Value for Money Statement

Organisation name: THE SILVER BIRCH ACADEMY

Company number: 8107310

Year ended 31 August 2014

I accept that as accounting officer of THE SILVER BIRCH ACADEMY 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.

Multi-Academy Trust Name: The Silver Birch Academy Trust
Registered Number: 08107310
Year ended 31st August 2014

As the Accounting Officer for the Silver Birch Academy Trust (‘SBAT’) I am responsible for ensuring SBAT 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 I understand value for money refers to the educational and wider societal outcomes achieved in return for the taxpayer resources received.

I set out below how SBAT has ensured its use of resources has provided good value for money during the academic year.

Improving educational results

• Our curriculum ensures all pupils have the opportunity to raise their individual levels of attainment;

• we review the staffing structure regularly to ensure staff are efficiently and effectively deployed and are appropriately qualified and experienced in their fields;

• we provide targeted support for pupils as appropriate, such as after school and weekend booster classes, reading intervention programmes, etc.;

• we focus on the differing needs of each individual pupil. This is reflected in our FSM report;

• we have effective tracking systems to record all aspects of pupil data, including progress through the academies. These help ensure interventions and support are targeted to achieve value for money;

• the pupils in both academies performed exceptionally well in their end of Key Stage 2 assessments with 100% of pupils achieving expected progress in Reading and Writing and 98.5% in Maths - significantly exceeding the national average.

• pupil premium funding has been allocated to optimal effect, as illustrated by the detailed breakdown available on SBAT’s websites;

• the two academies were ranked first and sixth in the London Borough of Waltham Forest for their Key Stage 2 SATs results. Whittingham Primary Academy was also ranked second in the whole of London.

Financial Performance
• management accounts are prepared and issued monthly to enable regular monitoring of value for money;

• regular budget proposals are provided (including 3/5 year projection) which enable short term and long term budget decisions to be made appropriately;

• the SBAT Business Manager, myself as Accounting Officer and the Board of Trustees have undertaken training on procurement in conjunction with our legal advisors, as well as reviewing our purchasing and procurement policies to ensure they are fit for purpose;

• under the new procurement process, a new catering contract was procured with a new supplier resulting in a lower cost per meal whilst maintaining the same level of quality as well as the installation of a cashless till at each site at no additional cost to the Trust;

• the photocopiers at both academies have been replaced with new machines under the RM1599 purchasing framework. This has resulted in a saving of almost 50% per print at both sites and in one academy, a saving of more than 50% in rental fees;

• SBAT has received over £10,000 in refunds on energy bills after reviewing its energy contracts showed the school has historically been incorrectly billed;

• SBAT has also consolidated its energy contracts across all sites, resulting in a cheaper tariff due to the power of bulk purchasing as well as saving a great deal of time. Previously, the SBAT Business Manager was required to procure each contract individually, as it expired. As all of the supplies have been rolled onto one contract, this now only needs to take place once every three years;

• following a review of contracts to assess where in-house support might provide better value for money, SBAT now employs an ICT support technician to provide technical support to both academies full-time. This frees up time for the contracted ICT support engineer to provide strategic, rather than triage, support;

• SBAT is seeking to use its facilities for lettings more effectively to increase its income generation.

Name: Mrs Patricia Davies
Academy Trust Accounting Officer

Date: 31 Dec 2014