

Value for Money Statement

Academy trust name: Longsight Community Primary

Academy trust company number: 07945230

Year ended 31 August 2014

I accept that as accounting officer of the Longsight Community Primary that 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.

Robust governance and oversight of Academy finances:

The Academy Trust's Directors are committed to ensuring that governance of the Academy Trust's financial management is robust. The Directors and each Local Governing Body are cognisant of their responsibilities in ensuring that the Academy Trust resources are managed effectively, to support the objectives in the Academy Trust's Development Plan, whilst considering the long term development of the Academy Trust. Directors, Governors, Senior Leadership Teams and staff strive for the best possible outcomes for pupils, achieved at reasonable cost.

A Finance and Personnel Committee is a sub-committee of the main board of Trustees and met three times in the year. The committee has clear terms of reference and the responsibility of providing assurance over the suitability of, and compliance with, financial systems and controls. Its purpose is ensuring that LCP has a high quality staff team and operates efficient and effective management of its financial resources. It is responsible for:

- Setting budgets and monitoring financial performance
- Approving financial policies and procedures
- Approving policies relating to personnel
- Appointment staff
- Acting on behalf of the Board in relation to personnel issues (including disciplinaries, grievances and capability processes)
- Approving an annual remuneration and performance policy and overseeing its application.

In addition to the finance and Personnel Committee Longsight Community Primary used the services of The **Buildings and ICT** Committee during the year in which a new school building was constructed. The Building and ICT Committee is a sub-committee of the main board of Trustees. Its purpose is ensuring that LCP has safe, efficient and high quality environment and resources. Its purpose was:

- Responsible for oversight of any building projects or improvements
- Responsible for oversight of any ICT projects or improvements
- Annually review the building lifecycle plan
- Review the ICT strategy and its implementation
- Monitor Health and Safety
- Review risks and ensure appropriate management actions are in place

The Academy Trust's Chief Financial Officer provides monthly written financial reports to the school and at each Finance and Personnel Committee meeting. Those reports included funding reconciliations and a full budget monitoring with commentary, thus ensuring a consistent format. A monthly consolidated report is also provided to the Chief Executive Officer which includes a review of academy funding, budget monitoring, and a balance sheet.

All Directors and Governors are required to complete a Register of Pecuniary Interests form annually. The opportunity to declare any pecuniary interests is provided at all governors meetings.

Ensuring that the Trust gains good value for money, and effective and efficient use of resources

The Academy Trust takes a prudent approach to expenditure. With approximately 68% of the Academy Trust General Fund budget spent on staffing. This was the first year as an operating school and Longsight has a high transient population so staffing structures were reviewed regularly in the year to ensure that they were fit for purpose and could adapt to the changing needs of its pupils and respond to support the attainment objectives of the Academy Trust..

The Academy Trust has a high proportion of skilled and experienced teaching and associate staff, who are very effectively deployed to provide best value. Teachers' performance management and support staff appraisal systems are in place, and HR policies, such as Managing Absence, Whistleblowing and Dignity at Work, are implemented.

The Academy Trust 's payroll is maintained by BDO Chartered Accountants and detailed monthly reconciliations of payroll are undertaken by the Chief Financial Officer to ensure that payments to staff are correct.

The Academy Trust has one on site finance member of staff and takes advantage of its corporate membership position with The Big Life Company with which it has a service level agreement for the company's financial expertise, procedures and controls. For a small but growing school this is the most cost effective way to manage the finances of the academy. Individual budget holders

are held accountable for the use of their budgets, and are helped by experienced accountants in sourcing best value.

The academy is a member of a local cluster group of schools and can procure such services as Speech and Language Therapy as a group making significant savings. For services such as catering, cleaning and caretaking Lonsight Community Primary joined the Big Life group to negotiate contracts as part of a larger agreement thus obtaining economies of scale. Full written quotes from several suppliers were obtained before any contract was agreed.

The Finance and Personnel Committee for all purchases over £5,000, were able to review, obtain sufficient information and challenge the accounting officer for all significant expenditure requests before approval, to ensure that an assessment of cost and benefits were duly considered All purchases under £5,000 should be chosen from a list of approved suppliers

The significant income and expenditure relating to the new school building, its receipts and payments were monitored and controlled by the qualified finance team in the Big Life Company.

A School Improvement Lead has been appointed to work between LCP and another school currently in development thereby sharing the cost of this resource

The Academy Trust has no significant surplus cash balances at the end of its first year but plans to invest in interest bearing accounts to maximise interest earning potential when funds are available.

Assessing value for money

The Longsight Community Primary Trust is committed to providing a high quality, inclusive education for all. Through regular assessment, we have a clear picture of the potential and progress of every student and provide support and extension work for those students who need it. Pupils that receive pupil premium are clearly identified and their individual performance reviewed to ensure that progress attainment is achieved.

The Chief Financial Officer scrutinises the academy's budget forecast, ensuring that the it complied with agreed policies and procedures, whilst challenging on spending.

Departmental and curriculum allocations are allocated to specifically meet day to day needs, thus ensuring that significant expenditure remains within the control of senior management. Careful and prudent management of financial resources has ensured that the annual expenditure budget remains within the total income received for the year. The 2013/14 academic year was the first year operating with pupils

Rukhsana Ahmed
Accounting Officer



Longsight Community Primary Trust

Date: 12/12/14