

Value for Money Statement

Organisation name: THE DIOCESE OF NORWICH MULTI-ACADEMY TRUST

Company number: 8737435

Year ended 31 August 2014

I accept that as accounting officer of THE DIOCESE OF NORWICH MULTI-ACADEMY TRUST 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.

In our first 10 months of operation great efforts have been made to grow the number of academies within the trust to allow us to benefit from economies of scale. Whilst at the year- end we had three academies within our trust, another four converted post year- end, and a further six are in process.

During this first period central staffing was very small, but the committed growth have allowed this central team to be planned to grow in an affordable way, which has happened at the start of the new accounting year, and includes a new Executive Officer who has also taken over the role of accounting officer. This enhanced staffing structure will allow us to extend the support for our academies.

During the first period of trading, when most services started with the pre-conversion providers, it became immediately clear that to support our local governing bodies and leadership teams and to improve trust governance of resources, changes were required. The Trust sourced and secured a much improved service for our academies for Payroll and HR services which were immediately implemented during the year. The Trust was also dissatisfied with the standard of financial reporting being generated. The Trust undertook a tendering and presentation exercise for a replacement service that improved the information available to the trust and at a local level to improve governance and control. This is in the process of being implemented in the current financial year.

To ensure school improvement, the trust has commissioned a project for our academies with an external school improvement specialist, and has also secured external support for Local Governing Bodies and their clerking, as this is considered to be an important part of our school improvement strategy. Whilst this was in place before the year-end, we expect to see the results for this work generated in the current academic year. Our own capacity to both support and review this progress is also being enhanced, and a new pupil data tracking package has been implemented.

As already stated the trust expects to achieve further value for money from economies of scale as the numbers increase. We have undertaken a review of all core services, seeking through tendering and presentation to achieve cost reductions and free up resources to be focused on the education and learning environment. To do this thoroughly takes both time and resources, so will not all be done at once, but over the coming twelve months. The trust has already taken advantage of the DfE's new insurance arrangement, RPA, which brings both savings and certainty; however there is further work being undertaken on areas not covered by this such as Sickness and Maternity Cover insurance which is a major issue for many sponsored academies.

The trust has implemented regular activity between all academy leaders to encourage peer to peer collaboration, which will be extended as the numbers grow.

In summary therefore we have made great strides, but we recognise there is much more to do. Our growth and increasing central resources will allow us to do this within our budget resources.

Name: Mr Paul Dunning
Academy Trust Accounting Officer

Date: 31 Dec 2014