

Governance Statement

For the year ended 31 August 2020

Scope of Responsibility

As trustees we acknowledge we have overall responsibility for ensuring that Woolgrove School, Special Needs Academy has an effective and appropriate system of control, financial and otherwise. However such a system is designed to manage rather than eliminate the risk of failure to achieve business objectives, and can provide only reasonable and not absolute assurance against material misstatement or loss.

The board of trustees has delegated the day-to-day responsibility to the Headteacher, as accounting officer, for ensuring financial controls conform with the requirements of both propriety and good financial management and in accordance with the requirements and responsibilities assigned to it in the funding agreement between Woolgrove School, Special Needs Academy and the Secretary of State for Education. They are also responsible for reporting to the board of trustees any material weaknesses or breakdowns in internal control.

Governance

The information on governance included here supplements that described in the Trustees' Report and in the Statement of Trustees' Responsibilities. The board of trustees has formally met 5 times during the Period.

Attendance during the Period at meetings of the board of trustees was as follows:

Trustees	Meetings attended	Out of possible
Mr J Hayes (Chair)	5	5
Mrs Sonia Morrison (Vice-Chair)	4	5
Julian Ekiert	5	5
Dr J Whitrow	4	5
Mrs K Porter	4	5
Mr A Mules	4	5
Mrs E Fernandes	0	3
Mrs Z Rayner	5	5
Mr Michael Berridge	2	2
Mrs Kate Firth	2	2
Mr Simon Fawcett	5	5
Mrs Laura Claxton	2	2
Mr C Wilson	0	1
Sarah Kavanagh Clerk	5	5
Mrs L Hall (Headteacher)	5	5

Review of Value for Money

As accounting officer the headteacher of Woolgrove School Special Needs Academy has responsibility for ensuring that the academy trust delivers good value in the use of public resources. The accounting officer understands that value for money refers to the educational and wider social outcomes achieved in return for the taxpayer resources received. The accounting officer considers how the trust's use of its resources has provided good value for money during each academic year and reports to the board of trustees where value for money can be improved, including the use of benchmarking data where available.

The Governing Body is accountable for the way in which the school's resources are allocated to meet the objectives set out in our School Development Plan. The Governing Body approve the annual budget and receive and approve the external auditors' management report and take action on any

recommendations made by them following the annual audit. The finance Committee meets termly to review the budget monitoring reports and to approve larger expenditure items and compliance with the academies statement of internal financial control. Recommendations will be put to the termly Governing Body Meeting. Contracts are regularly reviewed to ensure best value.

Governance Statement (continued)

For the year ended 31 August 2020

Review of Value for Money (continued)

The Academy carefully monitors pupil's progress to ensure resources are targeted appropriately and pupil premium expenditure is assessed to show effectiveness in improving the attainment of students on Free

School Meals and Looked After Children. Resources are directed where they are most needed and most effective in meeting education requirements. Resources have been targeted to provide individual support to pupils with language difficulties, specific learning difficulties and in need of sensory support.

The Academy will continue to monitor the impact of changes to Special Educational Needs funding and to maintain pupil numbers in order to secure annual funding.

The Purpose of the System of Internal Control

The system of internal control is designed to manage risk to a reasonable level rather than to eliminate all risk of failure to achieve policies, aims and objectives. It can therefore only provide reasonable and not absolute assurance of effectiveness. The system of internal control is based on an on-going process designed to identify and prioritise the risks to the achievement of academy trust policies, aims and objectives, to evaluate the likelihood of those risks being realised and the impact should they be realised, and to manage them efficiently, effectively and economically. The system of internal control has been in place in Woolgrove School, Special Needs Academy for the period 1 April 2012 to 31 August 2019 and up to the date of approval of the annual report and accounts.

Capacity to Handle Risk

The board of trustees has reviewed the key risks to which the academy trust is exposed together with the operating, financial and compliance controls that have been implemented to mitigate those risks. The board of trustees is of the view that there is a formal on-going process for identifying, evaluating and managing the academy trust's significant risks that has been in place for the period 1 April 2012 to 31 August 2020 and up to the date of approval of the annual report and accounts. This process is regularly reviewed by the board of trustees. Contracts are regularly reviewed to ensure best value. During the year we have entered into a maintenance contract with Wilby & Burnett to manage this process more efficiently.

The Risk and Control Framework

The Academy Trust's system of internal control is based on a framework of regular management information and administrative procedures including the segregation of duties and a system of delegation and accountability. In particular it includes:

- Comprehensive budgeting and monitoring systems with an annual budget and periodic financial reports which are reviewed and agreed by the board of trustees;
- Regular reviews by the finance committee of reports which indicate financial performance against the forecasts and of major purchase plans, capital works and expenditure programmes;
- Clearly defined purchasing (asset purchase or capital investment) guidelines;
- Delegation of authority and segregation of duties;
- Identification and management of risks.

The Trustees have reappointed Julian Ekiert as Chair of the Finance Committee and Academy Responsible Officer.

Review of effectiveness

As accounting officer, the Headteacher, has responsibility for reviewing the effectiveness of the system of internal control. During the year in question the review has been informed by:

- the work of the external auditor;
- the financial management and governance self-assessment process.

Governance Statement (continued)

For the year ended 31 August 2020

Review of effectiveness (continued)

The accounting officer has been advised of the implications of the result of their review of the system of internal control by the finance committee and a plan to address weaknesses, where relevant, and to ensure continuous improvement of the system is in place.

Approved by order of the board of trustees on 10 December 2020 and signed on its behalf by:

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J Hayes
Chair of Governors

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L Hall
Headteacher and Accounting Officer

