

# **BISHOP RAMSEY CHURCH OF ENGLAND SCHOOL GOVERNORS**

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## **Value for Money Statement (year ended 31 August, 2013)**

Achieving the best possible value for money has the highest priority for Bishop Ramsey Church of England School. This is evident from the school structures, the decisions made by leaders at the school, the quality assurance processes involving the Finance and Physical Resources Committee of the Governing Body and the full Governing Body and the outcomes achieved by The Academy Trust.

Value for money is embedded in the structure of The Academy Trust by the establishment of a Plant and Finance Committee of the Leadership Team which meets weekly and includes the Headteacher and the Finance Director of The Academy Trust. At these meetings policy is implemented and the day-to-day management of the budget is overseen. All members of the Leadership Team are required to apprise themselves of the minutes of this meeting and when significant matters are discussed these are taken forward for a full discussion at the Leadership Team. Hence all significant spending decisions are thoroughly investigated by the school's leadership and approved by them.

The Finance and Physical Resources Committee of the Governing Body met on a monthly basis during the financial year which ended 31st August 2013. At each meeting the monthly outturn statements were interrogated and the Finance Director required to explain any variances. Furthermore all significant spending decisions were approved at this committee prior to being effected. For any expenditure over £2,500 at least 3 quotes are obtained and the decision is referred to the Finance and Physical Resources Committee of the Governing Body. The Chair of the Finance and Physical Resources Committee also sat on the Standing Committee of the Governing Body and reported to the full Governing Body, as did the Finance Director, ensuring that the full Governing Body was fully aware of all spending decisions made.

The School Development Plan, which is approved by the full Governing Body, explicitly targets improved educational outcomes for students. This includes improving examination results and improving the quality of education delivered by The Academy Trust. In 2012-13 additional spending on the Sixth Form was sanctioned as this was a priority for The Academy Trust. In the same way the need to improve the depth of staffing in Physics was approved as this also was a priority for The Academy Trust. The Academy Trust also approved a restructuring of provision for Gifted and Talented students in order to consolidate the improvements which had been in recent years.

The Academy Trust ensures that the Risk Register is reviewed on a regular (termly) basis by the Standing Committee of the Governing Body. This group comprises the Chairs of all the Governing Body committees, the Chair of Governors and the Accounting Officer. Financial risks are among those covered by this process.

The Trust has engaged in collaboration with other education providers, where this has been deemed the most efficient way of driving up standards. To this end the school is involved in a KS3 Engagement project which enables Year 9 students to have access to a college based course, in order to combat the potential disaffection of particular students. As a National Support School, the Trust is habitually involved in supporting other schools which brings benefits to teachers at Bishop Ramsey in terms of offering them valuable professional development. Since becoming accredited as a Teaching School the Trust has also engaged in considerable shared CPD with other schools, which has improved the quality of teaching,

both at Bishop Ramsey and at the other schools involved. This has been highly cost effective.

The most significant new initiative for the Trust in the year 2012-2013 has been its accreditation as a Teaching School. In the light of this the Governing Body approved a significant restructuring of the Leadership Team in order to release the capacity needed to deliver the Teaching School accountabilities. This was fully funded by the Teaching School grant.

The continued high achievement of Bishop Ramsey students indicates the effectiveness of the Trust's strategies. In addition, results in Valued Added Terms are significantly positive at both post 16 and KS4. The number of exclusions was at an all-time low in the year 2012-2013 and attendance at 96% suggests that by all measures Bishop Ramsey is delivering outstandingly good value for money.

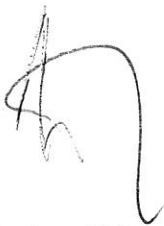
During the budget setting process in 2012-13, the initial task was to identify areas where savings could be made on an on-going basis; these areas included contracts and software packages, where more efficient processes were implemented in their place.

Stringent financial controls are communicated to staff to ensure they are aware of the financial constraints governing the academy. Individual budget holders are held accountable for the use of their budgets, and are assisted by the Finance Team in sourcing best value.

Contracts and services are regularly appraised and renegotiated when appropriate to ensure value for money. The Academy routinely takes advantage of bulk purchasing when appropriate, to obtain economies of scale.

The Academy explores every opportunity to generate income through hire of the Academy facilities. We also promote parental donations to the school for which gift aid is reclaimed.

The 2012-13 Financial Year saw the development of a Capital Strategy, with the Academy seeking to develop a portfolio of possible projects which were "bid ready". This arose from our experience of having bids to the EFA rejected on the grounds that they did not adequately meet the bid criteria.



Andrew Wilcock  
Accounting Officer  
Bishop Ramsey Church of England School

December 2013