



VALUE FOR MONEY STATEMENT

Academy Trust Name : Lighthouse Harmonize Education Trust

Academy Trust Company No : 07657235

Year Ending 31st August 2023

I accept that as Accounting Officer of Lighthouse Harmonize Education Trust – Harmonize 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, and I report to the Governing Body where value for money can be improved, including the use of benchmarking data where available.

From September 2021, the Academy officially increased the number of students from 104 to 150. The expansion has been expertly overseen by the Principal. The additional classrooms and learning spaces have now been integrated into the curriculum and timetable. The additional increase in student population from 104 to 150 has been seamlessly absorbed whilst maintaining the ethos and care that underpin the values and operation of the Academy.

Places were commissioned from Liverpool City Council's Alternative Provision and SEN Teams for students who have been permanently excluded from school; and four fifths commissioned from schools and authorities across Merseyside and Cheshire for those students in danger of exclusion or for those students who cannot cope in a mainstream setting for a variety of reasons.

The Academy Trust is part of the AP Forum and The Difference to share best practice, and often hosts visits from other AP schools referred by the DfE who hold us as a model of best practice in the AP Sector. The trust has also established strategic partnerships with Liverpool Hope University, Liverpool John Moores University, Edge Hill University and the University of Liverpool, and provides placements for trainee teachers in English, Maths and Science.

Best value principles were applied in assessing the current needs of the academy.

The following factors were considered in the decision-making process when obtaining any goods and services:

- Differing needs of our students
- Increased student numbers – revised timetable to accommodate 16 classes of 9/10 students
- Membership of CPC - Crescent Purchasing Consortium
- Membership of CCS - Crown Commercial Service

The accounting officer for the academy trust has delivered improved value for money during the year, examples of which are as follows:-

- As a result of careful management of funds, the older buildings in the school have been refurbished to bring them up to a similar standard to the new buildings so that neither staff nor the young people in the school see any major differences between the two.
- A much-needed refurbishment of the student toilet facilities was carried out in summer 2023.
- The garage was renovated to create a new gymnasium space in summer 2023. This improvement utilises an under-used space better for educational activities.
- An electrical re-wire was carried out which was essential for upgrading the new wing of the building and enabling good IT provision in the classrooms.
- We use Crown Commercial Service (CCS) to purchase best price energy for the school. CCS is the biggest public procurement organisation in the UK and plays an important role helping the public sector save money when buying common goods and services. CCS is currently used by Liverpool City Council.
- As members of the Crescent Purchasing Consortium, this helps us to achieve value for money with our purchasing requirements particularly in tendering for larger contracts.
- Our catering contract continues to be with Food for Thought (Merseyside) Ltd, a local 'not for profit' sustainable school meals company who provides good quality healthy nutritional meals and best value by using local produce and suppliers. They aim to raise standards and offer quality of choice and ensure compliance with food hygiene and health and safety legislation. Food for Thought provided valuable support throughout the year. This is reviewed annually.
- A new 17 seat Ford minibus was purchased. The lease on the previous minibus had expired. After review, it was decided that it would be better value for money for the Trust to purchase and run a minibus directly for transporting students.

Current Year Review

Financial governance and oversight.

Our governance arrangements include regular monitoring by the Governing Body and its committees including the Finance and Resources Committee and Audit Committee. They receive regular reports and updates at the meetings which are held half termly.

Internal controls.

An internal financial procedures handbook is in operation. JD Education Finance Services provided internal auditor services.

Managing risks.

The Risk Management Policy has been approved by the full Governing Body. The Risk Register identifies and manages the academy trust's significant risks and is reviewed continuously throughout the year. The governor sub committees evaluate and review effectively risks associated with their area of responsibility and report regularly to the full governing body.

Purchasing.

Procedures are in place for assessing need when purchasing all goods and services. The CPC membership will help us achieve value for money and support us in the tendering process for larger contracts.

Curriculum

The school's broad curriculum continued to offer a range of GCSE and vocational qualifications. These included the core subjects of English, Maths, Biology, PE, LAMDA Speaking and Listening and PSHE, supplemented with Performing Arts, Dance and Music, Beauty, Childcare, Design Technology, Food Technology, Health & Social Care and GCSEs in Art, English Literature, Photography, Physical Education, Physics, Psychology and Statistics. These options underpin the school's ethos of '*A Vision for Life*' and its values of *Trust, Respect, Compassion and Forgiveness* permeate through the whole school.

We work closely with many organisations to support the curriculum in providing opportunity for students to raise their individual levels of attainment. Examples this year have been: – Archbishop of York Youth Trust – Young Leaders Award; Liverpool Dyslexia Centre – Literacy Programme, English & Maths – 1:1 tuition where University students work 1:1 or with small numbers.

We will continue to work with outside organisations and seek to increase our connections for the benefit of our students. This academic year has shown the importance of collaboration with other educational providers and experts in supporting the complex needs of our students.

Enrichment Programme

Enrichment offers pupils many choices including art, beauty, catering, computer coding, cultural trips, dance, film and photography, gardening, horse-riding, jewellery-making, music (guitar/drums/DJing), music technology, singing, PE (bowling, free-running, football, table-tennis), well-being, and 1:1 English-Maths-Science-vocational subjects.

National Tutoring Programme: After school catch up English, Maths and Science is part-funded by the DfE's National Tutoring Programme.

We aim to constantly review and improve on providing new opportunities and experiences for our students. We value the importance of our enrichment programme in helping students to develop social skills and gain confidence to achieve their true potential.

Mental Health Support and Careers Advice and Support

We organised Health & Wellbeing activity days to promote positive mental health. We also provided career support, advice and guidance to enable all of our year 11 students to progress positively to further education, employment and training. We support the transformation from **exclusion-inclusion-career**, inspiring students to change their lives, giving them choice and opportunity to succeed. We continue to offer additional support through our **Move On Move Up** programme for students once they move on from Harmonize, This includes an alumni tracking programme for students who move up to their careers and are invited back to school with the aim of inspiring and supporting our current students. Assistant Principal/SENDCo, Mr Gerard Tiernan completed ROAR Whole School Approach Senior Mental Health Training [Liverpool Learning Partnership & Merseyside Youth Association] in March 2022.

Future Objectives

LHET submitted a bid in February 2023 as the lead applicant partnering with Sefton Local Authority to open an alternative provision free school in Sefton. An interview by the DFE, which was the second stage of the process, took place in July. If approved, this will lead to LHET becoming a Multi Academy Trust.

Signed.....*Marie McConville*.....

Name.....MRS MARIE MCCONVILLE.....

Academy Trust Accounting Officer

Date.....*31/01/2024*.....