

Value for Money Statement for Year Ended 31st August 2014

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.

Improving educational outcomes:

- **Targeted improvement:**

The Academy reviews its staffing structure annually. 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 using the feedback received from Ofsted and other school effectiveness reviews, such as the reports we commission from Edward Wheatley Educational Consultants and the school review (Mocksted) undertaken by the Pilgrim Learning Trust.

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. The SIP is reviewed and evaluated throughout each year and the lessons learned reflected in the new SIP for the following year.

The 2013-2014 School Improvement Plan has been structured to match the key areas of the Ofsted framework. The school priorities for 2013-2014 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 will be monitored through Departmental Review Meetings on a regular basis (approximately every 3 weeks).

Raising standards in core subjects at KS2 and KS3 still remains a key focus within the school. Thorough evaluation of standards achieved through national testing

(SATS) enable us to evaluate achievement against prior attainment indicators and national averages. The Core-Curriculum group meets regularly to discuss progress towards targets and value-added.

Matched pupil data for the end of Year 8 enables us to measure value-added between the end of KS2 and the point of transfer. Last year we also introduced baseline testing in Year 5 to enable us to accurately calculate the progress made by pupils between entry and exit at Goldington Academy.

Improvements in pedagogy continued to be a focus during 2013-14, particularly differentiation and personalisation (as highlighted by 'BlueSky'). All staff were provided with a 'Personalised Learning' folder to help ensure that they were meeting the needs of all the pupils in their teaching groups.

Other training days were also used to develop pedagogical approaches, addressing issues such as supporting SEN pupils effectively (issue raised by Ofsted) and questioning & dialogue (issue raised by external consultant). Departmental meetings were also used by Coordinators to promote pedagogical practices within their curriculum area.

Curriculum Coordinators received a day's training on 'Lesson Observations' to help them develop in their role as middle leaders and better equip them in identifying areas for development in their department. Developing the role of the middle leader continues to be a focus for 2013-14.

Self-evaluation continued to be a key focus for development in 2013-14. Subject co-ordinators have continued to undertake detailed departmental self-evaluation which has been used to inform their new departmental improvement plans. Greater emphasis now needs to be placed on the outcomes of self-evaluation to ensure a continued cycle of improvement.

- **Focus on individual pupils:**

Teachers all receive data profiles on the pupils they teach to inform teaching and learning; and teacher assessment data is now collected half-termly in English & Mathematics and termly in all other subjects. Tracking of pupil's progress using this data has been facilitated by producing data sheets that measure progress or highlight progress that needs to be made to achieve targets.

Data is also analysed on a half-termly basis in English & Mathematics at a whole cohort and pupil group (e.g. SEN, Pupil Premium, G & T, etc.) level to ensure that the needs of all pupils are being met. Pupils that are a cause for concern are discussed during Pupil Progress Meetings with English & Mathematics teachers; and shared with all teaching staff. This will continue in the 2013-14 cycle and be aided by the introduction of SIMs Assessment Manager making data easily accessible to all staff.

During the 2012-2013 cycle we have looked closely at variations in performance between different vulnerable pupil groups in both the Core and Foundation subjects. Core Curriculum and Curriculum Coordinator meetings have been used to discuss the data and possible intervention strategies. Coordinators have then raised issues relating to their particular subject area in departmental meetings. The performance of vulnerable pupil groups was also discussed during Departmental Review Meetings.

In English and Mathematics the enhanced staffing has been continued in order to make teaching groups smaller and these groups are set according to ability. "Out of Hours" learning programmes have also been used in Year 5 and Year 6 for Mathematics and English. These sessions have targeted pupils that are at risk of not making two levels between KS1 and KS2 and not achieving their end of year target. Some of these are targeted at Pupil Premium and Looked After Children.

The Special Educational Needs Coordinator is benefitting from more non-contact time in which to improve the identification of pupils who may require additional support, identifying the support required, implementing support programmes and analysing pupil progress data to ensure pupils are making good progress.

We have created the position of Gifted and Talented Coordinator to lead the teaching team on identifying pupils who fall into this category, to organise special events for them and to provide training/ mentoring for colleagues to ensure differentiation is appropriate to challenge the more able pupils.

The Academy has been successful in securing additional funding to provide One-to-one Tuition for its Looked After Children.

▪ **Collaboration:**

The Academy works in collaboration with other schools in the locality. In particular it is an active partner in the pyramid of local Lower, Middle and Upper schools and a member of the Pilgrim Learning Trust. Amongst other things, these associations allow the academy to collaborate on staff development, procurement and governance.

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**

A new performance management system was introduced in September 2013, 'BlueSky'. As part of this process staff evaluated themselves against the Teachers' Standards. SLT then used this to identify CPD needs and areas for development.

Ofsted visited the school in November 2012 and rated it as 'Good'. The areas for development identified in the report were: development of reading, level of challenge for more-able pupils, pace in lessons and progress of SEN pupils. Although some progress has been made towards addressing these issues these developments are reflected in the 2013-14 School Improvement Plan.

We are employing a Reading Coordinator to lead this key area, supported by a special budget set-aside for resourcing the improved provision of Reading, including books in the Library.

We have created a temporary position internally for a teacher to deliver twilight training sessions on a variety of themes and to act as a mentor for colleagues to encourage the value of Continual Professional Development.

The Governing Body committees have been re-structured in order to better challenge and support the school. All the committees and the full governing body meet once every half term. The committees are as follows:

- Health & Safety, Premises and Safeguarding
- Academic Standards and SEN
- Personnel
- Finance

We were again fortunate to receive ACMF funding in 2013-14. We are currently having all the Crittall windows in the school replaced, including the Curtain Walling to the three storey block. To fund this project we were awarded £955k. Once the project is completed security and the working environment will both be significantly improved and the effects of heat loss/gain effectively mitigated.

In our last biennial Pupil and Parents' Survey conducted by the Educational Company "Cocentra" in October 2012 responses were received from 314 parents. It was concluded that:

"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 2013-14 £100k has been spent from the school's reserves to implement the second 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 many activities and events. These lettings are a good additional source of income for the school, which helps to fund endeavours and purchases which may otherwise elude the school e.g. purchase of a new mini-bus to support inter-school activities.

Significant investment has also been made in the past year to upgrade the academy's heating systems.

▪ **Quantifying improvements**

Goldington's internal data analysis has been compared to 2013 national figures for the purposes of this document.

In 2014, 57% of Pupil Premium children achieved a Level 4+ in Spelling, Grammar and Punctuation compared to 62% nationally. 74% of Pupil Premium children achieved Level 4+ in Writing which was 16% above the 2013 national figure. The percentage of Pupil Premium children achieving Level 4+ in Reading was 86% and Maths was 84%, which are 8% and 7% (respectively) above the national figure for 2013.

43% of FSM pupils at Goldington achieved Level 5+ in Spelling, Grammar and Punctuation compared to 34% nationally. 18% achieved Level 5+ in Writing compared to 17% nationally; 36% achieved Level 5+ in Reading compared to 30% nationally; and 30% achieved Level 5+ in Maths compared to 27% nationally.

In Mathematics, at Level 4+, in 2014 there was an -10% difference between the attainment of Pupil Premium and Non-Pupil Premium children, this was a vast improvement on 2012 and 2013 when the difference was -23% and -19% respectively. In Writing Level 4+ there was a -4% difference between the attainment of Pupil Premium and Non-Pupil Premium children compared to -19% in 2013. The difference in attainment between Pupil Premium and Non-Pupil Premium children in Reading at Level 4+ was -6%, this was a vast improvement on 2013 where the difference was -28%.

At Level 5+ Non-Pupil Premium children's attainment was higher than Pupil Premium children's in Reading, Writing & Maths. As a school we are aware that this is an area where we need to place greater emphasis in the academic year 2014-15.

The difference between the APS for Pupil Premium and Non-Pupil Premium children at Goldington in Maths was -3.4 points in 2012, reduced to -2.8 points in 2013 and reduced again to -2.6 points in 2014. In Reading in 2012 there was a -3.4 points difference which was reduced to -3.2 points in 2013 and reduced again to -1.7 points in 2014; and in Writing the difference was reduced from -2.6 in 2012 to -1.8 points in 2013 and to -1.7 points in 2014.

In 2014 88% of Pupil Premium children made two levels progress between KS1 and KS2 in Reading compared to 87% of Non-Pupil Premium, a difference of +1%. This was a significant improvement on 2013 when the difference was -18%. In Writing, 95% Pupil Premium children made two levels progress between KS1 and KS2 in Writing compared to 90% of Non-Pupil Premium, a difference of +5%. Again, this was a significant improvement on 2013 when the difference was -13%. In Maths, 84% of Pupil Premium children made two levels progress between KS1 and KS2 in Maths compared to 91% of Non-Pupil Premium, a difference of -7%; a slight improvement on 2013 when the difference was -11%.

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 2014 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 2014 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 improvements that have been made to the fabric, security and safety of its buildings.

- **Benchmarking**

The school is currently participating in a benchmarking exercise through accountants Peters Elworthy and Moore. Once their data collection has been finalised and the information circulated to academies, Goldington Academy will carry out its own analysis of the data and comparisons made.

- **Option appraisal**

For all purchases we consider more than one option, even if that means checking in a number of stationery catalogues to compare costs for small items such as pens, pencils, etc.

We will often benchmark goods and or services against those available through purchasing consortiums such as ESPO or CPC to ensure we understand what is considered a good service at a reasonable price.

When larger items and/or services are procured we will usually have brain storming sessions and/or take advice from industry specialists to consider all options available, which includes giving consideration to how long the product/service will last, warranties available and whether they are fit for purpose, in addition to cost and availability.

For all of the funding bids we have submitted (for ACMF and PSBP2) our options appraisals and feasibility analyses have been well documented.

▪ Economies of scale

We actively use purchasing consortium ESPO and therefore benefit from the economies of scale they have negotiated on behalf of all the members they serve. In particular, we acquired new Multi-function Devices (MFDs) through a collaborative framework between ESPO, YPO and the Government Procurement Service at the end of the financial year. This purchase, combined with new printing control software, is expected to help the academy make significant cost savings in both printing and paper usage and it will be interesting to review the data at the end of the next financial year.

We also periodically review other opportunities and consider the benefits which could be available from purchasing collaboratively through our local networks (the local pyramid of schools and the Pilgrim Learning Trust), as the Business Managers from both groups meet regularly. Items/contracts reviewed in 2013-14 with a view to finding group savings included energy, personnel and payroll services, catering and sustainability strategies such as installation of solar panels. However, for Goldington Academy the existing arrangements were found to already represent the best value for money.

Maximising income generation:

The improvements to the school's buildings have met with approval from the community groups that use the school's facilities. Demand is therefore increasing for lettings through word of mouth, which has the potential to increase the academy's unrestricted income.

Governors reviewed the school's lettings rates in May 2014 and, although this will not significantly affect the income received from local charities and community groups who qualify for discounted rates, it means private and commercial lettings will be more profitable for the academy.

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 2014. 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.

The Responsible Officer reviews, which have been undertaken over five days during the year to 31st August 2014 in accordance with the RO Work Plan adopted by the governing body, scrutinised Accounting Controls (including reconciliations, payroll, suppliers, expenses and sundry income), Risk Management, Management Reporting Budgetary Control. 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: 19th December 2014.....