

## **Internal scrutiny report 2020/21.**

Derby Diocesan Academy Trust

Derby Diocesan Academy Trust 2

### **Executive summary**

Internal scrutiny for the period of 2020/21 has been undertaken by using independent external reviews across key areas highlighted and formally agreed by the Finance and Audit Committee.

### **Approach and summary of work undertaken and standards 2020/21**

- **H&S risk audits** have been completed with RAG ratings supplied for each school within the trust in distinct areas namely: Management of health and safety, in-house compliance and contractor compliance. YMD Boon Ltd have acted as specialist Independent scrutineers. The overall score of majority of the schools is above 80%. All schools, apart from William Gilbert (on Competent Person package), currently receive three health and safety visits per academic year.
- **Trust Diagnostic Survey** has been completed using Ambition Institute as expert scrutineers. This provided a full diagnostic report to enable the trust to review the findings from the diagnosis and agree deep dive areas. The full report is attached with survey results included.
- **Utilities**- Report raised that Water suppliers across the schools provided varying levels of service and cost. Recommendation to have consistent provider has been implemented and due to be completed in 2021.

- **Budget/Finance monitoring and Payroll**- Ongoing financial scrutiny for all schools within the trust. Actioned by DDAT Finance team and reported/monitored by Finance and Audit committee. External consultants S4S have provided a summary of quality assurance across all schools to highlight areas of support and further training. This output has led to a number of support plans being implemented across schools for key areas of compliance. Full training has been rolled out this year to all schools (HTs and SBMs) regarding payroll and HR activities.
- **HR Harmonisation audit and recommendations**. Completed by Michelmores solicitors to review the differing terms and conditions inherited as schools have joined from different Local Authorities. This audit has resulted in the business case shared with the full board in Summer term 2021. Recommendations have been provided regarding pay scales and grading, Increments, overtime rates, working hours and allowances, which have been circulated to the board accordingly. The end result being that standard terms are being rolled out with full board approval for all DDAT staff and future contractual arrangements.

## **Classification of opinions**

The scrutineers have described the level of confidence in respect of each business system reviewed and produced formal action points which have been noted by the finance committee and full board where appropriate.

## **Summary of opinion and recommendations**

### **Health & Safety**

- Full exhaustive review undertaken across this key area
- All schools have had 1 full review and subsequent follow up review
- Log and ratings spreadsheet supplied to finance committee to monitor and direct further support.
- Overall position is low risk with some highlighted areas in isolated schools
- Full rolling program is in place
  
- **Management Response**
- This will continue each year and separate risk registers are provided to ensure appropriate procedures are in place.

### **Utilities Review**

- Overall opinion- good practice maintained
- Action to transfer all schools to consistent Water provider.

### **Budget/Finance monitoring and Payroll**

- Overall opinion- sound systems embedded
- Recommendations – low. Noting that existing procedures are adequate. Some late returns for payroll and associated activities identified including reconciliation and pension deadlines.

- **Management response**

- Finance team provided full training and reinforced best practice to all schools.
- DDAT Handbook to be updated and re-iterated for 2021/22 with regards to future notice of concern letters being raised.

### **HR Harmonisation audit and recommendations**

- HR team has developed consistent terms and conditions and presented options to the full board for approval.
- Board has unanimously approved to progress towards standardisation of terms and conditions.
- Once costs have been identified the final approach will be presented and implemented according to Board recommendation.

The trust will continue to prioritise internal scrutiny. The Finance and audit Committee continues to identify areas for review in the subsequent years. The trust will continue to use qualified and experienced external companies to undertake the specific review areas as directed along with suitably qualified internal directors and partners for Financial scrutiny.