

Value for Money Statement

Organisation name: CITY GATEWAY 14-19 PROVISION

Company number: 8111431

Year ended 31 August 2014

I accept that as accounting officer of CITY GATEWAY 14-19 PROVISION 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.

Long term impact and sustainability

We engage learners who are or are at risk of becoming NEET (Not in Education, Employment or Training), and ultimately seek to remove their barriers to successful progression into the workplace. Our model is progressive and employment focused. This is demonstrated by the large proportion of learners progressing into Apprenticeship programmes with major corporate firms through City Gateway.

This has the dual impact of reducing the risk (and cost to the State) of long-term unemployment (resulting in life-long benefit claiming and potential inter-generational worklessness) and increasing tax revenues through learners being in employment - resulting in significant value for money for the taxpayer. It is estimated the total cost to the state of Britain's NEET problem is between around £22 billion in additional public spending and a total of up to £77 billion a year when lost income is included (Ref1). In addition, there are wider social impacts of young people spending time not in education, employment or training, such as the link between NEET status and youth crime (Ref2). The cost of youth crime is estimated to be £23 million a week. That amounts to an annual cost of £1.2 billion per year (Ref3).

Our delivery model and achievement

City Gateway was the sponsoring charity in setting up City Gateway 14-19 Provision and currently provides education and support services to City Gateway 14-19 Provision.

The education and support services provided by City Gateway were recognised by Ofsted when City Gateway 14-19 Provision was graded 'Outstanding' in May 2014. Ofsted highlighted a number of key areas that marked the success of City Gateway 14-19 Alternative Provision;

- A large majority of learners progress into apprenticeships, further education and employment having started at City Gateway 14-19 Provision with very few, if any, qualifications
- Staff ensure that exceptional work placements, and employers' participation in the delivery of programmes, raise the aspirations of young people and provide them with the skills to secure outstanding apprenticeships and employment
- Learners make excellent progress in developing personal and social skills, often from a low starting point
- Learners' attendance improves significantly from very low levels when learners first start at City Gateway 14-19 Provision. By the end of their programme, most learners have high attendance
- Staff provide exceptional support to learners that helps them participate, and remain, in education. Staff identify each learner's barriers to education exceptionally well and creatively develop effective strategies to overcome these difficulties
- Outstanding teaching, learning and assessment motivate and enthuse learners in lessons, ensuring learners behave well, enjoy learning and make rapid progress
- Leaders encourage staff to be innovative in the methods they use to support and teach learners. This, combined with the exceptionally good knowledge staff have of their learners and community, ensures individual students' needs are met very effectively

- Staff have an excellent understanding of the many reasons young people in their community are not in education, employment or training. They provide a safe and secure place for learners and work extremely well with external agencies to overcome learners' barriers to attending education.

In Key Stage 4, positive progression was 91.67% (10% above the target set). Further in post 16, all three programmes (Engage, Export and Employ) saw improvements on last year's success. This is even more significant given the significant increase in the number of learners (311 in 2012/13 to 400 in 2013/14), which is a 29% increase compared to last year.

The collaboration between City Gateway 14-19 Provision and City Gateway leads to increased efficiencies as resources and practices are shared between the two entities. For example, City Gateway and City Gateway 14-19 Provision work together to embed policies and strategies, such as the same Human Resources policy and quality improvement strategies across the board, allowing for collaboration.

City Gateway 14-19 Provision also benefits from City Gateway sharing the same ethos and values which underpin the services it provides. This is demonstrated through staff and management providing a nurturing, ambitious and positive environment for learners to succeed. At the heart of our approach is to put each learner at the centre of our work and to meet their needs on an individualised basis.

Robust governance and oversight of City Gateway 14-19 Provision finances

We operate a flexible and responsive delivery model and embrace continuous development of our services to ensure that learner success can be optimised. A strong system of financial controls, including timely and accurate financial management information is crucial to our ability to be flexible and responsive. This information is reviewed on a regular basis to assess risk and consider priorities.

Further, both the Accounting Officer and representatives from the Governing body are members of the Finance Committee. They closely review budgets and manage accounts for the school and pose challenging questions. This ensures the system of financial governance includes strong oversight by both the Governors and the Accounting Officer. The budgeting process ensures that financial resources are appropriately directed in-year to organisational priorities.

An example of this is in preparation for setting of the 2014/15 budget is that all areas of expenditure were reviewed in detail and a thorough process was carried out to identify where costs could be reduced without compromising quality.

Getting the best from collaboration

We continue to invest in collaboration with other providers and experts, for example with the Work Based Learning Alliance (WBLA). In particular, staff attended practice sharing network events, run by Challenge Partners, as well as numerous Ofsted and Department for Education (DfE) events. Also partnership meetings took place with colleges and other alternative providers in order to share practice and seek collaboration opportunities where it will benefit learners.

Purchasing and procurement

We are committed to ensure that through our purchasing and procurement we achieve value for money at all times. This commitment exists at all levels: from Governors and Accounting Officer through to managers across all departments.

We have benchmarked certain costs with other comparable institutions in our region to ensure value for money.

A specific example of achieving value for money in the current period is in relation to the building of our new permanent site at Mastmaker Court. As Accounting Officer, I have made detailed contributions to the planning and budgeting for the new site to ensure that the funding available is used in a way which will give our learners the best chance of success. In particular, I have set priorities for how the budget will be allocated to the different sections of the project.

Another way in which we have achieved value for money is through our selection of small local suppliers. Throughout the building of our new site, we have considered where these suppliers can be selected to provide a more cost effective purchasing solution while maintaining the quality needed.

We undergo market testing for any operational / maintenance / utilities contracts (e.g. cleaning) to demonstrate that City Gateway 14-19 Provision provides the best value for money.

To ensure value for money, the services provided by City Gateway for City Gateway 14-19 Provision are provided 'at cost' and the methodology for allocation of costs is reviewed regularly.

City Gateway 14-19 Provision has sound internal spending controls as evidenced by results of the annual programme of internal audit and the annual external audit.

References

Ref1 - Coles, B; Godfrey, C; Keung, A et al (2010) Estimating the life-time cost of NEET: 16-18 year olds not in education, employment or training. University of York, York.

Ref2 - Youth defined as 16-to-24-year-olds

Ref3 - The Prince's Trust (2010) The Cost of Exclusion: Counting the cost of youth disadvantage in the UK
http://www.princes-trust.org.uk/pdf/COE_full_report.pdf

Name: Mr Eddie Stride
Academy Trust Accounting Officer

Date: 19 Dec 2014