

# Value for Money Statement

## Academy Trust: The Park Federation Academy Trust

**Academy Trust Company Number: 08146330**

### Year ended 31 August 2013

I accept that as accounting officer of The Park Federation Academy Trust I am responsible and accountable for ensuring that the 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 Trust's use of its resources has provided good value for money during the academic year.

The Board of Directors and Academy Councils are accountable for the way in which the Trust's resources are allocated to meet the objectives set out in our Academy Development Plans (ADPs). Directors 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 our achievements and services.

#### What Is Best Value?

Value for money is about achieving the best possible educational and wider societal outcomes through the economic, efficient and effective use of all the resources in the Trust's charge.

Directors and Academy Council members will apply the four principles of best value:

- Challenge - is each academy's performance high enough?
- Compare - How does the pupil performance and financial performance in each federation academy compare with other academies in the Trust and against academies and schools in the local area?
- Consult - How does the Trust and each academy seek the views of stakeholders about the services each academy provides?
- Compete - How does the Trust and each academy secure efficient and effective services?

Are services of appropriate quality and economic?

## **The Board of Directors Approach**

Directors and senior management will apply the principles of best value when making decisions about:

- the allocation of resources to best promote the mission statement, aims and values of our Trust;
- the targeting of resources to best improve standards and the quality of provision;
- the use of resources to best support the various learning needs of all pupils, staff, parents, Academy Council Members and Directors.

## **The Directors and senior management will:**

- make comparisons with other/similar schools and academies using data provided by Local Authorities and the Government, e.g. Raiseonline, quality of teaching & learning, levels of expenditure;
- challenge proposals, examining them for effectiveness, efficiency, and cost, e.g. setting of annual pupil achievement targets, extended services provision;
- 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. energy management.

This will apply in particular to:

- staffing
- use of premises
- use of resources
- quality of teaching
- quality of learning
- purchasing
- learners' welfare and emotional well-being
- health and safety

## **Directors and Senior 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.

### **Reviewing controls and managing risks:**

The Trust has established robust segregation of duties within financial control. The Trust carries out regular monthly financial monitoring with support provided by Kingston Smith LLP and reports to the Finance Committee each half term. Directors challenge decisions makers within the Trust on the cost and effectiveness of spending proposals in order to achieve value for money.

The 2012/13 Risk Register has directed the work of the Responsible Officer who reports four times a year to the Finance and Audit Committees. The findings from the Responsible Officer's visits shape our action plans for future developments and improvements.

### **Staffing**

Directors and senior managers will deploy staff to provide best value in terms of quality of teaching, quality of learning, adult-pupil ratio, and curriculum management. The Trust Staffing Structure is reviewed annually to ensure the most appropriate provision for our pupils. In 2013/14 the Trust included in the Staffing Structure positions to improve effectiveness in the following areas:

- SENCO role and responsibilities to effectively accommodate any statutory changes;
- Director of Standards to take a lead in the monitoring and evaluation of quality teaching and learning and associated provision.

### **Use of Premises**

Directors and senior 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 hall.

### **Use of Resources 2013/14**

Directors and senior managers will deploy equipment, materials and services to provide pupils and staff with resources which promote quality teaching and learning. The Trust

has implemented an electronic Asset Register, which manages the allocation of resources in terms of costing, effectiveness and depreciation.

**Directors and senior managers will review the quality of curriculum provision and quality of teaching, to provide parents and pupils with:**

- a curriculum which is broad, balanced and meets the needs of all pupils;
- teaching which builds on previous learning and has high expectations of children's achievement.

The Trust has grown during the year and has provided opportunities for experts to share delivery and good practice, and to drive up standards in each of the academies.

**Learning**

Directors and senior managers will review the quality of children's learning, by cohort, class and group, to provide the learning environment which enables children to achieve nationally expected progress, e.g. setting of annual pupil achievement targets, based on a minimum progression of 2 national curriculum levels between Years 3 and 6. Termly Pupil Progress Meetings monitor the progress of all groups of pupils and provide informed judgements for intervention programmes which address identified underachievement.

2012/13 targeted use of Pupil Premium funding in order that pupils have the opportunity to raise their individual levels of attainment resulting in improved educational outcomes.

**Purchasing**

Directors and senior 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;
- procedures for accepting "best value" quotes, which are not necessarily the cheapest;
- procedures which minimise administration time by the purchase of goods or services under £1,000 direct from known, reliable suppliers (e.g. stationery, small equipment).

## **Pupils' Welfare**

Directors and senior managers will review the quality of the learning environment and the Trust's ethos, in order to provide a supportive environment conducive to learning and healthy, active lifestyles.

## **Health and Safety**

Academy Council members and senior managers will review the quality of the learning environment and resources, carrying out appropriate risk assessments, in order to provide a safe working environment for pupils, staff and visitors.

## **Monitoring**

These areas will be monitored for best value by:

- In-house monitoring by senior managers and subject leaders, e.g. classroom practice, work sampling;
- Termly target setting meetings between the senior leadership team and middle leaders;
- Annual Performance Management;
- Annual Budget Planning;
- Monthly financial reviews with the Chief Operating Officer and Finance Officers;
- Responsible Officer visits;
- Planned visits by the Kingston Smith LLP;
- Analysis of pupil performance data, e.g. SATs results;
- Analysis of Department for Education (DfE) financial data, and Corero (financial software systems) reports;
- Analysis of Def./Ofsted pupil performance data, e.g. raiseonline
- Ofsted Inspection reports
- Classroom observations
- Directors' regular committee meetings
- Board of Directors and Academy Council meetings

**The Board of Directors and Senior Managers will:**

- Ensure the Finance Committee and the Operations Committee use best value approaches;
- consider best value when arranging Service Contracts;
- obtain tenders on the installation of any large scale refurbishment or development of the premises.

**Lessons learned:**

Service Contracts are under annual review and the Trust has identified future contracts to have a best value and fitness for purpose review.

Further training for finance teams has been identified as an area for development during 2013/14.

**Signed:** .....

**Name: Dr. Martin Young**  
**Academy Trust Accounting Officer**

**Date: 07 December 2013.**