



# **Bridgnorth Endowed School**

**Company Limited by Guarantee**

**Registration Number: 8296889**

## **Value for Money Statement**

**Year ended 31 August 2014**

## Introduction

Bridgnorth Endowed School is committed to delivering high quality services to its stakeholders and expects high standards from its employees and contractors. In order to maintain those high standards a culture of openness and accountability is vitally important.

I accept that as accounting officer of Bridgnorth Endowed 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.

## How we are improving educational results

Maintaining good exam results for our students remains one of our key priorities. In 2014 the school achieved success in public examination results at GCSE and GCE. There are some noteworthy improvements in the 2013 results for GCE where 46% of grades achieved at A level were A\*-B; five subjects were targeted for improvement in 2013/14 and each of those subjects turned a negative residual of on average half grade below expectation, into half a grade above expectation. Within the GCSE results, in a turbulent year nationally, Maths results improved by 7% on the previous year, and in the option subjects, particularly History, PE, Business Studies, Spanish, Graphics, Art and Geography, students achieved at least 1/3 of a grade higher than expected.

**Targeted Improvement:** The school has robust tracking systems for monitoring achievement and is continually looking at how data can inform staff in order for them to support and extend the learning of students. We involve all our staff in focusing on the students' learning needs and how to meet those needs. The introduction of tutor and class folders has focused staff further on individual learning needs and proven a huge success within the past 12 months. This also helps supply staff/cover supervisors taking a class for an absent colleague because student progress, intervention strategies, behaviour etc are easily accessible at a glance.

**Focus on Individual Students:** The school offers students a comprehensive student support service. The recruitment of a third Learning Mentor has meant that a Learning Mentor is now in place for each academic phase (foundation, development, advanced). These Learning Mentors working with Progress Managers, as part of the now well established Deep Support Team, focus on students who are not on target to reach their predicted grades. This focus is reinforced by members of the Senior Leadership Team mentoring individuals at particular risk of under-

performing in year 11. A principle aim of this work is to raise student aspirations and support them in achieving their potential.

**Collaboration:** During the year, the school continued to work with a local secondary school in the delivery of a cost effective provision for some 6<sup>th</sup> form subjects which attract only a small number of students. After careful consideration governors agreed that the collaborative offer be reduced to maintain the GCE A Level provision that BES wishes to offer their students, ensuring that the number of courses more accurately maps the number of students attending the sixth form. Vocational learning continues to be directed to support certain student aspirations and whilst it is an addition to and not the main thrust of the sixth form it is useful because it adds breadth to the academic pathways, and provides a more work based learning involving local companies and providers.

BES has recruited and now manages their own peripatetic music staff to deliver music lessons, providing our families with a personalised offer at a more affordable rate than the previous offer.

The Director of Business & Finance is now Chair of the Shropshire School Business Managers Association, this brings with it a wealth of networking and collaboration opportunities in such areas as purchasing, expertise, shared CPD which has occurred over the past 12 months.

**Financial Governance and Oversight:** The Finance Committee met three times during the year to receive and review financial reports and set the school's budget for the coming year. Members of the Finance Committee also receive monthly budget status reports and have the chance to challenge anything they are unsure of. The Full Governing Body approves the budget each year and receives and approves the accounts in a separate meeting with the Accountants present and reporting to them. The Governors are always mindful of the need to balance expenditure against income to ensure the school remains sustainable.

The school has an internal and end of financial year audit service provided by Whittingham Riddell Accountants. During the year ended 31 August 2014, the service reviewed the financial systems and procedures (October 2013) that are in place during numerous visits and reported to the Full Governing Body on their findings with some recommendations – a large number of these have been addressed during the past financial year.

The school underwent an audit by the EFA during the summer of 2014 – there were some recommendations for improvements and these have now been fully implemented.

**Better Purchasing:** The school has a cycle of review for its on-going services from external organisations to ensure those services continue to meet the needs of the school, and are the best available to us at that time, and offer good value for money. During the past academic year Governors are considering proposals regarding ICT and Leisure Services – decisions will be made during the next academic year on how to proceed.

The school's new Financial Handbook which was completed during the 2013-2014 academic year has clear procedures and guidelines in place. Copies of the handbook have been distributed to all budget holders in the school and members of the Finance Committee.

Wherever possible BES considers shared procurement and has managed to secure a better buying power for schools in Shropshire in the purchase of paper, one of the biggest consumable expenditure items.

**Income Generation:** The school was lucky enough to secure funding through the SALIX loan facility (ACMF) to install new boilers for the main block and leisure centre aspects of the site. This will provide more energy efficient heating throughout with the provision of zoning areas and computerised management system.

The school explores every opportunity to generate income through the letting of school facilities and have been successful in building up a regular number of external lettings, for example a new partnership working with Telford College in hosting their community classes. A fresh marketing approach will be undertaken in the new academic year to promote the school's facilities even further.

Other income is generated through parental donations to our school fund for the benefit of all. This is an area that needs improvement for the next academic year.

**Reviewing Controls and Managing Risks:** The Governing Body's Compliance and Risk Committee have a comprehensive risk register that is reviewed regularly which considers risks to a number of areas. A Policy Register is also in place and is again monitored and reviewed by the Compliance and Risk Committee ensuring that the school has in place personalised policies that eventually are embedded to the school's everyday practice.

Adequate insurances are in place for premises , content, risk and staff absence – insurances are reviewed annually.

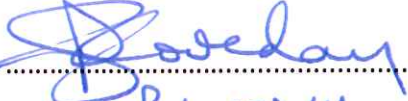
**Lessons Learned:** Key issues facing the school in 2014 – 2015 are changes to the 6<sup>th</sup> form provision and therefore curriculum offer for the following year together with reforms to sixth-form funding related to individual learning record requirements. The demographic data for the local area is of concern with a consideration to a further decrease in pupil numbers on roll for years 7 to 11. Therefore recruitment and retention are a key priority for the Governors and leaders of BES.

Curriculum offer for Years 9 to 11 will be reviewed with a change to the provision in place for the summer of 2015 when options are in place after the summer half-term.

To counter these changes, the school will continue to review all staff appointments and costs against outcomes and all decisions regarding purchasing and service provision will be taken with

an emphasis on obtaining value for money and improving outcomes for students. The school is aware of an increase of the per pupil funding amount but will not know of its full impact until early 2015 when the budget allocation is published to the school.

Benchmarking against other academies is an area that needs developing; with a limited number of comparison schools in the local area benchmarking is not necessarily of great benefit.

Signed:  .....

Name: P. LOVEDAY .....

Academy Trust Accounting Officer

Date: 4/11/14 .....