



**Company Number: 7722445**

## **Value for Money Statement Year Ended 31<sup>st</sup> August 2017**

As accounting officer the Headteacher has responsibility for ensuring that the academy trust delivers good value in the use of public resources. The accounting officer understands that value for money refers to the educational and wider societal outcomes achieved in return for the taxpayer resources received.

The accounting officer considers how the trust's use of its resources has provided good value for money during each academic year, and reports to the board of governors where value for money can be improved, including the use of benchmarking data where available. The accounting officer for the academy trust has delivered improved value for money during the year by:

- Monitoring spending, ensuring that spending was linked to the school improvement plan and clawing back unspent monies for re-budgeting
- Reviewing the curriculum and staffing to ensure a broad balanced curriculum for students while keeping spending within budget to ensure that there was not a deficit budget.
- Setting out a 5 year balanced budget, including planned staffing reductions to ensure long term financial security for the school.
- Successful bids for school improvement works funded by the DfE with subsequent improvement of the learning environment, leading to improved results in year 11 and year 13 and improved insulation, leading to reduced energy consumption and budget savings, which in were used to support other school costs e.g. staffing

### **The Purpose of the System of Internal Control**

The system of internal control is designed to manage risk to a reasonable level rather than to eliminate all risk of failure to achieve policies, aims and objectives. It can, therefore, only provide reasonable and not absolute assurance of effectiveness. The system of internal control is based on an on-going process designed to identify and prioritise the risks to the achievement of academy trust policies, aims and objectives, to evaluate the likelihood of those risks being realised and the impact should they be realised, and to manage them efficiently, effectively and economically. The system of internal control has been in place in Lady Hawkins' School for the period 1<sup>st</sup> September 2016 to 31 August 2017 and up to the date of approval of the annual report and financial statements.

## Capacity to Handle Risk

The board of governors has reviewed the key risks to which the academy trust is exposed together with the operating, financial and compliance controls that have been implemented to mitigate those risks. The board of governors is of the view that there is a formal on-going process for identifying, evaluating and managing the academy trust's significant risks that has been in place for the period 1st September 2016 to 31st August 2017 and up to the date of approval of the annual report and financial statements. This process is regularly reviewed by the board of governors.

## The Risk and Control Framework

The academy trust's system of internal financial control is based on a framework of regular management information and administrative procedures including the segregation of duties and a system of delegation and accountability. In particular it includes:

- comprehensive budgeting and monitoring systems with an annual budget and periodic financial reports which are reviewed and agreed by the board of trustees;
- regular reviews by the finance and resources committee of reports which indicate financial performance against the forecasts and of major purchase plans, capital works and expenditure programmes;
- setting targets to measure financial and other performance;
- clearly defined purchasing (asset purchase or capital investment) guidelines;
- delegation of authority and segregation of duties;
- identification and management of risks.

The board of governors has considered the need for a specific internal audit function and has decided:

- not to appoint an internal auditor. However the governors have appointed Mr S Grist, a governor, to carry out a programme of internal checks

This role includes giving advice on financial matters and performing a range of checks on the academy trust's financial systems. In particular the checks carried out in the current period included:

- testing of payroll systems
- testing of purchase systems
- testing of control account/ bank reconciliations

As part of the governors meeting cycle, Mr S Grist, the reviewer, reports to the board of governors, on the operation of the systems of control and on the discharge of the board of governors financial responsibilities.

## **Review of Effectiveness**

As accounting officer the Headteacher has responsibility for reviewing the effectiveness of the system of internal control. During the year in question the review has been informed by:

- the work of the internal reviewer
- the work of the external auditor
- the financial management self-assessment process, enacted by the business manager
- the work of the Chairs of Committees within the governors who have responsibility for the development and maintenance of the internal control framework

The accounting officer has been advised of the implications of the result of their review of the system of internal control by the Finance and Resources Committee and will plan to address weaknesses, e.g. those identified during the external audit and ensure continuous improvement of the system is in place.

Approved by order of the members of the board of trustees on 5th December 2017 and signed on its behalf by:

**Mr D Hill**  
Trustee

**Mr P Jennings**  
Accounting Officer