

# Value for Money Statement

**Organisation name: Brooke Weston Trust**

**Company number: 2400784**

**Year ended 31 August 2014**

I accept that as accounting officer of Brooke Weston Trust 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.

## **1. Improving educational outcomes**

The Trust's vision is to make all schools good or outstanding ensuring every student receives the best possible education. This is achieved through efficient use of our funds to resource support and training ensure the quality of teaching is at least good across all schools, and providing the highest quality possible for the learning environment in all BWT schools.

The overall performance of schools in our Trust has continued to improve. Our primary sector has seen step change in the quality and ambition of what is on offer and all schools are now meeting or exceeding this year's higher floor target. At secondary level BWA has returned results equal to its best ever performance at GCSE and CBA is for the first time significantly outperforming its local rivals. Whilst the headline figure has dipped at KSA and TCA many other indicators are improving in both schools and we must remain steadfast in seeing through the management and curriculum changes that have been introduced.

### **1.1 Higher Quality Teaching**

Our schools remained open on national strike days and, more importantly, the quality of teaching delivered in our schools is higher than ever before because the effective introduction of robust performance management and strong professional development programmes for staff across the Trust has had a high impact in eradicating inadequate teaching and sharpening practice throughout.

### **1.2 Standards and Outcomes 2013-14**

The Headline figures are as follows:

- Percentage of good/outstanding teaching over 2013-14 improved steadily.
- A-Level: BWA sustained high performance. Improvements in our sponsor academies compared to 2013.
- GCSE: strong performance by BWA back up to 84%; good progress at CBA (up 61% now = +28% in last 2 years); dips in KSA and TCA down to 42% and 30% respectively (TCA is 33% including re-sits).

- SATS: performance improved from 2013 with major gains at KSA and Beanfield.
- Student attendance Trust-wide was the highest ever.

### **1.3 Optimising Outcomes of OfSTED and DFE inspections**

During this year the Trust faced a raft of inspections and monitoring visits – 26 days in total, all of which were well managed to achieve the highest outcomes possible given the stage of development of the schools concerned. Highlights of the inspection process include CTS's outstanding OfSTED rating and NCC's award of the same grade to the special school unit at CBA. The fact that none of our schools are in a category of concern and that all of the inspection reports this year were complimentary about the impact of the Trust in driving up standards should not go unremarked as it is a significant achievement given their starting point last September.

### **1.4 Good Growth of Leadership Capacity**

We have been successful both in retaining and recruiting some strong leaders. Despite the unsettling period that inevitably follows major changes to an organisation's most senior leadership and governance, we are delighted that our most experienced secondary Principals are still with us and, in their new roles as Executive Principals, are working extremely hard to maintain high standards in their own schools whilst supporting their partner organisations and other Trust-wide initiatives including the Teaching School. We have also recruited an Executive Principal (Primary) and been able to appoint three new primary principals from within our ranks all of whom have track records as effective school leaders already within the Trust.

### **1.5 Increasing Demand for a Brooke Weston Trust Education**

The demand for places at our schools has never been higher and this has continued in the latest admissions round. At secondary level all schools are oversubscribed, two on first choices only. CTS and Brooke Weston attracted 5 applications for each place and numbers also rose at CBA, KSA and TCA.

### **1.6 Key Priorities for 2014-15**

The two mantras for 2014-15 are to ***Make it Better*** and that ***No-one is Left Behind***.

In order to achieve this we are:

- Making further improvements in outcomes and progress on previous years.
- Building staffing capacity.
- Consolidating the governance arrangements.
- Realising operational efficiencies planned during 2013-14.

### **1.7 Developments over the 2014-16 period**

The following are our plans beyond this:

- Pursuance of appropriate growth opportunities.
- Extending the school improvement and revenue generation capacity of the BWT teaching school.
- Positioning schools for changes in the national accountability and performance framework.

## **2. Financial governance and oversight**

In order to monitor any impact of any financial changes a Trust Five Year Financial Plan has been produced. Feeding into this are the Five Year IT Strategy and Five Year Facilities Management Plan along with the individual Academy Five Year Budgets.

These are regularly updated and presented to the Finance and Audit Committee for discussion at their quarterly meetings. A Finance Report outlining the latest position and future challenges is presented to every Board of Directors Meeting. There is significant Financial Challenge at both sets of meeting as can be seen in the Minutes to these Meetings.

We have begun the process of restructuring the Trust Board and introduced a Chairs' Forum as a vehicle to aid better communication and encourage debate. We have improved the capacity of our local governing bodies (LGBs) via a recruitment strategy that includes adding some of our best senior staff to the LGBs of Trust schools other than their own. LGBs now also benefit from much improved administrative support and access to relevant training. In terms of management processes, we have introduced a Trust risk register and Responsible/Accountable matrix to promote more effective work.

## **3. Managing Staffing**

The Trust was formed on 1<sup>st</sup> April 2012 from three individual academies. Six other academies have joined the Trust since this date. Each of the individual academies has joined with their own Staff Terms and Conditions, Staff Structures and Pay Levels. A legal requirement as a single employer is that all staff should be on the same Terms and Conditions and Pay Levels. The review of these continues along with the Staff structures within each of the schools. The first draft of the Staff Structure and Evaluation Scheme should be available to interested parties in the Spring so that the scheme can go live in September 2015. One of the objectives of this exercise is to establish stronger short and medium term control over expenditure within the cluster schools.

## **4. Better Purchasing**

The Trust is committed to ensuring transparency and compliance, whilst engaging with existing and new suppliers. We are aware of the need to engage with suppliers and ensure Value for Money, demonstrating excellent customer service whilst driving down costs, thus ensuring funds are made available to enhance the education of pupils within our schools. We are also committed to ensuring compliance with the Education Funding Agency (EFA) guidance, in terms of financial prudence of public money.

To achieve this we will need to make savings and efficiencies. Five year Facilities Management and IT strategies are in place to identify purchasing across all schools to ensure continued Value for Money and scrutinise existing contracts. A calendar of works for Facilities Management is to be followed by all schools when identifying small works and repairs to ensure adeptness when appointing contractors.

### **4.1 Efficiency Savings**

These are achieved through the following:

- Examining the need for change in order to meet the current business/education requirements;

- Identifying the need and developing a culture of challenge
- Considering a range of possible options, which allow the objectives to be achieved;
- Looking for existing frameworks where required to cultivate savings
- Quality assures tender documentation prior to market testing
- Promotes careful management of contracts.
- Places costs and benefits that can be quantified in monetary terms on a comparable basis;
- Assesses the costs and benefits that cannot be measured in monetary terms;
- Assesses the risks;
- Assesses the relative merits of each of the options;
- Evaluates benefits of Trust-wide options, either through disposal or sharing of goods
- Plans the implementation of the selected option and details how the investment decision is to be reviewed.
- Exploitation of technology through the use of e-procurement /contract management, asset registers
- Ambitious Partnerships across Trust schools and beyond
- Use of the Asset Utilisation Strategy to ensure the use of all assets is maximised

## **4.2 Collaboration**

Various meetings have been held with the Executive Principals, Business Managers, Facilities Teams and IT departments. Leaflets and booklets have been produced and distributed with guidance as to how and why we need to change our operating model in terms of spending patterns. A Procurement Policy has been adopted and can be found on the Trust website.

Meetings within individual teams have shown a willingness to engage however there is still a developing understanding of how to plan and implement practical solutions to reduce spend.

Some Central team initiatives which have involved school staff have led to greater understanding and acceptance of compliance and need for generating cost efficiencies.

## **4.3 Financial Implications**

The following cost efficiencies are already planned and underway:

*(See page overleaf)*

Item	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15
	<b>No formal procurement process in place</b>		<b>Formal procurement</b>
Legal	Retainer £8,595 plus fees agreed at £500 and 1,000 per solicitor	Previous fees plus various legal advice for admissions, PFI, procurement, academy conversions on top  £14,045.38  BWA data not submitted at time of report	Retainer £2,700 Lot 2 plus fees of £200-£900  Retainer £6,543 one year only Lot 1 plus fees of £500-£1000
Access control	£12,000 CBA	£17,000 CBA	£10,000 CBA
IT- Laptop purchases	£ 500-750 per laptop	£550-795 per laptop	£419 per unit
Vehicle Hire	£14 per day	£14 per day	£9.71 per day
Box	N/A	£6945	£4500
Paper	Between £2.35 and £1.95 per ream		£1.88 per ream
Waste Management  KSA only as example	£4,646.40	£4,646.40	£4,646.40  Cost neutral but compliant
Catering total spend on food	£890,822.90	£858,722.91	£849,722.91 increase in FSM keeps costs high Estimate.

Other areas where procurement can be applied by the principles outlined above for targeted savings:

Item	2012-13	2013-14	Target of 5% per contract
Cleaning materials current spend		£70,500	£3,525
Building engineering services <sup>1</sup>		£553,000	£27,650
Security		£274,500	£13,725
Furniture - repairs		£34,500	£1,725

#### 4.4 Risk and Business Continuity Management

The Trust is committed to ensuring that it moves towards full compliance; however there is a need to balance the ongoing operational requirements. Consideration is taken on balance to the following areas:

High cost/value  
 High operational impact  
 Reputational risk  
 Loss of supplier

#### 5. Maximising income generation

The 'out of hours' use of our facilities is a regular agenda item at the Principals meetings to encourage the individual schools to work together in order to maximise the level of income generated across the Trust.

Brooke Weston Academy, Corby Business Academy and Thomas Clarkson Academy have allowed the community use of their premises when they are not being used by the schools for a number of years. A Community Manager is employed at each these schools to manage this. The use of these facilities over the last 12 months has increased.

The new buildings at Corby Technical School and Kettering Science Academy have opened to the community 'out of hours' during this financial year. The income generation at these schools is slowly increasing and it is anticipated that the facilities will continue to increase during the year.

The Brooke Weston gym opened in October 2014 and is already being used by the Community throughout the day. This will be an additional revenue source for the Trust.

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The Trust Primary schools have a limited 'out of hours' usage. In the New Year a meeting with all the Community Managers is being arranged to coordinate the use of the facilities across the Trust. An agenda item will be Primary Schools and how we can utilise the use of their buildings to maximise revenue.

## **6. Reviewing controls and managing risks**

The Scheme of Delegation enables the Trust to maintain the robust financial controls within the individual academies. A copy of this can be found on the Trust website. The Finance Director works with the Executive Principals, Principals and finance staff within the individual academies to ensure that the Scheme of Delegation and the Trust Finance Procedures are followed. A report is scheduled on the Finance and Audit Committee Agenda to discuss any significant risks which are then reported to the Board of Directors as required. The EFA Financial Handbook has been used as the basis for this report.

The External Auditor carries out the Responsible Officer role and undertakes quarterly audit checks across the Trust. An independent report is then submitted to the Finance and Audit Committee. In addition to this the individual schools have been linked to perform quarterly peer reviews. The outcomes of these are reported to the Finance and Audit Committee through the Finance Director.

To enhance the controls in place we are following our procurement policy and procedures to implement a system to monitor our tangible fixed assets.

## **Lessons learned**

The Trust has been on a steep learning journey this last Financial Year with many changes and improvements. The most significant of these has been the introduction of a Procurement Policy that is both compliant and produces efficiency savings. As we move into 2014/15 we will continue to build upon the experiences from 2013/14 to make further savings whilst meeting the ever increasing demands placed on us as a public body.

**Signed:**

**Name:** Dr Andrew Campbell

The Brooke Weston Trust Accounting Officer

**Date:** 17<sup>th</sup> December 2014