

Value for Money Statement

Academy trust name: The Thomas Hardy School

Academy trust company number: 7677838

Year ended 31 August 2013

I accept that as accounting officer of The Thomas Hardy 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.

Improving Results

Our curriculum ensures that all students have the opportunity to succeed and attain their full potential.

Staffing is reviewed each term, and all subjects are staffed by specialists in that subject. The curriculum is also reviewed to ensure it is fair, and this has led to the withdrawal of the International Baccalaureate which did not attract sufficient numbers to remain viable. This change has not affected the prospects of our students or sixth form recruitment.

Our key indicator of 5 A* to C including Maths and English has increased from 65% in 2012 to 69% in 2013.

Value added data shows that our students make significantly better progress than expected. The gap between the attainment of Pupil Premium and non Pupil Premium students also narrowed.

All students are carefully tracked and interventions put into place where necessary. The school has been restructured to give more tailored support to students. Interventions are logged and evaluated for impact.

Pupil premium funding is carefully monitored, with funding ring-fenced and the spending broken down on the schools website as required.

The value added trend in A level results measured by ALPs is outstanding.

Outside agencies are employed to give independent advice and guidance. Mental health professionals look after the emotional needs of students and a team of guidance leaders also gives one to one support.

New courses are assessed for their suitability. This year a small cohort will be entered for iGCSE English as it will best suit them.

Lecture style lessons have been successfully used in the sixth form so that more students are able to experience the best teaching.

Good practice and CPD opportunities are shared with feeder schools to best achieve value for money.

Financial Performance

Financial governance is strong, with experts sitting on the finance sub-committee.

The school budget is broken down into the categories required by the finance committee. All of these budget headings are carefully monitored and not allowed to become overdrawn. The amounts allocated to these budgets are reviewed annually.

Management accounts are prepared and issued monthly, to enable regular monitoring and ensure value for money.

Budget projections are provided to enable short and long term financial plans to be made.

A cash flow forecast is maintained, and surplus cash balances are invested from time to time in order to generate extra income as opportunity allows.

Tenders/quotes are obtained as appropriate to ensure value for money, for example our current auditors were engaged following close scrutiny of detailed quotes from several accountancy firms, whilst our insurance cover was secured via the Crescent Purchasing Consortium's tendering framework.

We utilise the expertise of Consultancy firm DRB to provide support and an independent assessment of our financial management.

Signed: 

Name: Mike Foley.....

Academy Trust Accounting Officer

Date: 13 / 12 / 13