

Targeted improvement: The Academy has a robust tracking system for monitoring achievement and is continually looking at how data can inform staff in order for them to support and extend the learning of the students. We have employed skilled staff to support our school improvement agenda and we involve all our teams in focusing on the students learning needs and encourage innovation and creativity to meet those needs.

Focus on individual students: The Academy offers students a comprehensive student support service and specialist learning provision. Students benefit from one to one mentoring, small group work, external educational provision, where appropriate, and our experienced teams work with students to support their individual needs.

The Academy rewards excellence and encourages positive behaviour. We celebrate achievement and encourage students to try new activities to develop their confidence and leadership skills.

Diverse Curriculum: We recognise that students' skills and knowledge are diverse, and it is necessary to differentiate the curriculum in order to make the most appropriate use of resources to meet students' needs.

Classes are set individually in each of English, Maths and Science. Our most able students are offered triple Science. Students who struggle with English are given additional time at the expense of Modern Foreign Languages, as appropriate.

In order to meet student needs at KS4 we have moved away from a blocked curriculum, where curriculum provision is allocated according to staffing, to a model where students have a free choice of subjects and where the Academy then staffs the curriculum according to student demand. In addition, the vast majority of students study a core curriculum of English, Maths, Science, RE, Sport, MFL, History and Creating and Designing.

Collaboration: The Academy works closely with the feeder primary schools. The headteachers of each school meet regularly to share ideas, good practice and discuss issues. The Academy supports the primary schools with ICT technical support and, where appropriate, group purchasing to achieve value for money for all.

Currently four teaching staff, jointly funded on a pro-rata basis, work across seven schools. This means better use of resources, specialist teachers of MFL and Sport in each of the Primaries and a commitment to joint curriculum planning and provision in order to raise standards across the board.

Quantifying improvements: The Governors' Standards Committee meets four times a year to ensure that the Sponsors' Action Plan to raise attainment is adhered to. Since opening key KPIs show an improvement in attendance, significant rises in the Floor Targets of 5A* - C, Average Points Score per student and a reduction in the number of exclusions. The Academy is fast becoming the local school of first preference with numbers on roll rising from 529 in September 2012 to 707 in September 2013. The roll will exceed 800 students in 2014.

Financial governance and oversight: The Academy's Governing Body has strong oversight of the financial management of the budget. The Finance Committee meet regularly to review the financial position, to receive reports and to challenge decisions. Our external auditors review our financial processes and undertake the role of Responsible Officer to test our internal controls. The levels of delegation on spending proposals ensure we take the necessary steps to achieve best value.

The Full Governing Body approves the budget each year and is mindful of the need to balance expenditure against income to ensure the Academy Trust remains a 'going concern'. The Governing Body also receives and approves the Annual Accounts and External Auditors Management Report.

Better purchasing: The Academy is a member of a group purchasing consortium which facilitates group purchases for a number of schools to achieve best value. Our Budget Holders are continuously looking for the most competitive deals using various procurement tools such as internet shopping, advice from other schools and economies of scale.

The Academy regularly benchmarks financial performance against other academy trusts to demonstrate that the Trust provides good value for money.

Fitness for purpose: The Academy has a cycle of review for its on-going services from external organisations to ensure those services continue to meet the needs of the school, are the best available to us at that time, and offer good value for money.

Tender exercises are regularly undertaken to ensure that high value contracts are assessed against the marketplace on a regular basis to ensure that long term contracts (3 to 5 years) remain competitive.

Better income generation: The Academy has been successful with a number of external income streams including Summer School funding. The Academy explores every opportunity to generate income through hire of Academy facilities.

Reviewing Controls and Managing Risk: Monthly budget monitoring reports are produced by the Assistant Vice Principal – Finance & Operations. These reports are signed by the Principal and any remedial action taken to address any significant variances that may have an impact on the budget out-turn.

The Academy ensures that all surplus cash balances are invested in interest bearing accounts to maximise interest earning potential.

The Endowment Fund provided by the Sponsors is managed by specialist advisors at Barclays Corporate Services.

Reviewing operation to maximise use of resources: The Academy Leadership Team review expenditure and make adjustments based on the effectiveness of strategies introduced in previous years, curriculum offer, and any new strategies identified in the Academy Development Plan.

Lessons learned: The Academy has reached the end of its fourth year of operation and we have come to learn the options open to us and the autonomy and flexibilities we have. Our continued curriculum development to support high student achievement remains our top priority. We will be focusing on how best to resource our Development Plan.

Signed:

Name: Tom Waterworth

Academy Trust Accounting Officer

Date: