

**Value for Money Statement**  
**Academy Trust Name: King Charles 1 School**  
**Academy Trust Company Number: 07969062**  
**Year ended 31<sup>st</sup> August 2014**

I accept that as accounting officer of King Charles 1 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. During the 2013-14 academic year the academy financial position remained consistently good. A balanced budget was set in the summer of 2014 for 2014/2015.

**Improving educational outcomes**

The academy works to achieve the best outcomes possible for all students thereby ensuring the best life chances for everybody in its care. This is achieved by having a regular focus on improving the quality of leadership at middle and senior leadership and the quality of teaching across all key stages. The progress of the students was regularly reviewed and evaluated so that strategies could be adapted to improve the outcomes.

- At key stage 3 the academy met and exceeded its targets for the proportion of students achieving levels 5 and above in English and mathematics by using a variety of strategies-eg running a literacy and numeracy summer school, using the catch-up premium to employ a higher level teaching assistant to oversee the intervention programme in Years 7 and 8.
- At key stage 4 the proportion of students obtaining 5+A\*-C including English and mathematics slightly decreased (from 58% to 54%) but is still in line with the national average (60% to 56%). The attainment and achievement of the students in mathematics was the issue and this will be addressed during 2014/15.
- At key stage 4 the proportion of the disadvantaged students obtaining 5+A\*-C including English and mathematics increased from 31% in 2013 to 38% in 2014 by using the pupil premium to employ academic mentors in English, mathematics and science to provide regular small group and/or one-to-one tuition for the targeted students. The progress of the disadvantaged students in mathematics was the issue and this will be addressed during 2014/15.
- AS: the proportion of the students achieving A-B grades has declined since 2012 and is below the national average. The proportion of students achieving A-E grades has increased since 2012 and is now above the national average.
- A Level: The proportion of the students achieving A\*-E and A\*-B grades have both declined slightly since 2012 and are both below national average.
- Attendance: there were significant improvements in attendance during 2013/14. It increased by 1.2 percentage points from 94.3% to 95.5% and is now higher than the national average. The attendance for each year group is significantly higher than the national averages. This is due to having a strong emphasis on the importance of coming to school regularly, a range of interventions that are targeted and rigorous monitoring and evaluation. The attendance of the disadvantaged students did not improve during 2013/14 and will be a priority for 2014/15.
- Bullying: when it occurs it is handled well and the number of recorded incidents significantly decreased during 2013/14. It decreased from 81 during 2012/13 to 41 during 2013/14.
- The school has had a very clear and firm policy with regard to the use of fixed term exclusions but it has still been consistently below the national average. During the 2014/15 the academy will be looking to reduce the number of exclusions for boys and SEND students with a statement. During 2013/14 the academy purchased a property adjacent to the upper school site to use as an advice and support centre for the more vulnerable students that attend the school.

## Financial governance and oversight

The 'Finance Committee' is a sub-committee of the full governing body and has the following main responsibilities: preparation of the annual budget (revenue and capital) for approval by the governing body; monitoring income and expenditure on a regular basis; medium- and longer-term financial planning; development of, and works on, the school sites and buildings; to receive the auditor's reports (both internal from the Responsible Officer and external-in July 2014, the academy appointed Randall & Payne as the external auditors); implementation of the internal and external auditor's recommendations; internal audit functions of the 'Audit Committee' (as defined in the EFA's Academies Financial Handbook); annual review of the academy's finance policy for Governing Body approval, and monitoring compliance therewith; and risk management. The committee meets as least twice a term and as required to fulfil its terms of reference. During 2013/14 it consisted of 5 governors, the accounting officer (headteacher) and the company secretary. The committee has a strong background in financial management.

Internal financial controls are in place at the academy and are achieved by:

- Detailed budgeting and monitoring systems which are reviewed and agreed by the governing body
- Formalised policies with regard to financial control (including procurement, financial systems and practices)
- Clear statements of delegation of authority and segregation of duties.
- Assessment of risk by the completion of a risk register on an annual basis.
- Ensuring that all directors, governors and staff complete a register of pecuniary interests form annually. New declarations are also requested as a standing item at the start of each 'Finance Committee' meeting and full governing body meeting. Any new declarations are recorded within the minutes and should a declaration arise which may impact on a purchasing decision, that member/governor will be asked to leave the meeting whilst a decision is made.

## Better purchasing

- **Fitness for purpose:** The academy takes a prudent approach to expenditure. A significant proportion of the academy's budget is spent on staffing. The staffing structure is therefore reviewed annually to ensure it is fit for purpose and can adapt and respond to support the academy in meeting its objectives. Savings were made last year when the academy entered into a contract for broadband provision supplied by IBS for schools. Major contracts like these are reviewed annually or at the end of the contract term to ensure value for money. The academy continued to purchase services from the local authority (Worcestershire County Council). Where possible the cost of the service and service levels have been compared against alternative providers, for example the school now buys in its educational psychologist provision from an external provider.
- **Benchmarking:** The academy continues to monitor its financial information against similar organisations using the DfE benchmarking data. Membership of professional bodies for example the National Association of School Business Managers and Worcestershire Association of School Business Managers enables the sharing of information between schools to ensure better purchasing decisions can be made.
- **Options appraisal:** The governors and senior leadership team have continued to apply the principles of best value before purchasing goods and services. For example:
  - Tender exercises are regularly undertaken to ensure that high value contracts are assessed against the marketplace on a regular basis to help ensure the terms achieved are competitive
  - Identifying 'best value' quotes which are not necessarily the cheapest
  - The use of reliable suppliers
- **Economies of scale:** Collaborative working with schools in The ContinU Trust has been developed further this year on an 'Expense Reduction Analysis' initiative. The aim is look at three areas of significant spend within the school, benchmark with other schools taking part in

the initiative and then collectively go to the market place inviting suppliers to tender for goods and services. It was felt that the schools together could make significant savings.

### **Maximising income generation**

The academy has a 'Lettings Policy' in place and explores opportunities to generate income through the hire of the site. A proactive approach is taken towards preparing funding bids and generating revenue streams in order to maximise income generation. For example,

- The local community has benefitted by being able to hire the swimming pool, sports hall, science theatre and astro turf; and
- The academy secured funding from the Academies Capital Maintenance Funding (ACMF) in December 2013 for improving the science facilities and roofs on the lower school site.

We are very grateful for the financial support from the Roy Woodward Educational Foundation Trust and King Charles I School Foundation Trust for other capital projects at the school (eg the canopies on the lower and upper school sites).

### **Reviewing controls and managing risks**

The academy has a thorough set of Financial Procedures which are annually reviewed. These detail the academy's powers of delegation, expenditure limits for attracting written quotations/tenders and procedures to ensure a full and clear division of duty and audit trails for all expenditure.

The academy secured the support of a Senior Internal Auditor (from the local District Council) who has acted as Responsible Officer during the year and reported regularly to the governors' 'Finance Committee'.

The governors' 'Finance Committee' annually review the academy's risk register to ensure that all the key risks are managed and appropriately mitigated.

Insurance levels and cover are reviewed annually and set at appropriate levels to ensure risk is managed effectively.

All budget holders, senior leadership team and the governors' 'Finance Committee' receive regular management reports which are scrutinised to ensure the most effective use of resources to meet the academy's objectives.

The academy has begun to invest a small amount of its cash surpluses in low risk, fixed term accounts to maximise earning potential.

The governors' 'Finance Committee' review the reserve levels of the academy annually. This review encompasses the nature of income and expenditure streams and the strategic requirements of the academy. The aim is to provide sufficient working capital to cover delays between spending and receipt of grants and to provide a cushion to deal with unexpected emergencies such as urgent maintenance.

### **Lessons learned (reviewing operations to maximise resources)**

In future it might be appropriate to consider tendering for an increasing number of services and contracts whilst recognising the need to balance appropriately service continuity with economy. The academy will also reconsider the staffing structure and particularly in relation to middle and senior leadership and the mathematics department.

Signed:  .....  
Academy Trust Accounting Officer

Date: 15/12/14 .....