

Value for Money Statement 2013 to 2014

Value for Money Statement

Organisation name: Alfriston School

Company number: 7916763

Year ended 31 August 2014

I accept that as accounting officer of Alfriston 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.

Improving educational results:

A review of the range of qualifications and courses offered to KS4 and Post 16 pupils took place, subsequent action has resulted in 100% placements for our pupils in further education, employment or training when they leave.

The extended day activities and weekend activities offered to our pupils have been developed to improve pupil well-being and develop social skills. A wide range of residential opportunities is given to all pupils, including adventurous and cultural trips to inspire aspirational thinking and personal resilience. In 2013-14 these opportunities included residential trips to Wales, Manor Adventure, Chateau Beaumont, Center Parcs and our first residential trip to France.

Collaboration with other schools on sharing good practice, with consultancy offered to mainstream schools to improve provision and practice in raising standards for pupils with SEN.

Targeted funding for Year 7 has increased and the school has continued to purchase additional resources, including Kindles, and has appointed and retained the two part-time support assistants to provide support for literacy and numeracy.

Wide range of sporting events for pupils with SEN provided across the county to encourage healthy lifestyles, social interaction and high self-esteem. The PE staff are now providing a consultancy service to local primary schools to assist with their development of the PE curriculum.

The construction of the new swimming pool was completed in July 2014 enabling the school to provide at least one swimming lesson per week to pupils and weekly sessions for our residential pupils developing both their swimming and personal skills.

The improvement in our recent academic results, for both year 11 and the sixth form pupils in August 2014 provides excellent evidence that these strategies are achieving success.

Financial Governance and oversight:

The Academy's system of financial governance includes strong oversight by the governors and the accounting officer at regular meetings to set the budget, monitor the actual spending against the budget, approve high value purchases and consider changes to staffing and funding.

The Academy has kept its staffing structure under review and has deployed staff efficiently, including the appointment of a Pool Manager. This review also extends to the provision of services by external agencies, including therapists, brought in to provide support for the pupils.

The Pool Manager now manages the new swimming pool and letting of the school premises, to cover the cost of running this new facility. A trading subsidiary of the school has been set up to ensure that this operation is fully compliant with HMRC tax regulations. Extensive work has been completed by the school community, over several years, to fund the building of the pool. The school is very grateful for the generous donations and grants that have been made. Following the completion of a full tender exercise a fixed price contract was placed with Feltham Construction. The school benefited from the services of a specialist project manager and the building works were completed on site in 16 months.

With regards to purchases, the school undertakes a best value assessment of purchases over £2000. This includes using a premises consultant to ensure specifications are drawn up, competitive quotations are obtained for improvements / maintenance of the school site. In the summer of 2014, following receipt of two EFA ACMF Grants the school was able to refurbish windows and modernise its heating system to substantially improve the environment for teaching and learning. The same principles were applied to extend the car park, refurbish the dining room, residential facilities and 3 offices that have been funded by the school. Also a minibus has been purchased which is used extensively to transport the pupil for a wide range of activities including residential visits.

The same principles of best value are applied to the provision of services for the school. Tender exercises were carried out for insurance and the provision of cleaning services which have now been extended to cover the new swimming. In both cases the school paid particular attention to the standard of the service to ensure safeguarding of both pupils and staff.

The school governors carefully review the internal controls of the Academy which are set out in the Academy's Financial Handbook. Their decisions have been informed by the auditors, their own visits and the governors have appointed a Responsible Officer to conduct reviews on a termly basis. Risks are managed and insurance is taken where necessary, for example, staffing insurance is taken out to mitigate the cost of long term sickness.

Signed: J. Male.....

Name: JINNA MALE

Academy Trust Accounting Officer

Date: 11.12.14.....