

Allotts Business Services Limited

Management Report
to
Consilium Academies

Period Ended 31 August 2016



Consilium Academies

Management Report Period Ended 31 August 2016

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1. Introduction

The purpose of this report is to set out certain matters which came to our attention during the course of our work in connection with the audit of the financial statements and the independent reporting accountant's assurance report on regularity for the period ended 31 August 2016.

A further supplemental objective is to use our knowledge of the Academies Trust gained during our routine audit work to make useful suggestions concerning your financial systems for you to consider when looking at potential improvements in this area.

Our report relates only to those matters which came to our attention as part of our normal audit and assurance report procedures which are principally designed to enable us to form an audit opinion on the financial statements and an assurance opinion on regularity. Our work is not designed to test all internal controls or identify all areas of control weakness and should not be relied upon to disclose errors or irregularities which are not material in relation to the financial statements or regularity report.

1.1. Acknowledgements

We would like to take this opportunity to thank all staff we met during our audit for their co-operation and assistance.

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2. Overall objective

Our work is designed to consider whether:

- the financial statements of the Academies Trust give a true and fair view of the state of the Academies Trust's affairs at 31 August 2016 and of its incoming resources and application of resources, including its income and expenditure for the year then ended;
- the financial statements have been properly prepared in accordance with the EFA Accounts Direction, the Companies Act 2006 and UK Generally Accepted Accounting Practice;
- the information given in the Report of Trustees is consistent with the financial statements; and
- anything has come to our attention which suggests in all material respects the expenditure disbursed and the income received has not been applied to the purposes intended by Parliament and the financial transactions do not confirm to the authorities which govern them.

A further objective of our work is to bring to your attention our findings, including:

- key audit issues;
- material weaknesses in internal control;
- adjusted and unadjusted audit errors;
- significant financial statements figures and variances

2.1. Audit approach

Our overall audit approach is risk based and our detailed approach to individual components of the financial statements is derived from the results of our risk assessment on each area.

Our objective is to obtain sufficient appropriate evidence in order to form an audit opinion on the financial statements. Our audit plan is tailored to ensure that we carry out the minimum amount of audit work required to achieve our objective. The level of detail of our testing depends on the risks identified and the relative complexity of individual audit areas. This ensures that we concentrate our audit work on the areas identified as being of the highest risk of material misstatement and our work in lower risk areas is proportionately lower.

2.2 Approach to regularity assurance

Our work is 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 includes examination, on a test basis, of evidence relevant to the regularity and propriety of the Academies Trust trust's income and expenditure

2.3 Materiality

Materiality on the financial statements as a whole relates to the level at which misstatements or omissions individually or in aggregate would affect the decisions of users of the financial statements, and the financial statements would no longer show a true and fair view.

The assessment of what is material is a matter of professional judgement and includes consideration of both the amount (quantity) and the nature (quality) of misstatements.

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2.3 Materiality (continued)

In carrying out an audit, we are concerned that accounts as presented show a true and fair view. Truth and fairness does not imply absolute accuracy but rather that the accounts reasonably state the affairs of the entity and do not contain any significant inaccuracies.

Certain items within a set of accounts, such as trustees' emoluments or loans, must be legally disclosed and therefore in this context materiality would not be relevant. Similarly, certain transactions or balances including issues of irregularity or propriety, may reasonably be expected to influence the decisions of users at a lower level and we determine this level accordingly.

Material adjustments have been agreed and adjusted in the financial statements.

Lower value, unadjusted misstatements have been reviewed and it has been agreed that they should not be adjusted in the financial statements.

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3. Strategy and areas covered

3.1. Overall audit strategy

Our overall audit strategy included:

- discussions with management and reviewing interim figures, the budget return and Responsible Officer reports to update our understanding of the Academies Trust, to identify any changes and identify areas of higher risk;
- reviewing the design and implementation of internal control systems affecting the areas of the financial statements identified as higher risk;
- carrying out risk assessment procedures to assess the overall audit risk and risk on individual audit areas
- using the risk assessment to plan and develop an appropriate audit plan and procedures
- substantive testing, along with observation, enquiry and walk through tests of systems to confirm that the systems and controls as advised to us are operating effectively and as stated
- verifying any material balance sheet figures
- performing analytical review of income and expenditure
- confirming that the financial statements had been prepared in accordance with the Academies Accounts Direction 2015 to 2016 in all material respects

3.2. Regularity work

Our work on regularity included:

- enquiry of officers of the Academies Trust
- review and testing of income and expenditure for compliance with the funding and other agreements, the Academies Financial Handbook and the Academies Trust's system of controls
- examination of relevant documents
- review of the activities carried out by the Academies Trust
- review of the delegated authorities set out in the Academies Financial Handbook

3.3. Higher risk areas identified at the planning stage

The following areas were identified as high risk at the audit planning stage and our audit approach concentrated on these areas accordingly:

- Income recognition – under ISA 240 there is a presumed risk that income may be misstated due to incorrect revenue recognition
- Management override – under ISA 240 there is a presumed risk of the management override of controls in all entities
- Expenditure recognised in the correct period
- Misallocation of income and expenditure between funds
- Employee remuneration
- The acquisition of Armthorpe Academy and Buile Hill Visual Arts College in the period
- Tendering and procurement procedures

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4. Key findings

4.1. Matters identified at the planning stage

	Issue identified	Notes
1	Income recognition	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • General Annual Grant (GAG) and other EFA income included in the financial statements was successfully agreed to final funding confirmation from the EFA. • Management confirmed that there is no EFA clawback in respect of pupil numbers. We confirmed that pupil numbers are within the range where no clawback would be expected. • Accrued / deferred income had been correctly provided where income is for a period other than the year ended 31 August. • Non-recurrent grant income and other material sources of income were agreed to offer letters and contracts to ensure correctly recognised in the period. • We have tested a sample of sales and income receipts around the year end to ensure that income is recognised in the correct period. • A sample of trade and other debtors have been agreed to post year-end receipts. • A sample of prepayments, accrued and deferred income have been tested to contracts or other relevant documentation. <p>No material issues have been noted re the recognition of income.</p>
2	Management override	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We have carried out tests of observation and enquiry and walkthrough tests of systems and controls, as well as checking the adherence to control procedures when carrying out substantive testing. • We reviewed the nominal ledger for large and unusual items including journal entries. • Accounting estimates, judgements and assumptions were reviewed. <p>No indication of management override of controls or manipulation of items in the financial statements was noted.</p>
3	Expenditure recognised in the correct period	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A sample of trade creditors balances was agreed to supplier statements, or where statements were not available to the purchase and payment activity around the year end. • A sample of accruals has been tested to invoices or other relevant documentation. • Invoices, supplier statements and post year-end payments were reviewed for unrecorded liabilities. <p>No material unrecorded liabilities have been noted and expenses appear to have been recognised in the correct period.</p>
4	Misallocation of income and expenditure between funds	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Substantive testing of income and expenditure included checking that items had been allocated to the correct fund. • Material sources of income were agreed to contracts and it was ensured that related expenditure had been allocated to them. • Management confirmed allocation of overheads to funds. We confirmed such allocations were materially correct. <p>No material misallocation of income and expenditure between funds was noted.</p>

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	Issue identified	Notes
5	Employee remuneration	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Employee remuneration is a major expense of the Academies Trust and hence a higher risk area to our audit. • We have carried out tests of observation and enquiry and walkthrough tests of systems and controls, as well as checking the adherence to control procedures when carrying out substantive testing. • A sample of employees was selected and salary successfully agreed to contracts, deductions tested and agreed and existence agreed to third party evidence. • The charge in the financial statements was reconciled to the payroll. • Disclosures relating to higher paid staff, trustees and key management personnel were agreed. <p>No material errors re employee remuneration were noted.</p>
6	Tendering and procurement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We reviewed the tendering process and confirm it followed the Academies Trust's procurement policy and the requirements of the EFA. • A sample of capital expenditure has been tested to invoices. • We reviewed the terms of capital grants received and confirmed that expenditure was compliant with these and monitoring reports to funders had been submitted as required. <p>No indication of non-compliance with procedures re the capital project was noted.</p>
7	Academies joining the trust during the period	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Armthorpe Academy joined the trust on 1 August 2015 • Buile Hill Visual Arts College converted to an academy and joined the trust on 1 August 2016 • Our audit work included the testing of balances and transactions from the date of joining the trust. • The disclosures in the financial statements relating to the transfer of these academies have been evaluated against accounting standards and the Academies Accounts Direction 2015 to 2016.

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4.2. Matters identified during the fieldwork

Our work is not designed to test all internal controls or identify all areas of control weakness and should not be relied upon to disclose errors or irregularities which are not material in relation to the financial statements or regularity report. Our report relates only to those matters which came to our attention as part of our normal audit and assurance report procedures which are principally designed to enable us to form an audit opinion on the financial statements and an assurance opinion on regularity.

4.2.1. Grading structure

For each recommendation we have assigned a grading of High, Medium or Low priority depending on the importance or risk of the issue as explained below:

Priority	Classification
High	There is a significant risk of loss to the Academies Trust through ineffective or absent controls or a highly inefficient use of the Academies Trust's resources. Urgent action is required to rectify the matter.
Medium	There is a weakness or inefficiency which should be addressed promptly.
Low	A possible improvement in application, efficiency or recording of control procedures has been identified for management to consider.

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4.2.2. Issues and recommendations

1	Register of Interests	
	<p>Observations</p> <p>It was noted that although the Trust is maintaining a register of interests and forms of declaration are present and up to date, in some instances not all declarations were sufficiently detailed to ensure compliance with the Academies Financial Handbook. For example in some instances 'none' was entered.</p> <p>Implications</p> <p>The requirement of the Academies Financial Handbook that the <i>“register of interests must capture relevant business and pecuniary interests of members, trustees, local governors of academies within a multi-academy trust and senior employees, including directorships, partnerships and employments with businesses “</i> has not been fully complied with.</p> <p>The register therefore does not set the intended spirit of openness.</p>	<p>Recommendations</p> <p>We recommend that trustees should declare all interests, including those of spouses, partners and business partners in the Register of Interest. This may include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • employment with the school, • employment elsewhere, including the name of the employer, and nature of the trade if not obvious or well known, • self-employment, including the name of the business, nature of the trade and major clients, • voluntary work for a charity or community organisation, • directorship of any entity, • governor appointments of other schools or colleges, • trustee appointments of any charity, • posts having equivalent legal responsibility, • work performed in a subcontracting or advisory capacity e.g. for an exam board, • membership of trade associations, industry bodies, trade unions or political parties. <p>Priority : MEDIUM</p>
	Management Response	Original Timescale: 31 March 2017
	<p>The Company are looking to strengthen the Trust Board by 31st March 2017. In preparation for the Trust Meeting of the 25th January 2017, the Members and Directors will complete new “Register of Interest” forms with detailed guidance on what interests should be declared by themselves and their spouses. Directors appointed after this date will complete the same documentation.</p>	

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2	Register of Business interests	
	<p>Observation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It was noted the academy trust's register of business interests and other relevant information relating to trustees and local governors had not been published on the academies trust's website during the period. <p>Implication</p> <p>This is not in compliance with Section 2.5.of Academies Financial Handbook 2016 on Transparency.</p>	<p>Recommendation</p> <p>Recommendation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure that the register of interests and other information relating to trustees and local governors required is suitably published to comply with Section 2.5 of the Academies Financial Handbook. <p>Priority : MEDIUM</p>
	Management Response	Original Timescale: 31 March 2017
	<p>The current information on the Members and Directors are published on the Trust's website (within the Policy Section). This information will be updated following the Trust Board Meeting on 25th January 2017 and every following meeting of the Company and the Trust Board.</p>	

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3	Companies House Notifications	
	<p>Observation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• It was noted in some instances, Companies House had not been notified of appointments and resignations of trustees. <p>Implication</p> <p>This does not comply with the Academies Financial Handbook or the Companies Act 2006.</p>	<p>Recommendation</p> <p>Recommendation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Ensure notifications of changes in trustees are made to Companies House on a timely basis. <p>Priority : MEDIUM</p>
	Management Response	Original Timescale: 31 March 2017
	<p>All outstanding changes to the trustee membership will be completed by 31st December 2016.</p> <p>The Company secretary will ensure all further changes are filed with Companies House within 1 month.</p>	