

Value for Money Statement

Academy trust name: Debenham High School

Academy trust company number: 07467445

Year ended 31 August 2014

I accept that as accounting officer of **Debenham High 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.

Educational Performance

We are over-subscribed in every year group (with a Pupil Admission Number, (PAN) of 125 in every year group).

As a result of outstanding teaching students make excellent progress in all key stages. Students join the school with attainment that is well above average. Year 11 2013-14 had an average KS2 points score broadly in line with the national average (28.8 against 27.9). (Year 11 2012-13 were 29.1 average against national 27.8).

The 2014 results were the highest ever value-added for the school, using Fischer Family Trust D (FFTD) as a benchmark the minimum attainment was +0.01. The school uses the most aspirational benchmark data for the top 25% of performance (FFTD). FFT use historic progression measures to set targets for GCSE from Key Stage 2 attainment. The school has compared itself against this measure for the last 5 years. These results surpass the Fischer Family Trust (FFT) residual comparison of 2013 (-0.21), which resulted in VA score of 1020.7 in Reporting and Analysis for Improvement through school self evaluation (RAISE).

Analysis of performance in 2014 shows:

- 70% of students achieved 5A*-C including English and Mathematics
- 90% of students achieved 5A*-C grades
- 18 out of 25 of subjects improved against progress measures from 2013, this follows an improvement by 70% of subjects in 2013 from 2012. One subject of the

25 was a new course for 2014 and one was examined for the last time following removal of the course from the GCSE offer.

- 32% of grades were A*/A
- 84% of grades were A*-C

In the core subjects students make high progress. Many students make more than expected progress compared to the national averages. Progress measures in the core subjects are as follows:

- In 2014 English 44% of students made at least 4 levels of progress (National 2013 30%); 84% of students made at least 3 levels of progress (National 2013 69%)
- In 2014 Mathematics 51% of students made at least 4 levels of progress (National 2013 32%); 76% of students made at least 3 levels of progress (National 2013 70%)

With a consistent, mainly GCSE diet this represents an improvement in attainment through improved teaching and learning rather than by modification of the curriculum. The KS4 offer is changed every year to adapt to each cohort. In September 2014 GCSE Computing and Engineering were introduced and Environmental Science phased out. Where appropriate individuals study a bespoke curriculum to reflect learning needs that are significantly different from the majority of students. Where such provision exists this is created with emphasis on the core skills of literacy and numeracy and consideration of appropriate pathways beyond KS4.

80% of students attend at least one extra-curricular activity. This does not include the many curricula based lunchtime and after-school opportunities.

Our absence rate is low and we set 95% as our target. The national average for persistent absence is 6.9% of students. In 2012-13 our figure was 3.0% and in 2013-14 2.5%. Our overall attendance rate (all sessions) in 2012-13 was 94.5% and 2013-14 95.1%. Early intervention for those whose attendance drops below 90% has decreased our sub 85% attendance numbers by 43% over a two year period: 2011-12 46 students, 2012-13 31 students, 2013-14 26 students.

The behaviour of students within lessons and around the school is outstanding. Behaviour is seen as a strength of the school by parents. Many parents from outside the catchment area chose the school for the sense of calm, positive relationships and excellent behaviour. As identified in the most recent Statutory Inspection of Anglican Schools, (SIAS), inspection the values of compassion, generosity and respect lie at the heart of this Christian school. We have a firm line on behaviour and expectations are high and sanctions consistently applied. In the last three years our instances of referrals for poor behaviour have decreased by 63%. External exclusions are rare and there has only been one permanent exclusion in the last year. The number of exclusions is well below the national average.

The quality of teaching is consistently good or better, with much that is outstanding (July 2014 – 94% Good or better, 39% Outstanding. This is an improvement of 6% on 2013, despite more robust criteria). This is evidenced through regular faculty and departmental reviews, performance management observations and learning walks. The view of students and parents endorses the belief that the quality of education at the school is outstanding. Teachers plan lessons very well, use a range of strategies to engage and motivate students, give careful consideration for the range and needs of students within each class and use sharply focused and timely support and intervention to ensure that students make high rates of progress. Students feel strongly that they get an outstanding education at Debenham High School (at least 97% in every year group) and parents concur.

In addition to examination success students develop a wide range of skills, including a spiritual awareness. We are a Church of England Academy and the recent SIAS inspection (December 2012) found the distinctiveness and effectiveness of the Christian ethos of the school to be outstanding. Pupils articulate their understanding of spirituality and are confident to talk openly about faith and belief. The Christian ethos is embedded in all aspects of school life.

Students participate fully in the wide range of extra-curricular activities. For example over 150 students study a musical instrument, 100% of all Year 7 students attend at least one club, students compete in School and House sports teams regularly.

Despite this outstanding achievement we have a forward-looking Development Plan that challenges our attainment and looks to improve further. Our Development Plan is split into four themes:

1. Improve Student Achievement
2. Staff Training and Development
3. Develop Facilities and Environment that Enhances Teaching and Learning
4. Develop Our Community and Partnership Support

The governing body is fully involved in the school and provides challenging and knowledgeable support.

Collaborative working

As an academy we look to work with other schools both locally and nationally. In the last two years we have chosen to use this support with our local feeder primary schools. We have engaged with them in both teaching and learning and support services. At present we:

Provide Maths outreach one day a week and Literacy work one afternoon a week at our feeder primary schools. This support is focuses in KS2 and works with all abilities of pupils.

Through our ICT team we provide a service to three primary feeder schools with their ICT infrastructure and development

As a Church of England School we have close links with a number of local Christian places of worship. This includes the St Mary Magdalen Church of England in Debenham.

We are committed to staff development and training of the next generation of teachers. We have supported staff completion of MA modules over the last three years at school and have a range of trainee teachers from different providers. In 2013-14 four trainee teachers were placed at the school and all four gained employment at the end of their course. This year we have created four graduate internship posts to give apprenticeship style experience to those wishing to pursue a career in education.

Future plans

We continue to seek funding through the Condition Improvement Fund, (CIF), process to support our success. This includes much needed maintenance work on roofs along with the build of additional classrooms to enable more effective timetable planning and improved resources. In the twelve months ahead we will embark on a £1.1million overhaul of the heating system and boiler for a biomass option.

Financial Management

Financial benchmarking

The school has benchmarked its financial performance against other Suffolk academy schools. The school performance is broadly in line with schools of similar size and environment. The Governors have set financial performance targets and the budget has been set accordingly but with a clear focus on enabling the delivery of the School Improvement Plan.

Budget planning

Strategic budget plans are drawn up to ensure successful delivery of aims and goals of the School Development Plan (SDP) together with an awareness of future changes in funding streams and changes in employment related costs. A balance is struck between providing top quality education whilst planning and ensuring financial sustainability for existing and future cohorts. The school recognises that with the projected increases in teacher employer pension costs, the steady increase in LGPS employer contribution and the removal of the NI rebate in April 2016 the management of staff costs will become ever more critical to the long term sustainability of the academy

Financial management & oversight of risk and financial control

The Finance and General Purposes Committee, and our Responsible Officer, play an active and robust role in their oversight of the school's financial wellbeing. The school continually ensures the financial health of the school with prudent financial management by a combination of regular governor meetings, visits from internal audit now provided by an independent auditor, regular management account reports and strategic budget planning. Internal audit have consistently graded the financial management, governance and control as outstanding.

The school maintains an up to date risk register that is reviewed and updated at least once a year.

Investment

In line with our reserves and investment policy the Governors only invest in secure, low risk, high interest accounts with minimum commitment terms. Accordingly the Business Manager has the authority to invest with Lloyds bank in short term high interest accounts with due regard to the cash flow of the academy.

Purchasing, ensuring best value

The school financial regulations govern the procurement methods to be used within and above certain financial boundaries. The best price is sought at the discretion of the finance team for smaller value purchases and bulk discounts are obtained where individual department orders can be combined. Best value is considered to be a balance of price, quality of service and efficiency.

The school uses purchasing consortiums to ensure overall best value and still buys into the Local Authority purchasing and supplies services.

Signed: 

Name: JULIA UPTON

Academy Trust Accounting Officer

Date: 10/12/14