

# Value for Money Statement

Academy trust name: .....

**FOREST WAY SCHOOL**

Academy trust company number: .....**7931627** .....

## Year ended 31 August 2014

I accept that as accounting officer of **Forest Way 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.

Forest Way School is a special school providing education for 189 pupils with a wide range of special needs from moderate, to severe and complex. The governing body considers that the best use of academy resources is to invest in staffing and ensuring that are children receive the best quality of teaching thereby maximising the outcomes for our children. This is reflected in our staffing costs ratio which continues to exceed 90%. Additional specialist services such as nursing, speech and language therapy and aromatherapy have also been provided to further enhance the pupils' school experience and allow them to reach their full potential. The individual needs of pupils with specific needs including behavioural difficulties and complex medical and health issues are supported by targeting extra staffing across the timetable and at key times of the day. An Ofsted Health check conducted in September 2013 confirmed our continuing status as "Outstanding" supported by excellent pupil progress and achievement results.

Forest Way School is a centre of excellence and is highly regarded locally, nationally and internationally. It has had 2 outstanding Ofsted reports with no key issues identified on either occasion. It was designated in the first cohort of 100 schools nationally as a Teaching School. It facilitates an alliance of 45 schools, primary, secondary and special, providing a wide range of courses to share delivery and good practice. This has impacted on improvements across the whole alliance. The school is also a National Support School and the Headteacher a National Leader in Education. Extensive support is provided to other schools to help them raise standards for their pupils.

We are extremely proud of our school and ensure that we provide the appropriate financial provision to maintain the high standards of equipment/decoration/maintenance,

so that our pupils continue to benefit from the positive educational environment that we have created.

The success of Forest Way School and demand for places at what is a sought after education establishment has pushed our numbers on roll to unprecedented levels. The acquisition of an adjoining residential property and successful conversion to Post 14 and 16 Life Skills Centre has increased capacity. Its integration into the curriculum has been hugely successful and has become a place where our more able students can enhance their learning in a real life environment.

The 2013-14 financial year has been a period of consolidation following this property purchase and introduction leadership succession planning and the inevitable impact this has had on reserve funding. The objective this year was to replenish our reserves where possible through continuing to challenge costs and reduce waste. This objective will continue into the next financial year in order to meet future rising costs of running the academy and meet the financial challenges from payroll increases (including increases in Employers' National Insurance and Pension Contributions). Future sustainability of the academy is the primary objective in the current economic environment.

The governors continue to challenge all our service level and contract costs, deploying excellent value maintenance schemes to minimise our risks and enabling more accurate budget planning. We will however always strive to achieve the appropriate balance between quality of workmanship that preserves/enhances the appearance of the school against competitive costs. We do not always choose the cheapest quote but follow Best Value Principles.

This is our third year as an academy. Whilst we have continued to adjust to the changed environment, we are confident in our business dealings and strong internal financial controls that permeate down from the governing body throughout all aspects of school life. Members of the governing body play an active part in their governance, leading the school strategically and providing challenging monitoring in all areas to ensure a positive impact on the quality of teaching and learning for the pupils.

Signed: L. J. Singer

Name: LAWRENCE SHINGAR

**Academy Trust Accounting Officer**

Date: 11/12/14