

Value for Money Statement

Academy trust name: Harris Federation

Academy trust company number:

Year ended 31 August 2014

I accept that as accounting officer of **Harris Federation** 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.

1. Improving Educational results

This year saw excellent Ofsted inspection results including a string of Outstanding judgements at Harris Academy Greenwich (the old Eltham Green School), Harris Primary Academy Coleraine Park and Harris Primary Free School Peckham. Furthermore Ofsted judged Harris Primary Academy Philip Lane (previously Downhills School) to be Good with outstanding features. Many of these were very challenging schools previously in Special Measures and in some cases were very high profile conversions.

71% of our 2,050 Year 11 students achieved five A*-C grades including English and Maths, 14% higher than the national average. 67% of students eligible for the Pupil Premium achieved 5 A*-C grades with English and Maths meaning that Pupil Premium students achieved a GCSE pass rate higher than the national average for all students. Without the inclusion of equivalent qualifications, 60% of Harris students achieved five good GCSE's including English and Maths, around 9% higher than the national average.

An independent report by The Sutton Trust* has shown that the Harris Federation's secondary academies outperformed other academies and state-funded schools in raising standards for the poorest pupils between 2011 and 2013. The researchers found that:

- Compared with other academies groups, Harris has the highest proportion of disadvantaged students achieving at least 5 A*-C passes including English and Maths. Within this, the researchers also concluded that Harris is among the most effective academies groups for pupils who are not disadvantaged.

- At 7.3%, Harris has a lower attainment gap between disadvantaged pupils and their peers than any other academies group. The gap is also significantly smaller than the average for academies (18.8%) and for all mainstream schools (25.7%).
- Harris uses considerably fewer 'equivalent qualifications' than the average for academies and the average for all mainstream schools. Because of this, the researchers name Harris as among the most successful chains 'when we consider the points achieved from GCSEs alone'.
- A higher proportion of disadvantaged pupils at Harris are making the expected progress in English and Maths than in any other academies group.
- A significantly higher proportion of disadvantaged pupils at Harris academies achieved the Ebacc in 2013 than the average for all mainstream schools.
- Whereas in all mainstream schools just 7% of children who did not reach the nationally expected standard (Level 4) at age 11 go on to get five good GCSE passes including English and Maths, Harris academies achieved more than double this in 2013 and have scored consistently highly over on this measure over the past three years. The research also highlights that Harris academies are among the most successful at teaching pupils with average and high prior attainment.

2. Harris Teaching School

The Federation operated with twin Teaching Schools, Harris City Academy Crystal Palace and Harris Academy Chafford Hundred. Led by these two schools the Federation operated a School Direct scheme training our own teachers in both the primary and secondary sector and also offering nationally recognised professional qualifications for leaders and managers at all levels to school staff throughout the London area.

The Teaching Schools taught our first group of trainee Headteachers with their headteachers qualification, the National Professional Qualification for Headteachers. We also taught our first group of senior leaders for their National Professional Qualification for Senior Leaders and our first group of middle leaders for the National Professional Qualification for Middle Leaders. Participants included primary and secondary school leaders from a wide range of London boroughs.

3 Federation In-Service Training

Harris ran two federation-wide training days. The first day was for all teaching and support staff with teaching staff offered around 150 workshops on how to further improve the quality of teaching and support staff taking a wide range of workshops on areas of direct relevance to their jobs roles. Special needs staff had a special training day on student mental health issues.

The second Federation wide day focused on further raising the quality of teaching in the Sixth Form with all of our secondary academies collaborating on improving the quality of subject work schemes.

A great deal of advance planning also took place for the introduction of the new, more rigorous, National Curriculum with staff from across the group collaborating in the design of a new assessment system to replace National Curriculum levels and new, more rigorous (consider changing as repeats 'new, more rigorous') schemes of work.

4. Financial Governance and Oversight

The Harris Federation main board delegate much of its responsibility for strategic direction and also for monitoring its performance in all fields, including finance to the local governing bodies. The governing body in turn delegates some of its authority both to the committees and sub committees that it established and to the Principals of the academy.

The core duties of the governing body are:

- Ensuring clarity of vision, ethos and strategic direction;
- Holding the Principals to account for the educational performance of the academy and its students; and
- Overseeing the financial performance of the academy and making sure its money is well spent.

The Federation central team including the Group Financial Director (FD) and Federation Business Manager (BM) continues to have a very strong presence at the Finance and General Purposes committee (FGP) meetings for each academy. This structure enables the Federation finance team to present the finances including three to five –year forecasts, KPI's, within group comparisons and comparisons with similar schools, as well as ensuring that the committees have followed the Scheme of Delegation Policy. Governors are offered various training sessions, including understanding and interpreting financial information, which has helped them to provide challenge to those managing the finances.

The Group FD updates the Accounting Officer on a regular basis on all finances including academies current financial position and any potential issues.

The Federation BM's prepare monthly management accounts which are available to all members of the FGP committees. This includes a balance sheet, outturn for the year, risks and opportunities, KPI's and cashflow analysis.

The Finance and Audit Committees meet up on a regular basis to review the finances of all the academies, including assessing the viability of any new acquisitions.

The internal audit and compliance manager ensures that all academies adhere to the financial policies by visiting the academies at least once a year to review procedures and

detail transactions around expenses, purchase orders and cash. The findings are presented to the Audit Committee.

5. Group purchasing

The Federation financial policies are designed to ensure that all transactions entered represent the best value for money for the Federation and the best possible use of the taxpayers' funds entrusted to us.

Procurement procedures comply with both the HM Treasury guide, Managing Public Money, and the guidance in the Education Funding Agency's Academy's Financial Handbook and are designed to be robust and effective whilst remaining proportionate and providing an efficient and cost effective purchasing system. This is achieved by a system that increases the level of research and comparison undertaken with the value of the procurement.

Efficiencies continue to be made across the group, and are primarily as a result of being part of a growing Federation with a large purchasing base. This enables lower rates to be negotiated. Economies of scale, sharing of expertise and better staff development are also achieved. For example, given that all Harris schools are London based we are able to deploy experienced Executive Principals to oversee more than one academy and one Business Manager to cover three academies. This enables quality, knowledgeable, and highly experienced people to add substantial value to each academy. Some of the larger savings achieved in 2013/14 include:

- **Insurance** – premiums reduced by £350k as a result of extending our contract with Zurich by two years.
- **Business Managers** - one Business Manager manages the finances of three schools, this has delivered group savings of £600k pa.
- **IT** – Centralised IT provision of Network to minimise IT staff requirements at local level, this has resulted in savings of around £700k pa
- **Catering** – our group contract has saved the Federation at least £600k this year and in addition the Federation received over £400k capital investment into a group cashless system/general equipment.
- **Photocopying** - we have made savings of around £100k for all the academies joining the group contract.
- **Telephone system** – installed new VOIP phone systems for all new academies joining the group resulting in savings of around £200k pa.

The Group continues to deliver substantial savings in other areas such as:

- Driving up income from third party lettings by our partnership with Schools Plus.
- Centralised IT tendering to obtain advantages of economies of scale when buying hardware and software.
- Collaboration by use of Head Office Consultants to raise standards without incurring the costs of external consultants or recruiting additional staff locally at academies.
- Introducing Business Case processes to ensure that new expenditure is justified.
- Savings from using a single payroll provider.
- Setting up preferred suppliers across the group such as for stationary.

Signed:

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Dan Moynihan', written over a horizontal dotted line.

Name:

Sir Dan Moynihan

Academy Trust Accounting Officer

Date:

31st December 2014

