

Value for Money Statement

Trust: Goldsworth Trust (incorporating Goldsworth Primary School and St John's Primary School)

Company number: 07887259

Year ended: 31 August 2014

I accept that as Accounting Officer of Goldsworth 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 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.

Partnership with St John's Primary School

On 1st December 2013, St John's Primary School joined Goldsworth Primary School to form the Goldsworth Trust with me, Pauline Alexander, as executive head. This partnership is going from strength to strength with both schools benefitting. It is hoped that St John's will be taken out of special measures in the near future.

Extension of Nursery Provision within the Trust

In September 2013 Goldsworth Primary opened Golden Owls Day Nursery on the school site for children aged 2-4 years and in the summer of 2014 St Johns extended their existing nursery provision both providing much needed local nursery provision. Although the Golden Owls Day Nursery is anticipated to provide income for the School, the main objective is for children to be better prepared for school, thereby more able to achieve their full potential during their primary education.

Improving Educational Results

Both schools have extensive tracking and pupil data recording systems. Children are monitored at individual level and findings are reviewed by class/group teacher(s) through Key Stage Co-ordinators to senior management team.

There is an extensive range of intervention and support programmes which is constantly reviewed to ensure that value for money is achieved and that the programme is successful for the individual child. Where a programme is clearly not working other interventions are considered.

Both schools have processes in place to ensure that Pupil Premium is used in a proper manner and to full effect. We also pride ourselves on our holistic approach to a child's development. This has been clearly demonstrated by St John's increase in attendance and better behaviour in class. In turn, this has led to a better learning environment and improved results.

SAT Results 2014 – Goldsworth Primary School has once again exceeded both Surrey and national averages in all areas whilst St John's has achieved significantly improved results.

Staff development

Staff training – staff training is held jointly between the schools resulting in an economy of scale, a wider exchange of ideas and best practice. In addition, our staff provide training to other schools (e.g. leading from the middle course)

Staff deployment - the staffing structure at both schools is routinely reviewed to ensure staff are efficiently deployed, appropriately qualified and used to the best of their abilities. This allows us to bring in additional

staff to target key curriculum areas such as reading recovery and numbers count and to use staff to the best of their ability at either school.

Community Cohesion

In addition to the partnership between the two schools, we also collaborate with other local schools (both through subject cohorts and the Woking Schools Learning Partnership) and professionals to ensure that good practice in both education and school management are shared. Training requirements across the partnership are identified so that training can be delivered in a timely and cost effective manner.

We encourage the children to take part in community activities (for example, choir singing at local events) and to have an awareness of others' needs such as through charity fundraising.

The Schools continue to encourage lettings with Goldsworth Primary School and its pool in particular being in almost constant use. The pool is now under the total management of the school and it now provides sessions for Special needs children and adults and ladies only swim sessions.

Financial Governance and oversight

The Trust has recently appointed a new member of staff with a dual role as both Trust Accountant and Business Manager at St John's Primary to bring cohesion to the financial practices of both schools. The schools are continuing to build a closer partnership with regards to financial management and are working collaboratively to look at both economies of scale when making purchases with one individual assessing the needs of both schools. This is a developing area but to date we have purchased IT software and learnpads. We also try to share resources such as stage lighting rather than both schools buying expensive equipment that is used infrequently. Both schools are part of the local group of academies which meet under various umbrella groups to disseminate and share financial information.

Both schools have strong financial governance with a range of skills on the Finance Committees. The Committees receive regular financial reports and are involved in the procuring of large expense items. Budgets and unforeseen or additional expenditure are discussed and challenged at these meetings in line with the Trust's scheme of delegation. In addition, both schools have retained a responsible officer who continues to make termly visits into each school.

With regards to specific financial initiatives:-

- Goldsworth Primary School has for a number of years been successfully using the Wisepay online payment system alongside cash and cheque payments. In the last 12 months, the school has stopped payment by cash for larger purchases thereby reducing the administrative overheads. All pupils (with the exception of just two families) are registered to receive communications via email or text. The reduction of hard copies for parents has significantly reduced copying costs. In addition the school now issues weekly newsletters providing reminders of trips and events. This has improved the timely payment for school activities and allowed for activities requiring parent input to run more smoothly and with less disruption to the school day.
- The Schools previously purchased staff insurance but this has not proved to be cost effective as the premium has always significantly been greater than the benefit. This year the trust is trialling 'self-insuring' with both schools setting aside a sum for unforeseen long term sickness.

Reviewing controls and managing risks

One of the targets for the Trust Accountant is to establish consistency between the schools in the trust and to ensure that best financial practice (in line with the EFA's Finance Manual) is identified and adhered to at both schools. The trust has invested in the PSF financial software package and the target for the coming year, using the trust accountant's professional skills, is to maximise the impact of the system allowing for a more streamlined monthly and year end procedures and reporting.

Signed: *P R Alexander*

Name: Pauline Alexander

Academy Trust Accounting Officer

Date: 11th December 2014