



## VALUE FOR MONEY STATEMENT

**Academy Trust Name :** Lighthouse Harmonize Education Trust

**Academy Trust Company No :** 07657235

**Year Ending 31<sup>st</sup> August 2020**

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.

The academic year commenced on 1st September 2019 with a capacity of 104 students with 98 students on roll on 20<sup>th</sup> March 2020 before national lockdown due to the COVID-19 pandemic. 18 places were commissioned from Liverpool City Council's Alternative Provision Team for students that have been permanently excluded from mainstream school. The remaining 80 places were commissioned from schools across Merseyside for those students who are unable to remain in a mainstream setting for various reasons.

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 12 classes of 8/9 students
- Membership of CPC - Crescent Purchasing Consortium

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

- 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 is with a local 'not for profit' school meals company, providing good quality nutritional meals using local produce and suppliers and ensuring compliance with food hygiene and health and safety legislation.

- The lease of a new minibus and the purchase of the previously leased minibus at a greatly discounted cost have proved invaluable in transporting students on PE lessons and enrichment activities including trips to local sports venues. This has proved much more cost effective than regular hire arrangements and taxi costs.
- Audit services continue to be provided by Beever and Struthers due to the excellent service they provide and knowledge and experience they have within the education sector. Performance will be assessed to ensure we get the best possible service and value for money.

## **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. Beevers & Struthers, Chartered Accountants provided a Responsible Officer service.

### 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.

Minibus – From 21<sup>st</sup> February 2018 the academy purchased a previously leased minibus at a heavily discounted rate and leased a further minibus (for a period of 60 months). Having two minibuses has proved invaluable in transporting students on enrichment activities or the PE Dept for local trips to sports venues and whole school end of term trips to various venues.

### Curriculum

We offer a broad and balanced curriculum with English, Maths and Science at its core. which was broadened in September 2019 with the introduction of GCSE Statistics and GCSE History. These are in addition to the core subjects of English, Maths, Biology, PE, LAMDA Speaking and Listening and PSHE and supplemented with Performing Arts and Music, Beauty, Chemistry, Childcare, Design Technology, Food Technology and GCSE Physical Education options which underpins 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.

Enrichment Programme

Enrichment offers pupils many choices including beauty, catering, dance, gospel singing, music (guitar/drums/DJing), music technology, film and photography, cultural trips, horse-riding, PE, free-running, football, golf, table-tennis, art, catering, bowling, food bank for local families in need, and 1-1 English, Maths, Science and Vocational subjects.

Mental Health Support and Careers Advise and Support over the summer holidays

We received Covid-19 emergency funding from Steve Morgan Foundation to provide mental health support for students struggling due to the pandemic and lockdown which enabled our clinical psychologist to support students with weekly zoom or telephone calls. 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.

Website

A new website was commissioned and developed with School Website Design Agency following the cessation of the original maintenance contract which had been running since the school opened. A number of costings from different companies were sought. The new site provides a more interactive visitor experience and user-friendly interface and has been beneficial in promoting the school during the pandemic.

Catering Contract

Food for Thought (Merseyside) Ltd - a local 'not for profit' School Meals Company continued to provide valuable support throughout the year. They work in partnership with us to provide a catering service for our students while ensuring compliance with food hygiene and health & safety legislation. Best value was obtained by using local produce and suppliers to provide nutritional meals. This is reviewed annually. Taking into account the increase in our student numbers (now at maximum capacity) an additional kitchen staff member was appointed, a Salad Bar was introduced and the service proved successful for another year.

Future Objectives

Curriculum – 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 – 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.



Signed..... ..

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

Academy Trust Accounting Officer

Date.....31<sup>st</sup> December 2020.....