

Value for Money Statement

Academy trust name: St. James' RC Primary School

Academy trust company number: 7976516

Year ended 31 August 2023

I accept that as accounting officer of **St James' RC Primary 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 have 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.

What Is Best Value?

We 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 require it? Can it be delivered differently?
- Compare – How does the school's pupil performance and financial performance compare with all schools and academies?
- Consult – How does the school seek the views of stakeholders about services the school provides? What do parents want?
- Compete – How does the school secure efficient and effective services?

Governors and School Leaders

Governors approve the annual budget and received detailed income and expenditure reports, including any foreseen variances, termly. The minutes from these meetings are circulated to all governors. The governors and school leaders will apply the principles of *Value for Money* 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.

They:

- 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 distract leadership from more important or valuable areas.

They will:

- make comparisons with other/similar schools using data provided by the DFE and LA as appropriate;
- 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, e.g. provision of computer suite, redecoration;
- consult individuals and organisations on the quality/suitability of the service that we provide to parents and pupils and the services we receive from providers e.g. consultants.

This will apply in particular to:

- staffing;
- use of premises;
- use of resources;
- quality of teaching;
- quality of learning;
- purchasing;
- pupils' welfare;
- health and safety.

Staffing

Governors and school leaders will deploy staff to provide best value in terms of quality of teaching, quality of learning, adult-pupil ratio, and curriculum management.

Premises

Governors and school leaders 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.

Use of Resources

Governors and school leaders 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 leaders 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 Statutory Guidance, 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 leaders will review the quality of children's learning, by cohort, class and group, to provide teaching which enables children to achieve at least nationally expected progress with the setting of annual pupil achievement targets.

Purchasing

Governors and school leaders will develop procedures for assessing need, and obtaining goods and services which provide "Value for Money" in terms of suitability, efficiency, time, and cost. Measures already in place include:

- competitive tendering procedures (e.g. for goods and services above £5,000)
- 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

Pupils' Welfare

Governors and school leaders 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 and Safety

Governors and school leaders 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.

Income Generation

A substantial amount of the School Finance Manager's time is dedicated to increasing all income streams from lettings and before and after school childcare.

Lessons Learned

The school regularly challenges the extent to which expenditure improves the outcomes of students and how funding can be better utilised to achieve its aims and objectives as set out in the School Development and Improvement Plan.

Monitoring

These areas will be monitored for best value by:

1. In-house monitoring by the Head teacher and curriculum leaders;
2. Termly data meetings between the Head teacher and SENCO;
3. Annual Performance Management;
4. Annual Budget Planning;
5. Visits by the Responsible Officer;
6. Annual external audit;
7. Analysis of school pupil performance data, e.g. SATs;
8. Analysis of National and LA pupil performance data;
9. Analysis of National and LA financial data, bench mark data for all schools, LA and similar schools;
10. Inspection reports
11. Governors' termly school visits;
12. Governors' termly meetings;
13. Governors' Annual Finance Review;
14. Governors' Annual School Development and Improvement Plan Meeting

Name: Lisa Weeks

Academy Trust Accounting Officer

Date: 31/12/2023