

Value for Money Statement

Organisation name: Ash Grove Trust

Company number: 8689696

Year ended 31 August 2014

I accept that as accounting officer of Ash Grove Trust 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.

Value for Money Statement

Academy trust name: Aspire Educational Trust

Academy trust company number: 8689696

Year ended 31 August 2014

I accept that as accounting officer of The Aspire Educational Trust 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.

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. Governors will 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 LEA 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 LEA and the Government, e.g. benchmarking tools, quality of teaching & learning, levels of expenditure
- challenge proposals, examining them for effectiveness, efficiency, and cost, e.g. setting of annual pupil achievement targets
- require suppliers to compete on grounds of cost, and quality/suitability of services/products/backup
- consult individuals and organisations on quality/suitability of service we provide to parents and pupils, and services we receive from providers, e.g. Sex and Relationships Education, pupil reports, OFSTED, Finance consultant, LEA, Energy Unit

This will apply in particular to:

- staffing
- 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

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 and striving to improve on or maintain previous years exam results and attendance.

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 £10,000)

Three quotes for goods and services in excess of £3,000.

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 Headteacher and curriculum managers, e.g. classroom practice, work sampling
2. Termly target setting meetings between the Headteacher and curriculum managers
3. Staff Appraisal
4. Annual Budget Planning
5. Headteacher's regular finance review
6. Analysis's of school pupil performance data against similar LA schools and Analysis of LA financial data against bench mark data for similar schools
7. Analysis of DfE pupil performance data
8. OFSTED Inspection reports
9. Governors' termly committee meetings
10. Governors' full termly meetings
11. Governors' Annual Finance Review

12. Governors' Annual SATs Target Setting Meeting

In the next three years the Governing Body will:

Hold an annual performance plan meeting to set targets for improving pupil achievement.

Hold an annual development plan meeting at its first meeting of the Autumn Term .

Discuss "Best Value" at each Autumn Term meeting of the Finance Committee.

Review their "Best Value" statement at each Spring Term meeting.

Consider best value when arranging internal and external redecoration contracts

Signed:

Name: Kevin David Simpson

Academy Trust Accounting Officer

Date: 4th November 2014

Name: Mr Kevin David Simpson

Academy Trust Accounting Officer

Date: 05 Dec 2014