

Value for Money Statement

Sunnyside Academy

Academy Trust Company Number: 08803924

Year ended 31 August 2014

I accept that as Accounting Officer of Sunnyside Academy I am responsible and accountable for ensuring that the Academy delivers good value in the use of public resources. I am aware of the guide to academy value for money refers to the educational and wider social outcomes achieved in return for the taxpayers resources received.

I set out below how I have ensured that the Academy's use of its resources has provided good value for money during the academic year.

The Academy is committed to:-

1. Raising student attainment

Sunnyside Academy is a larger than average sized school which draws its pupils from a wide area. It was built 35 years ago to educate pupils with special educational needs alongside mainstream pupils. Over one third of the pupils have learning difficulties and/or disabilities and one tenth have a statement of special educational need or disability (SEND). These proportions are much higher than in most schools. There are specialist staff and facilities to teach pupils who have hearing or visual impairments. Our base for pupils with learning difficulties was re-classified as a High Needs Base in January 2014.

Most pupils come from White British backgrounds, though a small number are from other ethnic backgrounds, are learning English as an additional language and are hearing impaired.

A new Senior Leadership Team of head teacher, deputy head teacher and assistant head came together in January 2011 and they have had early and effective impact on broadening leadership responsibility across the school. Through the introduction of Assertive Mentoring they are developing a more consistent approach to encouraging pupils to take more responsibility for their own learning and ensuring that all pupils receive clear and detailed guidance on how to improve their work.

2014 Y6 Cohort

Any cohort of children at Sunnyside consists of:

- Mainstream children with no SEND.
- Mainstream children with SEND.
- Hearing impaired children.
- Visually impaired children.
- Children who attend our Higher Needs Base and join Sunnyside from Y3 onwards.

The HI/VI and HNB children can be drawn from any of the five Tees Valley LAs.

In 2014 the Y6 cohort consisted of 46 pupils broken down as follows.

- 25 (54%) mainstream pupils with no SEND at SA or SA+ though many are monitored as part of our SEN process.
- 7 (15%) mainstream pupils with SEND one of whom was statemented.
- 4 (9%) HI children. All 4 were statemented for SEND.
- 3 (7%) VI children. 1 was statemented for SEND.
- 7 (15%) High Needs Support Base children.

22 (48%) of the cohort were registered with SEND in some form and of them only 34 (74%) of the pupils were at Sunnyside at the end of KS1. A significant majority of our more complex SEND cases join us during KS2 usually having 'failed' elsewhere in a mainstream setting. Our hearing impaired children who work in the communication base are integrated into mainstream when appropriate, usually with support. Visually impaired children work within the mainstream setting with support and are withdrawn for Braille as necessary. Comparison of raw SAT results from one year to another at Sunnyside can be misleading and unhelpful as each cohort across the school can have a very different make up. In 2014, 35 of the 46 children in Y6 were able to take SATs. The 35 were broken down as follows:

- 32 mainstream pupils of which 9 were mainstream pupils with SEND.

- 1 HI child who was Statemented and profoundly deaf who was integrated into mainstream with 1 to 1 support where possible.
- 2 VI children.

This means that if every child of the 35 who took SATs achieved L4+ the school could achieve a maximum of 76% L4+ in Reading, writing or maths if the SAT test results for the whole cohort were taken into consideration. Direct comparison of Sunnyside Academy's results with other schools is therefore unwise.

The following information gives a breakdown of achievement for all children in Y6 in an attempt to give a true picture of the attainment of pupils at Sunnyside.

Raw SATS Test results for the whole cohort

46 children to count.

Subject and Level	% of cohort L4+	% of cohort L5
Reading	70%	17%
Writing	65%	4%
Maths	65%	20%
SPAG	56%	30%

SAT Test results for the children who took SATS

Subject and Level	% of cohort L4+	% of cohort L5
Reading	94%	23%
Writing	86%	6%
Maths	86%	31%
SPAG	77%	40%

The improvement in results has been achieved by placing a renewed emphasis on quality first teaching and ensuring that appropriate interventions are in place for children who require reinforcement or enhancement of the curriculum. Our school improvement plan drives any such improvement. Regular pupil progress meetings hold all staff to account for their actions. The introduction of our new wow curriculum based on first-hand experience will help to ensure that every child achieves their full potential.

2. Robust governance and oversight of Academy Trust Finances

The Academy benefits from the provision by Mouchel Business Services of a suitably qualified Responsible Officer (RO). The RO reviews key financial policies, systems and procedures, including the use of tenders and presents reports on compliance to the Finance and Resources Committee.

The Academy receives support throughout the year from its External Auditors on compliance and accounting practices. For example, this year the school entered into a Lease for IT equipment, the original quote, along with a few others were not deemed by our Governors or Accountant to be Operating Leases, but rather Finance Leases. A large amount of time was spent with suppliers and finance companies to ensure the lease was correct.

The work on the recently refurbished office suite was procured through a local architect. Having had an initial quote from the Local Authority, the architect prepared a specification for the works and undertook the tender on behalf of the school. His final recommendations were then brought to the Finance and Resources Chair along with the Director of Resources. The actual building work cost came in at under £40,000 less than the Local Authority quote.

The Finance and Resources Committee receive termly monitoring reports. The Trustees approve the budget each year and is mindful of the need to balance expenditure against income to ensure the Academy remains a 'going concern'. The board also receive and approve the Annual Accounts and the External Auditors Management Report.

3. Ensuring the operation of the Academy demonstrates good value for money and efficient and effective use of resources

The Academy regularly benchmarks financial performance against other academies to demonstrate that the Academy provides good value for money.

Tender exercises are regularly undertaken to ensure that high value contracts are assessed against the marketplace on a regular basis to ensure that long term contracts (3 to 5 years) remain competitive. For purchases above £10,000, but below the tender limit, 3 quotes are required.

The schools work closely with the Discovery Alliance Trust, consisting of five primary and one secondary academy. Through this partnership best value has been realised in such areas as insurance, buildings management and the group are currently working on procuring energy. As a group better savings can be made than as a single entity.

4. Maximising income generation

The Academy explores every opportunity to generate income through hire of Academy facilities. Income is also generated from small grant applications which help to support the wider curriculum.

During the year the school successfully bid for funding from the Big Lottery Fund, and amount of £10,000 for allotments for the pupils. Many of the staff work on a consultancy basis for other schools, including the Headteacher and Director of Resources, providing additional income for the school.

5. Reviewing controls and managing risks

The Academy Senior Leadership Team review expenditure within each budget heading annually and make adjustments based on the effectiveness of strategies introduced in previous years, curriculum offer and any new strategies identified in the Academy Improvement Plan.

The Academy works with other schools collaboratively to ensure that procurement costs are kept to a minimum.

There is a commendable segregation of duties within the finance team. The school is fortunate, as a large primary school to have a team of four working in an administrative role, with three focussing on finance in particular. Stringent safeguards are in place to ensure that risk is minimised through fraud. Financial risks are considered at each Finance and Resources governors meeting.

The Academy maximises its resources by its environmental policies. These include energy consumption, recycling and reducing waste and procurement.

Andrew Dunn

Sunnyside Academy Accounting Officer

Date: 3 November 2014