

Value for Money Statement

Academy Trust name: The Dean Trust Limited

Academy Trust company number: 08027943

Period ended 31 August 2013

I accept that as Accounting Officer of The Dean Trust Limited 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 Results

Examination results of our students in 2013 (2012 in brackets) were:

	Ashton on Mersey School	Broadoak School	Forest Gate Academy
Percentage of pupils gaining 5+ A*-C GCSE grades including English and Mathematics	58 (65)	48 (53)	N/A
Percentage of pupils gaining 5+ A*-C GCSE grades	92 (91)	89 (96)	N/A
Key stage 1 Percentage of children attaining at least L2.	N/A	N/A	Reading 74% (69) Writing 57% (55) Maths 96% (86) Y1 Phonics 84% (53)
Key stage 2 Percentage of children attaining at least L4.	N/A	N/A	Reading 75% (86) Writing 75% (61) Maths 81% (93) Y1 Phonics 63% (79) EGPS 50% (N/A)

Key stage 5			
A-Level	100% A*-E (96)	N/A	N/A
	65% A*-C (58)		
AS Level	88% A*-E (75)		
	39% A*-C (36)		
Vocational (BTEC)	98% MMM+ (100)		
	74% DDD+ (72)		
	44% D*D*D* (51)		

Results at Ashton On Mersey School (AoM) against the main headline figure of 5+ including English and Maths, dipped this year due to lower than forecasted results in English. This achievement was largely due to under- performance in one of the two syllabuses used and the effect was exacerbated by grade boundary changes. This was equally true at Broadoak School which also saw a dip in English results.

Achievement at AoM against all other indicators has continued to rise, especially the top end, with the proportion of pupils attaining 3+ A/A* reaching 33%. At Broadoak there was also a large increase in this indicator from 12% to 25%. The Average Point Score (APS Capped) at AoM for all pupils has also risen to 363 which is well above national averages. At Broadoak School APS (Capped) remains close to national average and shows the breadth of the curriculum. It also demonstrates that, despite significantly lower starting points than other schools nationally, pupils achieve well.

At Forest Gate Academy, floor targets for attainment and progress were matched or exceeded although attainment in all areas except for writing dipped largely due to pupils working below the level of the test. However, this was a particularly low ability cohort of pupils from Key Stage 1 but they made excellent progress resulting in a Value Added score of 100.9 (99.1 2012) and significantly better than national progress in Maths. The Key Stage 1 cohort results indicate an increase in all areas and expectations are high for the cohort as they move through Key Stage 2.

Targeted improvement

To achieve these results the Trust re-organised Senior Leadership Team responsibilities to ensure a focus on achievement in the core subjects of English Maths and Science. The Trust keeps its staffing structure under review and ensures that investment of resources is directed strategically and in line with improvement plan priorities at each of the schools in the Trust. The success of this strategy is evidenced by the headline results.

The Pupil Premium funding is targeted at individual students according to their needs. Special Educational Needs students and those requiring support from the pupil premium are given the extra support afforded by this additional funding. This is tailored to their individual needs and can be either 1:1 support, group support or additional resources.

Collaboration

The Trust commissions support from the Teaching School operated by AoM to ensure standards continue to rise across all schools. This facilitates consistency in good practice across the Trust, whilst encouraging the building of capacity for school to school support. At the same time, as a result of the reputation of the Trust, the Teaching School has been successful in securing some lucrative national commissions. In the past year, 6 employees of the Trust have been designated SLE in recognition of their collaborative work. The Trust has continued to develop as an Academy sponsor with one additional school entering the Trust in September 2012. A further school will be sponsored in February 2014.

This year Ashton on Mersey have contributed to three main charities so far. Our annual Poppy appeal raised £671 for the British Legion. The 6th form students helped to lead a number of fundraising events for Children in Need and we were pleased to be able to contribute £667 towards this very worthy cause. The appalling conditions that the victims of the Typhoon Haiyan were left to endure prompted the school to raise funds for the victims. We were extremely pleased to be able to send £715 to help the thousands of victims.

Broadoak School is heavily involved in its local community, attending several local events and activities. Broadoak receives sponsorship and support from Air Products, Dulux and The Rotary Club. The Wolfson Foundation awarded the school a grant of £40,000 for arts and technology, recognising the value added to pupils in a highly deprived community. The Manchester United Foundation use the school as a hub for football development also benefitting Forest Gate as well as other local primary schools. The Executive Principal sits on Trafford's Children's Trust Board, The Surestart Advisory Board, The Stronger Families Group, The Localities Group and the Youth Partnership for Partington and Carrington and as such is able to contribute to local projects for the benefit of young people. Despite being in an area of high deprivation the school participates in the Christmas shoe-box appeal, Comic Relief, supports a school in Uganda each spring in terms of staffing expertise, and staff and pupils raised £1,193 for a variety of charities in the 2012/13 academic year.

Forest Gate has supported national charity events including Comic Relief, Children in Need and Sports Relief.

New initiatives

The Trust fulfils a joint quality assurance role with Chester University to support expansion of Initial Teacher Training (in particular School Centred ITT) and to sustain the School Sport Partnership in light of declining funding.

Quantifying improvements

The key indicators that quantify the effect of the Trust's strategies include the following:

- Performance in formal examinations and all intermediate assessment/testing stages,

- Student attendance as a proxy measure for the quality of the curriculum and the learning environment. In the academic year to August 2013 attendance was 95.7% (95.6% 2012) for Ashton on Mersey, 93.3% (93.1% for 2012) for Broadoak, and 93.0% (94.7% for 2012) for Forest Gate. This is an improvement on past years and compares favourably with other schools in the area.
- Financial performance. The actual surplus was more favourable than the budgeted position. When taken together with academic performance this demonstrates good financial management and targeting of resources. The trust was also successful in attracting funds from the ACMF which has value for money as one of the criteria for assessing bids.
- Academic resources and environment. The Trust has made significant improvements to the fabric of the estate at two of its school sites. Capital grants to the value of £925k have enabled roofing replacements, replacement boiler systems, improved glazing and replacement of curtain walling

Financial governance and oversight

The Trust's system of financial governance includes strong oversight by the Trustees and the Accounting Officer. The Accounting Officer is provided with monthly updates of financial performance and is involved in recommending any corrective action that may be required via the cycle of Governing Body meetings. The Board of Trustees are provided with quarterly financial management reports and other appropriate reports e.g. the annual report and audited accounts. The Chair of the Trust has extensive experience within the education sector and Local Government, both of which have embedded the principles of VFM in their operations over a number of years. The chair of the West Trafford Learning Partnership Finance Committee is a practising chartered accountant and the Trust finance team includes suitably qualified staff. Minutes of all meetings confirm that spending is monitored robustly with appropriate challenges from committee members and Trustees.

Reviewing controls and managing risks: The Trust has a system of internal controls in place to minimise financial risks. These controls are kept under constant review by the management team and the finance department but it is also subject to regular testing by the Responsible Officer and external auditors, whose findings are reported to Trustees and Governors.

The senior management team and the accounting officer receive regular financial management reports with narrative explaining variances and key areas of income and expenditure. Similar reports are also provided to the Governors and Trustees who then make decisions on corrective actions or budget virements to address areas of concern or to prevent unnecessary waste.

Following a competitive procurement process the trust has secured insurance policies to cost-effectively manage the major risks to the organisation

Better purchasing

The Trust has recruited a group purchasing officer to review and develop all areas of procurement practice to enhance best value / value for money. For example:

- **Fitness for purpose:** Some services and contracts been appraised and renegotiated to get the best mix of quality and effectiveness for the least cost. For example, during the period to 31st August 2013 a contract for use of sports facilities has been renegotiated to secure a significant saving which will take effect in the year ending August 2014.
- **Benchmarking:** The trust has undertaken benchmarking activity to identify areas where review of best value can be targeted and savings can be achieved, for example areas of the sixth form curriculum have been assessed to ensure viability and this is now being kept under review as a result of recent changes to funding methodology.
- **Options appraisal:** The Trust has considered different options before making purchases, including an assessment of the costs and benefits of the alternatives over the longer term. For example at the balance sheet date the Trust was in the process of installing some new heating plant which incorporated solar panels to reduce energy costs in the long term.
- **Best practice.** Subject to limits specified in the financial procedures manual the trust always obtain quotes or carries out competitive tendering activity as part of the procurement process. This helps to ensure that we secure competitive prices. In addition the trust operates a “preferred supplier” system for regular purchases which again aims to ensure that we secure competitive prices and value for money.
- **Economies of scale:** The Trust has expanded and continues to explore further expansion opportunities which provide a good fit with our vision and objectives. Naturally such expansion presents the Trust with opportunities to secure greater economies of scale as our purchasing power increases. The group purchasing officer role includes processes to secure the economies of scale, and by operating at the group level also reduces and shares the administration and procurement costs.
- **Additional income generation:** The Teaching School business helps the Trust to capitalise on its excellent reputation and draws in additional grants and income. Surplus funds are reinvested into the core business which enhances the education of our pupils and the outcomes that they achieve.

Lessons learned

The Trust recognised the need for a coherent strategy for the use of pupil premium funding and developed a policy for the effective use of the funding. This is now also managed across the Trust by a Co-ordinator, ensuring best practice is shared, tighter lines of accountability and sustaining increased outcomes for the target group of pupils in all Trust sites

Growth strategy - as an Academy sponsor it has been important to ensure that capacity and infrastructure permits careful and steady growth to enable all our schools to develop simultaneously.

Signed: 

Name: Tarun Kapur CBE

Academy Trust Accounting Officer

Date: 16/12/13