



VALUE FOR MONEY STATEMENT

Academy Trust Name: Lighthouse Harmonize Education Trust

Academy Trust Company No: 07657235

Year Ending 31st August 2024

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 and Skills 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 also 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 trust is part of the AP Forum and The Difference and shares best practice with other AP providers; the Principal is a member of the LASH New Headteacher Support Group and has linked up with the new headteacher from Everton Free School to support her. The academy continues to have a high profile both locally and nationally with many individuals and organisations being referred to the school by the DfE as a beacon of excellence 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, and for students of Child and Adolescent Mental Health.

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 that had been set aside from the previous year, we were able to do essential repair work to renew the roof on west wing of the building which was leaking into music suite.
- Cat6 was installed throughout the building improving bandwidth and connectivity for good IT provision in classrooms.
- A refurbishment of downstairs staff toilet facilities to add an extra toilet and wash basin for increased staff numbers.
- 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.

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, Speaking and Listening and PSHE, supplemented with GCSEs in Art, Dance, Drama, Photography, Psychology, PE, Physics, Statistics, English Literature and vocational qualifications in PSHE, Performance Skills, Beauty, Childcare, Design Technology, Food Technology, Health & Social Care and Music Technology. 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 the students many choices which include art, beauty and jewellery making, dance, film and photography, food and cookery, music and singing, music technology, book club and reading club, gardening, well-being, cultural trips. PE, bowling, football, horse-riding, table-tennis; as well as 1-1 English-Maths-Science and community engagement with a local OAP home and food bank for families in need.

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. The SENDCo, Miss Emily Maxwell is accredited as an Advanced Designated Mental Health Lead.

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 on 3rd July 2023. The outcome of the application process was communicated on 6th March 2024. In spite of an earlier indication to the contrary, LHET's application was not approved. The Trust is still committed to expanding into a Multi Academy Trust, and is exploring doing so through the LA Presumption Process, in partnership with Sefton and other interested local authorities.

Signed.....

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

Academy Trust Accounting Officer

Date.....