

Value for Money Statement

Academy trust name: Myton School Trust

Academy trust company number: 07669416

Year ended 31 August 2013

I accept that as accounting officer of **Myton School Trust** ("Myton 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.

Myton School Mission and Aims

The mission at Myton School is to "enable us all to be successful by achieving our full potential as learners and individuals. This means we will work together to ensure high levels of achievement for all."

To enable the Trust to achieve this, the Trust has set 5 core targets over the next 3 years, as set out in our School Improvement Plan 2013-2105. These are:

1. Achievement to be outstanding by ensuring all students and groups of students make at least good progress with many making outstanding progress
2. Teaching to be never less than good and a significant proportion outstanding
3. Students maintain a consistently positive attitude to learning and behaviour in all classes and areas of the school
4. All leaders and managers are highly ambitious for the students in their care and lead by example
5. All staff actively promote the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of our students

To work towards the challenging mission and aims of the Trust, the Trust undergoes a very thorough budget setting process before the start of the academic year. This process is driven by the known funding available (as notified by the Education Funding Agency – EfA), other projected income, the curriculum needs defined to meet our mission / aims, strategic initiatives identified by the Leadership Team / Board of Governors and the needs of the individual curriculum and non-curriculum departments. The Trust is able to measure the effectiveness of the allocation of resources as follows:

IMPROVING EDUCATIONAL RESULTS

Record GCSE and A Level Results in 2012/13

Myton School Trust achieved record GCSE and A level results in 2012/13.

In GCSE:

- 75% of students achieved 5 A* - C including English & Maths compared to a 67% 4 year historical average.
- The Value Added achieved in 2012/13 of 1017 was well above the 4 year historical average of 1001.

In A level:

- 31% of the results were A* - A versus a 4 year historical average of 23%
- 86% of students achieved A* - C grades versus a 4 year historical average of 77%

Free School Meals ("FSM")/ Looked After Children ("LAC")

- The Trust's strategic aim "to narrow the learning gap" made significant progress with 46% of FSM / LAC students achieving 5 A* – C including English & Maths, a vast improvement from a 2 year historical average of 30%.
- The Value Added for FSM / LAC in 2012/13 was 1010 improving from the prior year level of 1003.
- The Trust has invested its Pupil Premium allocation over the last 2 years into intervention, resources and staffing that specifically target barriers to learning such as behaviour, punctuality and attendance.

Neet

- The Trust prides itself that for the last 3 years it achieved 0% Neet. This is a significant achievement given the current economic climate and is another measure that demonstrates that the Trust invests its money in curriculum delivery, intervention, vocational courses and careers guidance effectively.

To ensure that standards are continually raised the Trust also:

- Operated a programme of lesson observations throughout the academic year;
- Operated a programme of departmental reviews throughout the academic year;
- Appointed and worked with a School Improvement Partner to agree targets and assess progress;
- Continuously assessed the value added for students at KS2 to KS3, KS2 to KS4 and at KS5;
- Worked with a network of educational professionals to support on-going school improvement towards ambitious targets.

Targeted funding

The Trust ensured that the staffing structure was deployed to support an improved curriculum. Most recent examples of this are:

- The introduction of a new curriculum "pathway" and leadership structure at KS5 to further improve standards
- Appointment of an additional literacy leader to improve standards for pupil premium students
- Maintained focus on the progress of the most vulnerable groups of students
- Improved and increased intervention at KS4 via one-to-one tuition, personalised timetables and off-site college provision in partnership with other local schools and providers.

Focus on Individual Students

The Trust also invested funding in a number of key areas to benefit individual and groups of students as follows:

- Investment in behaviour & engagement strategies aimed at students at risk of exclusion.
 - College courses resulting in vocational qualifications that can lead to post 16 pathways
 - One-to-one tuition to maintain core subjects
 - Social skills courses
- Intervention strategies involving one-to-one and small group work
 - Holiday classes / summer schools

- Resources e.g. maths watch, my maths, SAM learning
 - SISRA – data tracking package
- Vocational learning i.e. alternative curriculum opportunities
 - College courses
- The impact of these investments in 2012/13 were:
 - 0% needs
 - 99% A* - G in GCSE
 - No permanent exclusions
 - Overall attendance significantly above average
 - Fixed term exclusions significantly below average
 - 94% of our students achieved 5 A* - C in 2013.
 - All whole cohort measures and English and maths progress measures meeting FFTD estimates
- Gifted and Talented
 - The Trust also had an active programme to support its most gifted and talented students with partnerships with a number of organisations including Warwick University, Med Link and Clare College Cambridge.
 - 32% of the 2013 GCSE results were A* and A with approx. 1/3 of our students obtaining 5 A* to A grades.

Collaboration

The Trust has engaged with other educational providers and consultants to share delivery / good practice and to drive up standards for the least cost. Examples of these collaborations are:

- The Trust is a member of “Partnership Plus” which comprises 36 secondary schools located across Coventry and Warwickshire. The benefits to the Trust resulting from this partnership include:
 - Enhanced CPD training courses at reduced prices
 - Opportunities to share good practice via “Live Lesson” and other training
 - National Educational Speaker programme
- The Trust is also a member of the “Griffin Alliance” which is a teaching school consortium. Myton School Trust takes a lead on delivering training for NQTs across the Warwickshire are – Initial Teacher training programmes – and is licenced to deliver accredited National College courses including NPQSL for both senior and middle managers. The involvement in this training ensures:
 - Staff retention due to the quality of CPD / training available to its staff
 - Opportunities to raise teaching standards and share good practice across the Trust and beyond
- The Trust is also a member of the Central Warwickshire Area consortium which includes work on:
 - School Leadership
 - Business Managers / Finance Directors best practice
 - Pastoral support

New Initiatives

- Through the regular budget monitoring process discussed below, the Trust has been able to accommodate various new initiatives throughout 2012/13 that were not originally budgeted for.
 - Significant investment in the Trust’s IT infrastructure including upgrading the entire switches and cables across the school site, upgrading the server room and installing wi-fi across the site. This enhanced IT connectivity forms the foundation for implementing an improved IT solution within the classroom

- Investment in consultancy fees (architects, surveyors etc) to prepare plans for expanding the school in the form of a post-16 centre. These plans have now been submitted for planning permission and a bid is being written for the 2014/15 ACMF.
- These initiatives were accommodated through additional income generated in the academic year e.g. training school income, consultancy / secondment work, donations & grants as well as savings generated from value for money procurement and on-going spend monitoring:

Quantifying Improvements

- As noted earlier in this report, the 2012/13 educational results are the best the Trust has achieved to date.
- In addition, the Trust set a 2012/13 balanced budget. The year-end result was a small deficit funded from reserves. The small in-year deficit included unbudgeted significant investment in IT infrastructure, funded for by increased income and sound financial management as noted above.

FINANCIAL GOVERNANCE AND OVERSIGHT

- The Finance and Facilities Committee, a sub-committee of the Board of Governors, has the following main responsibilities:
 - assisting the decision making of the Board of Governors, by enabling more detailed consideration to be given to the best means of fulfilling the Board of Governors' responsibility, to ensure sound management of the academy's finances and resources, including proper planning, monitoring and probity
 - making appropriate comments and recommendations on such matters to the Board of Governors on a regular basis
 - ensuring major issues will be referred to the full Board of Governors for ratification
 - agreeing the auditors audit plan
 - receiving the auditors' report and to recommend to the full Board of Governors action as appropriate in response to the audit findings
 - recommending to the full Board of Governors the appointment or reappointment of the auditors of the academy
 - recommending to the full Board of Governors the acceptance of the Trust's budget before the start of each financial / academic year.
 - approving any contracts / purchases (revenue and capital) with a total value greater than £10,000 (excluding VAT)
- The Finance & Facilities Committee comprises 6 Governors, including the Accounting Officer.
- The Finance & Facilities Committee chair is a Chartered Accountant and Director in his own accounting practice
- The Finance & Facilities Committee servicing officer, the Finance Director, is a Chartered Accountant
- The Finance & Facilities Committee meets 5 times per year and has the following standing agenda items:
 - Management accounts and financial review
 - Facilities Manager's Report and review of major Project Register – this report summarises all projected major repair, maintenance and capital works over £10,000. The report also includes a review of major contracts e.g. catering, cleaning and grounds maintenance. This enables the committee to understand and project future commitments (both capital and revenue).
 - Review of the Risk Register
 - Review of major contracts / invoices in excess of £10,000 (excluding VAT)

BETTER PURCHASING

The following procurement authorisation limits apply to all revenue and capital purchases entered into by the Trust. These limits are also applied to the total value of any contract entered into.

Procurement	Approval	Evidence
Purchases less than £500	Budget Holder Approval	Receipt
Purchases between £500 - £1,000	Budget Holder + Finance approval	2 formal written quotes
Purchases between £1,001 - £2,000	Budget Holder + Finance approval	3 formal written quotes
Purchases between £2,001 - £5,000	Budget Holder + Finance + Leadership Team approval	3 formal written quotes
Purchases between £5,001 - £10,000	Budget Holder + Finance + 2 Leadership Team approval	3 formal written quotes
Purchases between £10,001 - £156,441	Budget Holder + Finance + 2 Leadership Team + Finance Committee approval	3 formal written quotes / tenders
Purchases over £156,441	Budget Holder + Finance + 2 Leadership Team + Finance Committee approval	Formal EU procurement tender

For major contracts e.g. over £10k in value and with a length of between 3 to 5 years, a full tender process is entered into. Examples of recent tenders are:

- Catering contract - a consultancy firm was appointed to manage the procurement process including the OJEU compliance and a Governors sub-committee was appointed to evaluate the tender process and award the contract.
- Cleaning contract - the same process as above was used to award this contract
- Grounds Maintenance contract - 5 central Warwickshire Secondary schools have recently grouped together, including Myton School to appoint a Grounds Maintenance contractor. The group feels that by combining efforts, the schools will get a better service at a more competitive price due to synergies achieved within a joint contract awarding process.

Fitness for Purpose

All procurement is managed through the Trust's Finance Office and controlled by our Procurement Officer and Finance Manager. The Trust's Procurement Officer has over 10 years extensive procurement knowledge to ensure best value and fitness for purpose from suppliers is obtained. The Trust's Finance Manager is CIMA qualified and ensures purchasing best practice is adhered to at all times in accordance with the guidelines as set out in the Academies Finance Handbook – September 2012 edition and September 2013 edition going forward.

Benchmarking

The Trust benchmarks its costs against similar organisation through the DfE benchmarking data (resulting from the AAR). Through participation in the FD Forum discussions and in partnership with other schools across Central Warwickshire

Options Appraisal

The Board of Governors and Leadership Team apply the principles of best value when making any spending decisions including:

- The allocation of resources to best promote the mission and aims of the Trust
- The targeting of resources to best improve standards and the quality of provision
- The use of resources to best support the various education needs of all students

The trust has developed procedures for assessing need, and obtaining goods and services which provide “best value” in terms of suitability, efficiency, time and cost. Measures in place include:

- Highly skilled Finance team
- Competitive tendering procedures
- Procedures for accepting “best value” quotes, which are not necessarily the cheapest
- Use of reliable suppliers

Economies of Scale

- Purchasing is centralised through the Finance Office which ensures bulk purchasing can attract the best pricing
- The Trust has recently joined 4 other Central Warwickshire secondary schools to tender for a Grounds Maintenance contract to ensure best value both in terms of service delivery and pricing
- The Finance Director regularly attends a Central Warwickshire business managers forum to discuss best practice and investigate opportunities for joint procurement

Better Income Generation

As noted previously, the Trust is always looking for opportunities to generate additional revenue streams. In 2012/13, the Trust was very successful in this area which enable the school to make significant investments to upgrade the ICT infrastructure.

The Trust continues to explore all avenues of income generation to enhance its revenue.

REVIEWING CONTROLS AND MANAGING RISKS

The Board of Governors, Finance & facilities Committee and leadership team regularly review the Trust’s risk register to ensure all key risks are managed and appropriately mitigated.

Insurance levels and cover are reviewed annually and used to cost-effectively manage risk.

Budget holders, Leadership Team and the Finance & Facilities Committee receive regular budget reports which are scrutinised to ensure the most effective use of resources to meet the objectives of the Trust.

The Finance & Facilities Committee also acts as the Audit Committee. At the start of the 2012/13 academic year, the audit committee reviewed the Trust’s risk register and identified the key areas that should be subject to an internal audit review. The audit committee appointed Baker Tilly, the Trusts external auditors, to extend their external audit work and include the specified internal audit work also.

The Trust ensures that all surplus cash balances are invested in interest bearing accounts to maximise interest earning potential. Surplus cash balances are also invested in two separate, unrelated banking institutions to reduce counterparty exposure.

The Board of Governors review the reserve levels of the Academy annually. This review encompasses the nature of income and expenditure streams, the 3 year income and expenditure forecast and the strategic investment requirements of the Trust over a 3 year period. The Board of Governors have determined that an appropriate level of free reserves should be maintained to provide sufficient working capital to cover details between spending and receipt of grants and to address any unexpected emergencies such as urgent maintenance.

CONCLUSION

The financial procedures and controls within the Trust are well embedded (inherited from the predecessor school prior to Academisation).

The Trust continuously seeks to identify and maximise additional revenue generating opportunities and maximise value for money and this will remain an on-going key objective of the Trust going forward.

Signed: 

Name: E.P. MACINTYRE

Academy Trust Accounting Officer

Date: 17/12/13