Value for Money Statement

Academy trust name: Goldington Academy

Academy trust company number: 07557785

Year ended 31 August 2013

I accept that as accounting officer of **Goldington Academy** 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 Best Value Statement can be found in Appendix 1.

Improving educational results:

▪ **Targeted improvement:**

The Academy reviewed its staffing structure for September 2013, as part of the consultation on the new Whole School Pay Policy. Expenditure, including that on staffing, reflects the schools priorities identified in its School Improvement Plan, which has been determined through self-evaluation (at Governor, Senior Leader and Middle Manager levels) and the feedback following Ofsted's inspection in November 2012.

The School Improvement Plan includes both short and longer term plans for development. This particularly applies to whole school issues which may need a longer phase for development, implementation and monitoring.

For 2012-2013 the School Improvement Plan has been re-structured to match the key areas of the Ofsted framework. The school priorities for 2012-2013 fit into four themes: achievement of pupils, quality of teaching, behaviour and safety and leadership and management.

Departmental Improvement Plans reflect both whole school issues and developments within departments. These issues are also linked to the four themes of the new Ofsted framework. Progress towards these is monitored through Curriculum Link meetings in the Autumn, Spring and Summer terms.

Raising standards in core subjects at KS2 and KS3 still remain a key focus within the school. Thorough evaluation of standards achieved through SATS enable us to evaluate achievement against prior attainment indicators. The Core-Curriculum group meets regularly to discuss progress towards targets and value-added is measured between KS2 SATS and pupil performance at transfer. Matched pupil data for the end of KS3 SATS enables us to measure value-added between KS2 and KS3.

In English and Mathematics enhanced staffing has been implemented and "Out of Hours" learning programmes have also been used in Year 6 for Mathematics and English.

Improvements in pedagogy continue to be a focus during 2012-13, particularly AfL and personalisation. Whole staff training and departmental meetings were used to promote pedagogical practices. Within the core subjects the use of APP to identify barriers and move forward learning also progressed.

Areas singled out for development were:

1a	Raise standards in English	- Percentage of pupils achieving Level 4+ increased to 90% - Percentage of pupils achieving Level 5 increased to 53% - Percentage of pupils making two levels progress between KS1 and KS2 increased to 90% - Reduce the number of pupils with a reading age below their chronological age by at least 10% - Value-added between KS2 SATs and end of Y8 in English increased, bringing it more in-line with Mathematics - Value-added from entry (Y4 data) shows a minimum of 13 points progress
1b	Raise standards in Mathematics	- Percentage of pupils achieving Level 4+ increased to 88% - Percentage of pupils achieving Level 5 increased to 49% - Percentage of pupils making two levels progress between KS1 and KS2 increased to 90%
1c	Raise standards in the foundation subject	End of Year Teacher Assessment data shows foundation subjects APS has increased and is more in-line with the core subject
1d	Address any variations in the performance of different pupil groups, within subjects and compared to National averages	- Gaps in performance between different pupil groups identified - Strategies implemented to address gaps in performance between different pupil groups - Gaps in performance between different pupil groups narrowed
2a	Improve the quality of teaching	All teaching judged as "good" or "outstanding"
2b	Ensure consistency in AfL practices, particularly self-assessment, success criteria and written feedback	- Pupils consistently self-assess at the end of each lesson - Pupils receive regular constructive written feedback - Pupils know the level at which they are working and how to improve - Success criteria used regularly, particularly to aid peer assessment and subject specific target setting - APP used effectively in the core subjects - High level questioning and dialogue used during lessons to assess pupils understanding and intervene if appropriate
2c	Ensure homework is set regularly and is of an appropriate quality to support pupils learning	- Homework is set regularly in accordance with the homework timetable - Homework set is appropriate and supports learning

2d	Further develop the use of data on a day-to-day basis to personalise learning and ensure the needs of all individual pupils are met	➢ Staff training on how to use data effectively to support learning delivered ➢ Staff using data appropriately to help them to personalise learning
2e	Further develop the range of teaching strategies used to motivate and enthuse learners	➢ Lesson observations and planning monitoring show that a range of well-judged and imaginative teaching strategies are being used ➢ Pupils more motivated and enthusiastic during lessons
2f	Develop the use of the Virtual Learning Environment (VLE)	➢ Committee established to "champion" the use of the VLE within school ➢ Staff provided with further training on how to use the VLE ➢ Additional content purchased that can be embedded into the VLE ➢ All curriculum areas have some content for pupils to access from home on the VLE ➢ VLE used to support the management of curriculum areas
3a	Continue to use the Learning Integration Centre to support the raising of academic standards and behaviour	➢ Specific groups of pupils identified for small group support in LIC to help improve behaviour and self-esteem ➢ Groups of under-performing pupils identified to work in LIC to raise academic standards ➢ Pupils removed to work in LIC who are disturbing the learning of others
3b	Monitor and improve child protection and safeguarding practices	➢ Key personal have up-to-date knowledge of statutory safeguarding and child protection requirements ➢ All staff receive annual safeguarding and child protection training ➢ CRB checks completed for all staff and volunteers ➢ Single Central Record up-to-date
3c	Maintain and improve upon current attendance rates	➢ Attendance above the national high attendance grade indicator (94%) ➢ Percentage for persistence absences reduced ➢ Percentage for unauthorised absences reduced ➢ Variations in attendance between different pupil groups addressed
3d	Maintain and develop pupils positive attitudes towards learning	➢ Pupil engagement during lessons is high ➢ Lessons proceed without interruption due to pupils excellent attitudes to learning ➢ Pupils are punctual to lessons because they are keen to learn
3e	Ensure consistency in the in the implementation of behaviour management systems	➢ Red/Yellow card system, including associated sanctions, implemented consistently by all staff

4a	Further develop self-evaluation procedures	➢ Rigorous self-evaluation procedures in place at curriculum level that inform improvements ➢ Self-evaluation results in current practices being reviewed and improvements implemented
4b	To work in closer partnership with Trust partners and other feeder lower schools to improve attainment, progress, and assessment, particularly in English & Mathematics.	➢ Increased attainment at the end of KS2 in English and Mathematics ➢ Smoother transfer and transition (Y4 → Y5) ➢ Opportunities for Y4 & Y5 teachers to share pedagogical practices ➢ Y4 and Y5 teachers given the opportunity to teach in each other's schools
4c	Continue to provide staff with appropriate professional development opportunities focused on improving the quality of teaching and learning; and raising standards	➢ Staff training days used to provide professional development opportunities ➢ Staff attending appropriate external CPD courses that improve teaching, learning and standards ➢ Lesson observations show improvement in the quality of teaching and learning ➢ Increases in attainment
4d	Continue to encourage middle leaders to promote high expectations and strive for higher standards	➢ Good practice shared during Curriculum Coordinators meetings ➢ Curriculum Coordinators using departmental meeting time to improve teaching and learning, model good practice and enthuse staff ➢ Curriculum Link meeting used to challenge and support coordinators in their aim to achieve high standards ➢ Outcomes of departmental self-evaluation used effectively to plan appropriate actions that result in improvements

▪ **Collaboration:**

The Academy works in collaboration with other schools in the locality. In particular it is a member of the following Trusts which, amongst other things, collaborate on staff development, procurement and governance:

1. **North East Bedfordshire Learning Trust**

   The Academy is a partner of the North East Bedfordshire Learning Trust, a company registered in England and Wales as a Charitable Company registered by guarantee, registration number 06920399. The Academy may appoint one director to the Trust Board.

This is a collaboration of six schools in the Mark Rutherford School Pyramid comprising Member schools:

- Newnham Middle School
- Castle Lower School
- Goldington Green Lower School
- Hazeldene Lower School
- Putnoe Primary School
- The Hills Lower School

The Member Partners are:

- University of Bedfordshire
- Bedford College
- Bedfordshire Police
- Goldington Academy
- The Bedford Charity (The Harpur Trust)
- Horizon Health Commissioning Ltd

The idea is for the Trust to work alongside and within the local community by having regard to its obligations set out by the (National) Government through its Community Cohesion Agenda and the Extended Schools Framework; in order to:

- Promote work among all partners to support teaching and learning by sharing good and outstanding practice.

- Use the expertise of Trust partners alongside collaboration between schools in the Trust to develop a high quality curriculum, which is co-designed by and relevant to all pupils and meets the schools' priorities for improvement.

- Further develop systems of transition between phases to ensure greater coherence, continuity and progression in learning. Work together with the other schools and with local community organisations to increase the support for parents offered by extended schooling, providing a greater range of high quality specialist after school provision to meet the needs and interests of all children.

- Make available educational opportunities for everyone in the community to access lifelong learning.

- Provide high quality professional development for all staff closely focused on the priorities of the schools in the Trust.

The decision has been taken to disband the NEBLT and this will happen over the coming months.

2. Pilgrim Learning Trust

The Academy is a member of the Pilgrim Learning Trust, a company Limited by guarantee, registered in England and Wales as a Charitable Company, registration number 8310718.

The PLT aims:
- To raise standards in member schools/Academies
- To work alongside local governing bodies, embedded in their communities, to ensure accountability, challenge and support
- To grow the PLT locally at a pace appropriate to our capacity to make a difference to the education and lives of young people in our schools/Academies

The PLT shall:
- challenge and support school leadership in teaching, learning, achievement and school management. Independent audits will be an annual feature so that clear information is available to the Governing Body on identified areas of strengths and weaknesses
- develop our own staff within the schools/Academies of the PLT so that they are even more effective; and to do this from within our own collective expertise and through the Teaching School where appropriate
- assist the functions of Governing Bodies through training and support
- procure cost effective, high quality services that allow maximum allocation of school funds to teaching and learning
- bring maximum autonomy to individual PLT members enshrined within the framework of our Agreement on:
  - Teaching, learning and student outcomes
  - Procuring and delivering cost effective, high quality services
  - Governance

The 4 founder members of the PLT are the Sharnbrook Academy Federation schools; these schools are Harrold Priory Middle School, Lincroft Middle School, Margaret Beaufort Middle School and Sharnbrook Upper School.

The other current member schools are:

John Gibbard Lower School, The Ferrers School, Huxlow Science College, *Goldington Academy, Finedon Schools, Manor School, Alfred Street Junior School, South End Infant School, Irthlingborough Infant School, Tennyson Road Infant School, Raunds Park Infant School, Stanwick Primary School, St Peters C of E Junior School, Irthlingborough Junior School, Whitefriars Infant School, Little Harrowden Primary School, Higham Ferrers Nursery and Infant School, The Latimer Arts College, Higham Ferrers Junior School.*

The Academy also uses ESPO and Crescent Purchasing to procure goods and services, along with other purchasing consortiums or school purchasing frameworks. It continues to buy-in some services from Bedford Borough to ensure it and other local schools benefit from economies of scale e.g. energy procurement.

- **New initiatives**

In a little over twelve months we have had in excess of £1.5 million spent on the school premises, buildings and facilities, ensuring that pupils have a safe and productive environment in which to learn.

We were fortunate to receive ACMF funding of £560k n 2011-12 to implement fire safety upgrades after a significant number of required improvements were identified in the schools Fire Risk Assessment.

We were successful again in 2012-13 with our bid for ACMF funding, this time to address the poor condition of the schools flat roofs. This project also enabled us to remove roof related asbestos from site (e.g. in the soffits and fascias) and improve insulation to prevent heat loss.

An important feature of the year was our Pupil and Parents' Survey conducted by the Educational Company "Cocentra". From 314 parent responses in October they wrote the following conclusion:

"Parent/Carer satisfaction with the school is high and any areas identified for potential further development need to put into this context. There are no areas which attract high levels of negative response."

Pupils concerns were around school cleanliness and the condition of the schools toilets. In response to this a programme of toilet refurbishments was agreed by governors, for implementation over a four-year period. In 2012-13 £150k has been spent from the school's reserves to implement the first year of this initiative. The School Council helped to inform the designs and colour schemes.

This investment is also good for the local organisations and community groups who use the schools premises for their activities and events. These lettings are a good additional source of income for the school and help fund endeavours and purchases which may otherwise elude the school e.g. purchase of a new mini-bus to support inter-school activities.

Financial governance and oversight:

- **The Purpose of the System of Internal Control**

The system of internal control is designed to manage risk to a reasonable level rather than to eliminate all risk of failure to achieve policies, aims and objectives; it can therefore only provide reasonable and not absolute assurance of effectiveness. The system of internal control is based on an on-going process designed to identify and prioritise the risks to the achievement of Academy Trust policies, aims and objectives, to evaluate the likelihood of those risks being realised and the impact should they be realised, and to manage them efficiently, effectively and economically.

The system of internal control has been in place in Goldington Academy Trust for the year ended 31 August 2013 and up to the date of approval of the annual report and financial statements.

- **Capacity to Handle Risk**

The governing body has reviewed the key risks to which the Academy Trust is exposed together with the operating, financial and compliance controls that have been implemented to mitigate those risks. The governing body is of the view that there is a formal on-going process for identifying, evaluating and managing the Academy Trust's significant risks that has been in place for the year ending 31st August 2013 and up to the date of approval of the annual report and financial statements. This process is regularly reviewed by the governing body.

Better purchasing:

- **Fitness for purpose**

Contracts are reviewed towards the end of each contract period. The evaluation of each service/ product being contracted considers whether it continues to be required by the Academy and, if so, whether the quality meets the Academy's needs and if it represents good value for money. For example, when the Academy's Long Term Undertaking with its current insurer comes to an end in March 2014 the risk elements for which the Academy requires insurance will be reviewed in line with its Risk Register. The Academy will also expect to make savings in recognition of the investments made to improve the fabric and safety of its buildings.

- **Benchmarking**

The school is currently participating in a benchmarking exercise as part of the Bedford Middle School Heads Association (BMHSA) and analysis of data will take place in the coming months once the data collection exercise has been completed.

Reviewing controls and managing risks:

- **The Risk and Control Framework**

The Academy Trust's system of internal financial control is based on a framework of regular management information and administrative procedures including the segregation of duties and a system of delegation and accountability. In particular, it includes:

- comprehensive budgeting and monitoring systems with an annual budget and periodic financial reports which are reviewed and agreed by the governing body;

- regular reviews by governing body committees of reports which indicate financial performance against the forecasts and of major purchase plans, capital works and expenditure programmes;

- setting targets to measure financial and other performance;

- clearly defined purchasing (asset purchase or capital investment) guidelines;

- delegation of authority and segregation of duties;

- identification and management of risks.

The governing body has considered the need for a specific internal audit function and has decided not to appoint an internal auditor. However, Appointed Governor Mr P Hymers, has performed as Responsible Officer (RO) for the year to 31st August 2013. The RO is supported and advised by the Academy's auditors. He ensures a range of internal audit checks are carried out throughout the year on the Academy's financial systems according to the published Responsible Officer Work Plan. The RO reports to the governing body on the operation of the systems of control and on the discharge of the governing body's financial responsibilities.

These arrangements can provide only reasonable and not absolute assurance that assets are safeguarded, transactions are authorised and properly recorded, and that material errors or irregularities are either prevented or would be detected within a timely period.

The Responsible Officer reviews, which have been undertaken over three days during the year to 31st August 2013 in accordance with the RO Work Plan adopted by the governing body, scrutinised Accounting Controls (including reconciliations, payroll, suppliers, expenses and sundry income) and Corporate Governance. No material control issues were identified in the RO review reports.

Residual risk is reviewed periodically and Governors ensure adequate insurance cover is in place for these areas.

Signed: ⁣_____

Name: **Mr F X Galbraith**

Academy Trust Accounting Officer

Date: 12th December 2013

BEST VALUE STATEMENT

Adopted by the Governing Body of
Goldington Academy
on this 19th day of May 2011

This policy is to be reviewed: .... **Three yearly** ....

The next review date is: .... **June 2014** ....

Review is the responsibility of: .... **GB Finance Committee** ....

REVIEW HISTORY

Review ratified: ....

Review ratified: ....

Review ratified: ....

Signed: .... *DAHead* ....　　　**Dated:** 29.06.2011
　　　　　　Chair of Governors

Signed: .... *P. Price* ....　　　**Dated:** 29.06.2011
　　　　　　Head Teacher

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 development plans. Governors need 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.

What is Best Value?

Governors will apply the four principles for *best value:*

- **Challenge** – Is the school's performance high enough? Why and how is a service provided? 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?

The Governors' Approach

The Governors and school managers will 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 pupils.

Governors, and the school managers, will:

- make comparisons with other/similar schools using data provided by the LA and the Government, e.g. RaiseOnline, quality of teaching and learning, levels of expenditure;
- challenge proposals, examining them for effectiveness, efficiency, and cost, e.g. setting of annual pupil achievement targets, enhanced staffing;
- require suppliers to compete on grounds of cost, and quality/suitability of services/products/backup, e.g. provision of computer suite, re-decoration;
- consult individuals and organisations on quality/suitability of service we provide to parents and pupils and services we receive from providers.

This will apply in particular to:

- staffing
- use of premises
- use of resources
- quality of teaching
- quality of learning
- purchasing
- pupils' welfare
- health and safety

Governors and school managers:

- will not waste time and resources on investigating minor areas where few improvements can be achieved;
- will not waste time and resources to make minor savings in costs;
- 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 school managers will deploy staff to provide best value in terms of quality of teaching, quality of learning, adult-pupil ratio, and curriculum management.

Use of Premises

Governors and school managers will 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 library.

Use of Resources

Governors and school managers will deploy equipment, materials and services to provide pupils and staff with resources which support quality of teaching and quality of learning.

Teaching

Governors and school managers will review the quality of curriculum provision and quality of teaching, to provide parents and pupils with:

- a curriculum which meets the requirements of the National Curriculum, National Literacy Strategy and National Numeracy Strategy, the LA Agreed RE Syllabus, and the needs of pupils;
- teaching which builds on previous learning and has high expectations of children's achievement.

Learning

Governors and school managers will review the quality of children's learning, by cohort, class and group, to provide teaching which enables children to achieve nationally expected progress, e.g. setting of annual pupil achievement targets, 2 national curriculum levels between Years 5 and 8.

Purchasing

Governors and school managers will develop 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 tendering procedures (e.g. for goods and services above £50,000);
- competitive quotations (for goods and services above £5,000);
- procedures for accepting "best value" quotes, which are not necessarily the cheapest (e.g. suitability for purpose and quality of workmanship);
- procedures which minimise office time by the purchase of goods or services under £1000 direct from known, reliable suppliers (e.g. stationery, small equipment).

Pupils' Welfare

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

Health & Safety

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

Monitoring

These areas will be monitored for best value by:

1. In-house monitoring by the Head Teacher and curriculum managers, e.g. classroom practice, work sampling.
2. Twice-yearly target setting meetings between the Senior Leadership Team and curriculum leaders.
3. Annual Performance Management.
4. Annual Budget Planning.
5. Head Teacher's monthly financial review.
6. Termly visits by the School Improvement Partner.
7. Regular liaison with the LA Finance Advisor.
8. Analysis of school pupil performance data, e.g. SATs results, standardised test results, QCA optional tests against LA schools, similar schools.
9. Analysis of LA pupil performance data.
10. Analysis of LA financial data against bench mark data for LA schools, similar schools.

11. Analysis of DCSF pupil performance data, e.g. RaiseOnline.
12. Ofsted Inspection reports.
13. Link Governors' liaison with curriculum leaders.
14. Governors' termly committee meetings.
15. Governors' full termly meetings.
16. Governors' Annual Finance Review.
17. Governors' Annual SATs Target Setting Meeting.
18. Governors' Annual School Improvement Plan Meeting.
19. Governors' Annual School Profile.

In the next three years the Governing Body will:

- hold an annual meeting to set targets for improving pupil achievement;
- hold an annual School Improvement Plan meeting;
- discuss "Best Value" annually;
- consider best value when arranging buildings/maintenance projects