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Your Ref:
Date: 16 December 2020



PRIVATE & CONFIDENTIAL

The Board of Trustees
Quantock Education Trust
Haygrove School
Durleigh Road
Bridgwater
Somerset
TA6 7HW

Dear Sirs

2020 Audit and Regularity Assurance Engagement of Quantock Education Trust

Introduction

In order to carry out our duties and responsibilities as auditors, we are required by International Standard on Auditing (UK) 260 "*Communication with those charged with governance*" ("ISA 260"), to communicate matters arising from the audit of the above named Academy Trust to you.

Our fieldwork is complete and we propose to issue an unmodified audit report for the year.

Our Approach to the Audit

Our work was planned to provide a focused and robust audit, so as to:

- Provide an independent opinion as to whether the financial statements give a true and fair view; and;
- State whether the financial statements have been properly prepared in accordance with the Companies Act 2006 and the relevant Academies Accounts Direction (AAD).

Our work was also planned to provide a "limited assurance" report on regularity in accordance with the relevant AAD issued by the Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA).

Because of the inherent limitations of an audit, together with the inherent limitations of internal control, there is an unavoidable risk that some material misstatements may not be detected, even though the audit is properly planned and performed in accordance with ISAs (UK).

When planning our audit work, we sought to minimise the risk of material misstatements occurring in the financial statements. To do this, we considered both the risk inherent in the financial statements themselves and the control environment in which your Academy Trust operates. We then used this assessment to develop an effective approach to the audit.

Based on our knowledge of the Academy Trust, we assessed the risks to the Academy Trust and planned our audit with regard to these risks. Our auditing standards require us to include the following as significant risks:

- Management override; and;
- Revenue recognition.



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Responsibilities of the Trustees

The trustees are responsible for the preparation of the financial statements and for making available to us all the information and explanations we consider necessary.

The matters dealt with in this letter came to our attention during the conduct of our normal audit and assurance procedures which are designed primarily for the purpose of expressing our opinion on the financial statements of the above Academy Trust and providing a limited assurance conclusion on regularity.

In consequence our work did not encompass a detailed review of all aspects of the systems and controls and cannot be relied upon necessarily to disclose defalcations or other irregularities, or to include all possible improvements in internal control that a more extensive special examination might reveal.

We would be pleased to discuss any further work in this regard with trustees and/or management.

Qualitative Aspects of Accounting Practices, Regularity and Financial Reporting

The following key audit and accounting issues were discussed and agreed at our closing audit meeting with Tracy Lee on 10th November 2020.

- Accounts presentation
- Trustees' report

Audit Materiality

In carrying out our audit work we considered whether the financial statements are free from 'material misstatement'.

Materiality is an expression of the relative significance of a particular matter in the context of the financial statements as a whole. An item will normally be considered material if its omission would reasonably influence the decisions of those using the financial statements.

The assessment of whether a misstatement is material in the context of the financial statements is a matter of professional judgement and will have regard to both the amount and the nature of the misstatement. Thus different materiality levels may be appropriate when considering different aspects of the financial statements.

The assessment of whether a misstatement is material in the context of the regularity assurance report has been evaluated in the same way as the "true and fair" audit of the financial statements, as noted above.

Unadjusted items

We do not deem the total of the unadjusted items to be material to the financial statements. Within our letter of representation, we request you confirm that the effects of not recording such misstatements identified in the financial statements are, both individually and in the aggregate, immaterial to the financial statements of the Academy Trust as a whole.

Audit adjustments

During the course of our audit, we have identified adjustments which have been processed in the financial statements, on the agreement of management. These are attached to the letter of representation.

Internal financial controls

Our review of the Academy Trust's system of internal control is carried out to assist us in expressing an opinion on the financial statements of the Academy Trust as a whole. This work is not primarily directed towards the discovery of weaknesses or the detection of fraud or other irregularities (other than those which would influence us in forming that opinion) and should not therefore be relied upon to show that no other weaknesses exist. Accordingly, we refer only to significant matters which have come to our attention during the course of our normal audit work and do not attempt to indicate all possible improvements which a special review might reveal.

Accompanying this letter is a memorandum noting our significant control observations together with any recommendations we have for possible improvements which could be made. See Appendix I.

Regularity assurance engagement findings

We conducted our regularity assurance engagement in accordance with the relevant AAD issued by the ESFA. We performed a limited assurance engagement as defined in our engagement letter.

The objective of a limited assurance engagement is to perform such procedures as to obtain information and explanations in order to provide us with sufficient appropriate evidence to express a negative conclusion on regularity. A limited assurance engagement is more limited in scope than a reasonable assurance engagement and consequently does not enable us to obtain assurance that we would become aware of all significant matters that might be identified in a reasonable assurance engagement. Accordingly, we do not express a positive opinion. Our engagement included examination, on a test basis, of evidence relevant to the regularity and propriety of the Academy Trust's income and expenditure.

We propose to issue an unmodified regularity assurance report for the year.

Appendix I also includes regularity issues brought to your attention in connection with the regularity assurance engagement.

Independence

The FRC Ethical Standard and ISA 260 requires us to communicate with you on a timely basis on all significant facts and matters that bear upon our independence and objectivity. The aim of these communications is to ensure full and fair disclosure by us to those charged with governance on matters in which you have an interest. We are not aware of any relationships that, in our professional judgment, may reasonably be thought to bear on our independence or the objectivity of the audit engagement team.

We confirm that in our professional judgment, Bishop Fleming is independent within the meaning of regulatory and professional requirements and the objectivity of the audit engagement partner and audit staff has not been compromised. We consider that our independence in this context is a matter that should be reviewed by both you and ourselves. It is therefore important that you consider the facts of which you are aware and come to a view. Should you have any specific matters that you wish to discuss, please contact us.

Details of all the threats and related safeguards relating to non-audit services provided were included in our planning report.

Your comments

We would be grateful if you could enter your comments against each point under the "management response" column of Appendix 1 and return it to us in due course. This letter will be submitted to the ESFA with the Financial Statements.

This letter has been prepared for the sole use of the Board of Trustees, Governors, management and others of the Academy Trust. We understand that you are required to provide a copy of this report to the Education and Skills Funding Agency who may share this information internally within the Department for decision making purposes. With the exception of this, no reports may be provided to third parties without our prior consent. No responsibilities are accepted by Bishop Fleming towards any party acting or refraining from action as a result of this report.

Finally we would like to take this opportunity to thank your staff for the co-operation we have received throughout our audit. If there are any further matters which you wish to discuss concerning our audit, please do not hesitate to call us.


Yours faithfully



BISHOP FLEMING LLP

APPENDIX I

Control Observations and Recommendations

Description & Impact	Recommendation	Management Response	Category
Current year observations			
Fixed Asset Register During our work, we noted that the fixed asset register produced, does not show which fund is used to purchase assets, this can result in potential differences for depreciation charges shown on the statement of funds.	<p>We recommend that the fixed asset register is updated to clearly indicate what fund type was used to purchase assets held on the Trust's balance sheet.</p> <p>A template fixed asset register and assistance can be provided by Bishop Fleming if required.</p>	<p>All in year purchases and future purchases on the fixed asset register have been allocated to a specific fund. Historical transactions were not allocated to a specific fund as these allocations were made as part of the year end accounts and audit process. We have requested the information from our auditors and unless they are able to go back and unpick what was done each year in terms of some of these assumption in the accounts, we are unable to retrospectively go back and allocate to funds. BF have always done a manual adjustment (the basis of which has never been shared with the QET) for depreciation - a calculated figure for assets funded from unrestricted funds.</p> <p>We have asked for examples of other fixed asset registers as we are not happy with my current version as it is little unwieldy.</p>	



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Update on previous year observations

Declarations of Interest

It was noted that the declarations of interest used throughout the year did not include all potential related parties, as defined by accounting standards (FRS102), the Charity SORP, or the Academies Financial Handbook. This point has now been cleared.



In particular the SORP includes a wide definition of related parties, include parents, grandparents, children, grandchildren and siblings of trustees.

Staff ID on File

While reviewing a selection of 10 personnel files it was noted that the files did not contain ID evidence. Obtaining and checking an individual's ID forms are part of "right to work" checks. This point has now been cleared.



Procurement Procedures

It was noted on review of the new photocopier lease that only two written estimates were obtained. The finance policy states that for orders over £10,000 but under £50,000 three written estimates should be obtained, reviewed and the best source identified. This point has now been cleared.



KEY:



Financial - Observations refer to issues that are so fundamental to the system of internal control that management should address immediately to minimise the risk of a material misstatement within the financial statements.

Governance – Observations that are fundamental to good governance and should be addressed immediately to minimise the risk of governance failings.



Financial - Observations refer mainly to issues that have an important effect on the system of internal control and, if left uncorrected could potentially lead to a material misstatement within the financial statements.

Governance – Observations that are important to good governance and should be addressed to minimise the risk of governance failings and to help improve procedures.



Financial - Observations refer to issues that would, if corrected, improve internal control in general and engender good practice, but is unlikely to have a material impact on the financial statements.

Governance – Observations that if addressed would help to improve and embed good governance practices but is unlikely to lead directly on its own to governance failings.



Observations made in the previous year have been resolved.