

RHONDDA CYNON TAF COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

MUNICIPAL YEAR 2013/14

COMMITTEE:

AUDIT COMMITTEE

31st March 2014

Item No. 6
Finalised Audit Assignment 2013/14

REPORT OF:-

GROUP DIRECTOR, CORPORATE SERVICES

Author: Marc Crumbie (Operational Audit Manager)

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1. PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

This report provides Members with a summary of audit assignments completed between 14th December 2013 and 14th March 2014.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that Members:

- 2.1 Note the contents of this Report.
- 2.2 Consider what comments and recommendations, if any, they wish to make.

3. BACKGROUND

- 3.1 In line with agreed procedures, I attach at **Appendix 1** a summary of audit assignments completed between 14th December 2013 and 14th March 2014.
- 3.2 I have provided Members with the Auditor's stated opinion regarding the system or service examined and have summarised the high priority recommendations made together with the management response and the anticipated implementation date for each agreed recommendation.
- 3.3 Members will note that, of the 10 completed assignments, 6 resulted in at least one high priority recommendation being made – for the remaining 4 assignments, no high priority recommendations were made.
- 3.4 The audit assignments summarised at **Appendix 1** are: -

CORPORATE SERVICES

- GENERAL LEDGER
- TELL US ONCE
- TREASURY MANAGEMENT

COMMUNITY & CHILDREN'S SERVICES

- MOBILITY SHOPS
- INTEGRATED FAMILY SUPPORT TEAM

EDUCATION & LIFELONG LEARNING

- MOUNTAIN ASH COMPREHENSIVE SCHOOL (FOLLOW-UP)
- S.S.GABRIEL & RAPHAEL R.C. (C.Bk.)
- YSGOL GYFUN GARTH OLWG
- PONTYPRIDD HIGH SCHOOL
- SAFEGUARDING

4. SUMMARY

- 4.1 The regular provision of all summarised audit assignments to Audit Committee throughout the year is aimed at assisting Members in evaluating the effectiveness of Internal Audit work across all Council systems and services.
- 4.2 In doing so, it enables Members to form an opinion on the overall control environment prior to the closure of accounts process for 2013/14.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT, 1972
as amended by
THE ACCESS TO INFORMATION ACT, 1985
RHONDDA CYNON TAF COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL
LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS
AUDIT COMMITTEE
31st March 2014

Report of the Group Director for Corporate Services

Author: Marc Crumby (Operational Audit Manager).

Item	File Ref:
6. Finalised Audit Assignment 2013/14	IA / MC
Contact Officer: Marc Crumby, Operational Audit Manager Bronwydd House Porth CF39 9DL Tel. No. (01443) 680779	

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FINALISED AUDIT ASSIGNMENTS
 14th December 2013 and 14th March 2014

CORPORATE SERVICES
GENERAL LEDGER
DATE : 20/12/2013
<p>INTRODUCTION</p> <p>The management and control of the Council's General Ledger is undertaken by the Corporate Services Group (Finance Division). The purpose of the General Ledger system is to record all financial transactions and provide information for the preparation of Management Accounts, Final Accounts and Financial Returns. In order to maintain proper financial control and protect the integrity of the Ledger, it is essential that adequate accounting routines are in operation.</p>
<p>AUDIT OPINION</p> <p>Overall the control environment for the General Ledger and Accounting framework is considered satisfactory with the main processes being promptly and accurately completed through the system specifically designed for the purpose (Civica Financials). With regards to the specific testing undertaken during the review, assurance can be provided to management that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ledger input / output is controlled, secure, timely and appropriate to need. • The structure of the financial ledger reflects the information needs of the authority and is adequately controlled. <p>No high priority recommendations made.</p>

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CORPORATE SERVICES
TELL US ONCE
DATE: 15/01/2014
<p>INTRODUCTION</p> <p>'Tell Us Once' is a service offered by most Local Authorities on behalf of the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) for births and deaths. The service is mainly used by the bereaved to inform Central and Local Government services of the death, at one time, rather than having to write, telephone or even attend each service individually. If the person wishes to take up the service, they can select which services are contacted. The information is provided to the DWP via their computer system, which is then passed onto other government departments and Local Authority Services. Customer Care, in consultation with Registration Services, implemented 'Tell us Once' in 2010 as a DWP Early Adopter, being one of the first Local Authorities in Wales to offer the service.</p> <p>Notification of 'Tell us Once' referrals for Local Authority Services are received by the Contact Centre. Staff at the Contact Centre update the Council's internal Customer Relationship Management (CRM) system, creating a 'work ticket' which is sent electronically to each of the relevant departments. Once the ticket is actioned by each of the services, the work ticket is closed.</p>
<p>AUDIT OPINION</p> <p>Overall, the system was found to be operating appropriately, with no key weaknesses identified.</p> <p>A sample of 20 deaths reported to the Registrar was selected. Of those 20, 12 had 'Tell us Once' referrals to be actioned internally. All 12 were found to have been processed accurately and within the 15 day limit set.</p> <p>Four recommendations were made in the audit report (none of which were high priority), which relate to information retained by the Registrars, how information is transposed from the DWP's system to the Council's CRM system, limitations to the information that can be obtained, at present, from the DWP's CRS system and the absence of formal monitoring against timescales.</p> <p>By implementing the associated recommendations contained within the audit report, management will enhance further the standard of control.</p> <p>No high priority recommendations made.</p>

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CORPORATE SERVICES
TREASURY MANAGEMENT
DATE: 04/03/2014
<p>INTRODUCTION</p> <p>The Treasury Management Service undertakes the management and control of the Council's borrowing and investment function, a service provided by the Corporate Services Group (Finance Division).</p> <p>The role of the team, led by the Investment Manager, is the effective management of all money in connection with cash and funding resources of the County Borough Council. This also includes money held by Schools under Local Management of School arrangements but excludes the management of Superannuation Fund monies, apart from temporary cash surpluses. Effective management and control of risk is therefore the prime objective of Treasury Management activities.</p>
<p>AUDIT OPINION</p> <p>Overall, the control environment in relation to Treasury Management is considered satisfactory.</p> <p>At the Full Council meeting 20th March 2013, members approved the Treasury Management Strategy, Investment Strategy, Prudential and Treasury indicators and the Minimum Revenue Provision.</p> <p>On the 24th July 2013, Council received and agreed the 2012/13 Annual Treasury Management review which included the estimated and actual Treasury position, Prudential and Treasury indicators.</p> <p>The process developed to manage the Council's investments and borrowing is considered robust and effective.</p> <p>For the sample selected it was established that low risk investments had been placed with either the Debt Management Office or other Public Bodies, which was in line with the Treasury Management Strategy and all had been correctly authorised by a senior member of staff, based on the funds available each day and to date the Council has not taken out any new loans in 2013/14.</p> <p>No high priority recommendations made.</p>

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COMMUNITY & CHILDREN'S SERVICES		
MOBILITY SHOPS		
Date: 30/12/2013		
INTRODUCTION		
<p>The overall responsibility for managing Mobility Shops lies with the Community Equipment Services Manager within the Commissioning, Business and Housing division of the Community and Children's Services Group.</p> <p>The Council operates two Mobility Shops, one in Newport (inherited via the successful Community Equipment store tender) and one based in Aberdare. The shops stock a range of mobility aids, which include rise chairs, motorised scooters, wheelchairs, household aids, walking sticks and footwear.</p> <p>Motorised scooters and wheelchairs are also available for free hire in the Aberdare shop, so that disabled people can utilise this specialist mobility equipment within Aberdare town centre.</p>		
AUDIT OPINION		
<p>Overall, Purchasing was found to be operating appropriately however; weaknesses were identified in the other areas, particularly Collections & Deposits and Stock Control.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cash reconciliation processes and subsequent banking require improvement. • The process for ensuring that VAT is appropriately administered and recorded also requires improvement. <p>By implementing the associated recommendations contained within the audit report, management will enhance the standard of control.</p>		
Report Reference Number	High Priority Audit Recommendations made & Agreed by Management	Agreed Implementation Date
7.1.3	<p>AGREED RECOMMENDATION</p> <p>Management should identify whether it is possible to programme the Sharp XE- A102 till to process refunds, however, if this is not the case, then consideration should be given to replacing it with a model that can.</p> <p>All refunded transactions should be recorded.</p> <p>The totals on the weekly returns should be amended to reflect any refunds processed that week. The cash amounts on the weekly returns should reflect the amount in the safe to be banked. Any under or over bankings should be recorded and reported. Bankings should not be delayed in order to accumulate cash to cover any deficit.</p> <p>MANAGEMENT RESPONSE</p> <p>Agreed. The till has now been programmed to undertake refunds.</p> <p>Agreed. The process has now been changed to ensure that refunds are recorded</p>	Implemented.

	<p>properly.</p> <p>Agreed. A meeting has been held and the retail officers advised of the correct processes to follow. Under the new guidance takings will be banked at least weekly and must match the weekly return.</p> <p>Under or over-bankings must be reported to the Community Equipment Services Manager and discussed at the monthly shop review meeting.</p>	
7.1.5	<p>AGREED RECOMMENDATION</p> <p>Income and expenditure for each shop should be reconciled to the General Ledger on a monthly basis. Evidence of this check should be retained.</p> <p>MANAGEMENT RESPONSE</p> <p>Agreed. A meeting has been held with staff and a process agreed.</p> <p>On a monthly basis income and expenditure downloads will be sought from the ledger. Any discrepancies will be reported to the Service Manager at the monthly monitoring meetings.</p>	Implemented.
7.1.7	<p>AGREED RECOMMENDATION</p> <p>Management should ensure that bankings are undertaken in sequence.</p> <p>The weekly banking returns should be updated to include the date the income was paid into the bank.</p> <p>Daily cash check and income check returns should be completed for each working day.</p> <p>MANAGEMENT RESPONSE</p> <p>Agreed. Staff have been advised that banking should be undertaken on a weekly basis and all banking must be made in sequence. This will be monitored at the monthly monitoring meetings.</p> <p>Agreed. Returns to be updated.</p> <p>Agreed. Daily cash check & income check returns to be completed.</p>	Implemented.
7.5.1	<p>AGREED RECOMMENDATION</p> <p>A VAT exempt form should be completed for all VAT exempt transactions.</p> <p>Staff should be made aware that there is no requirement to complete a VAT exempt form for the purchase of eligible incontinence products, if they are for the customer's personal usage.</p> <p>MANAGEMENT RESPONSE</p> <p>Agreed. Staff have been advised of the correct process to follow.</p>	Implemented.

COMMUNITY & CHILDREN'S SERVICES		
INTEGRATED FAMILY SUPPORT TEAM		
Date: 20/02/2014		
INTRODUCTION		
<p>Section 53 of the Children and Families (Wales) Measure places a duty on local authority's to establish an Integrated Family Support Board.</p> <p>The Integrated Family Support Team (IFST) is a multi-agency team set up to work with children and families who are affected by parents/carers drug misuse. It is a partnership between Rhondda Cynon Taf and Merthyr Tydfil County Borough Councils and Cwm Taf Local Health Board.</p> <p>The aim of the team is to provide a highly skilled, multi-disciplinary team to intervene with families referred by Children's Services from Rhondda Cynon Taf and Merthyr Tydfil who present a high level of need and risk due to parental/carers substance misuse in order to reduce the level of risk and ensure positive outcomes for the most vulnerable children.</p> <p>The responsibility for the Integrated Family Support Team lies with the Children's Services Division, under the overall governance of the Group Director, for Community and Children's Services. It is delivered operationally by the Head of Prevention Services, who is also the Chair of the Operational Planning Group which supports the IFS board.</p>		
AUDIT OPINION		
<p>Overall, assurance can be provided that the Integrated Family Support team is fully aware of their roles and responsibilities in providing a highly skilled, multi-disciplinary intervention to families referred to them.</p> <p>Reviews are undertaken within agreed timescales, and all cases in the audit sample had appropriately documented outcomes.</p> <p>However, referral targets have not been achieved, which could be linked in part to inconsistent practices between Rhondda Cynon Taf and Merthyr Tydfil referral procedures. Consequently, both the targets and referral procedures may benefit from review, with the aim of harmonising them.</p> <p>The implementation of the recommendations made within this report should provide Management with the opportunity to enhance the procedures for the team.</p>		
Report Reference Number	High Priority Audit Recommendations made & Agreed by Management	Agreed Implementation Date
7.1.1	<p>AGREED RECOMMENDATION</p> <p>Management should review the referral levels, and document:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Whether the target of 100 referrals per year is still considered achievable. b) What, if any, measures will be introduced that aim to increase the number of referrals, for example, raising the awareness of the team. <p>MANAGEMENT RESPONSE</p> <p>Agreed.</p>	30 th June 2014

	A review of criteria for IFST intervention will be undertaken. Following this review, the team will be informed of any reviewed targets.	
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EDUCATION & LIFELONG LEARNING
MOUNTAIN ASH COMPREHENSIVE SCHOOL (FOLLOW-UP)
DATE : 08/01/2014
INTRODUCTION Mountain Ash Comprehensive School was last subject to a routine Internal Audit as part of the 2012/13 Internal Audit Plan. Following the presentation of the report to Audit Committee on the 1 st May 2013, a follow-up review was requested.
AUDIT OPINION Since the previous review, the School have not permitted any member of staff to commence in their post without the necessary pre-employment checks. As a consequence, the practice of issuing loans in advance of salary payments has also ceased. Testing identified that recommendations agreed following the review have, on the whole, been implemented. The audit report contains one recommendation in respect of the use of EVOLVE for off-site sporting fixtures, although it is accepted that improvements in the recording of all other School trips on the system were evident. Overall, we conclude that the system of internal control is satisfactory. No high priority recommendations made.

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EDUCATION & LIFELONG LEARNING		
S.S.GABRIEL & RAPHAEL R.C. (C.Bk.)		
Date: 16/12/2013		
INTRODUCTION		
<p>The self-evaluation process is designed to help and advise Headteachers and support staff to evaluate the effectiveness of their financial and governance arrangements. The process requires primary schools to complete a self-evaluation checklist against expected controls.</p> <p>Spending through Primary schools accounts for a significant proportion of the Council's expenditure (£76 million for 2013/14).</p> <p>SS Gabriel & Raphael Primary School was last subject to an internal Audit Review in May 2008, and this is the third cyclical visit made to the school to examine progress made under the self-evaluation process.</p>		
AUDIT OPINION		
<p>Overall, the control environment at the school is considered good.</p> <p>The Child Protection Policy and Staff disciplinary policy regarding Safeguarding were both up to date and endorsed by the Governing Body. The school has appointed the Headteacher and a designated Governor with responsibilities for Safeguarding and Child Protection issues. All staff at the school have undertaken the relevant training for Child Protection with a record to evidence this retained at the school. The Educational Visit Coordinator has been trained and updates all trips onto Evolve. The school has an out of date spreadsheet of all staff employed at the school where 3 members of staff are not included.</p> <p>The School Private Fund was well run and administered with a suitable Management Committee. The annual certificate had been completed and sent to Education Finance. Bank statements are being received at the school on a monthly basis and have been reconciled to the subsidiary records. Banking of income is being undertaken at least once a week and recorded appropriately whilst expenditure is being incurred correctly for the School Private Fund.</p> <p>The Purchase Card records are updated as soon as a purchase is made so the transaction log is kept up to date. All expenditure incurred through the Purchase Card is in line with the Cardholder Manual. However, the bank statements are not reconciled to the transaction log and there was no receipt available for 1 item of expenditure which totalled £156.</p> <p>Dinner money was being securely retained at the school and banked promptly. The school is pursuing all dinner money arrears and a return of all pupils in arrears is submitted to Catering Finance every half term. Free school meals are only being provided to pupils who have been given confirmation of eligibility which is retained at the school.</p> <p>The audit trail for purchases is being retained well at the school, although delivery notes were not retained for all purchases. All orders are being signed by a member of staff who has authority to commit the school to expenditure.</p> <p>The budget allocation is decided through a staff meeting which takes into account staff salaries and utilities. The Headteacher is undertaking bank reconciliation of the school account which is sent to Education Finance. Any alterations to the school budget are reported to the Governing Body and all virements are signed by the Headteacher and kept on file as evidence of the change.</p>		
Report	High Priority Audit Recommendations made & Agreed by Management	Agreed Implementation Date

Reference Number		
B19	<p>AGREED RECOMMENDATION In accordance with the SPF Regulations, payments (cheque and cash) should be supported by appropriate documentation (i.e. invoices and/or receipts). Where a receipt has not been obtained the school should complete a PF2 form.</p> <p>MANAGEMENT RESPONSE Agreed. We will make sure we have receipts for all expenditure in future.</p>	Implemented.

EDUCATION & LIFELONG LEARNING		
YSGOL GYFUN GARTH OLWG		
Date: 15/01/2014		
INTRODUCTION		
<p>Ysgol Gyfun Garth Olwg is an 11-18 mixed, designated Welsh comprehensive school, which mainly serves the children of the Pontypridd area. There are 825 pupils on roll including 147 students in the sixth form.</p> <p>The proportion of pupils entitled to free school meals at the school is currently 8.7%.</p> <p>The total budget for the School for the current financial year (2013/2014) is £4.19m.</p> <p>The School was last subject to a routine audit review in November 2010.</p>		
AUDIT OPINION		
<p>Based on the audit testing undertaken, the School's administration requires strengthening.</p> <p>This report has identified weaknesses in four of the six areas examined, with one of the weaknesses categorised as a high priority.</p> <p>The handover of School Budget and School Private Fund income from teaching staff to the Finance Officer was a particular issue that required strengthening. It was established that both parties do not always document and verify the amounts transferred. On such occasions the money is placed in the safe, to be counted by the Finance Officer when it is convenient to do so.</p> <p>This practice presents a risk to all staff involved and should cease with immediate effect.</p> <p>The implementation of the recommendations made within the audit report will enable the Headteacher to enhance the standard of administration at the School.</p>		
Report Reference Number	High Priority Audit Recommendations made & Agreed by Management	Agreed Implementation Date
7.3.1	<p>AGREED RECOMMENDATION</p> <p>As per the School Private Fund Regulations, all income should be recorded on the Record of Daily Income upon receipt, with the signatures of both parties as verification of the amounts involved.</p> <p>Income in respect of the School budget should be documented and verified in the same manner.</p> <p>MANAGEMENT RESPONSE</p> <p>Agreed.</p> <p>This issue has been addressed.</p>	Implemented.

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EDUCATION & LIFELONG LEARNING		
PONTYPRIDD HIGH SCHOOL		
Date: 19/02/2014		
INTRODUCTION		
<p>Pontypridd High School is an 11-18 mixed, designated English comprehensive school, which mainly serves the children of the Pontypridd area. There are 1022 pupils on roll including 132 students in the sixth form.</p> <p>The School is in an area that is disadvantaged economically, with the proportion entitled to free school meals standing at 21%.</p> <p>The total budget for the School for the current financial year (2013/2014) is £4.43m.</p> <p>Pontypridd High School was last subject to a routine audit review in November 2010.</p>		
AUDIT OPINION		
<p>Based on the audit testing undertaken, the School's internal control environment relating to its financial and governance arrangements is considered to be in need of improvement.</p> <p>The audit identified weaknesses in five of the six areas examined. Seven of these weaknesses have been categorised as a high priority.</p> <p>The administration of the New York / Washington 2014 school trip was of particular concern, given that it is administered wholly separate from the School Private Fund by a member of the teaching staff. Income and expenditure transactions are processed via their personal bank account and credit card, and records were insufficiently detailed.</p> <p>Annual trips to Auschwitz have been run in a similar manner and all records were reported as destroyed after use.</p> <p>This practice must cease with immediate effect and responsibilities transferred to the School Private Fund treasurer to ensure all trips are administered consistently and in line with School Private Fund regulations.</p> <p>The implementation of the recommendations made within the audit report will enable the Headteacher to enhance the standard of administration at the School.</p>		
Report Reference Number	High Priority Audit Recommendations made & Agreed by Management	Agreed Implementation Date
7.1.1	<p>AGREED RECOMMENDATION</p> <p>The Governing Body should confirm a scheme of delegation and formally record the financial limits for delegated authority to ensure that a permanent record of the limits and authorised staff is available at the school.</p> <p>MANAGEMENT RESPONSE</p> <p>Agreed.</p>	31 March 2014

	<p>Governing Body Finance Committee has met and has advised the School Bursar to seek best practice and advise on the recommended delegated financial limits from the Local Authority.</p> <p>The Bursar will present such information in the Spring Finance meeting.</p>	
7.1.2	<p>AGREED RECOMMENDATION</p> <p>A declaration of business interests register should be completed on an annual basis, which details the business interests of all Governors, the Headteacher and any other staff who may influence financial decisions at the school.</p> <p>New declarations should be completed immediately in respect of the Headteacher and Governors identified.</p> <p>MANAGEMENT RESPONSE</p> <p>Agreed.</p> <p>Outstanding declarations of Business interests will be collated in the next appropriate Governing Body meeting.</p>	31 March 2014
7.2.1	<p>AGREED RECOMMENDATION</p> <p>The School should develop a central training record, to demonstrate the date and level of attainment alongside individual staff names.</p> <p>This could be incorporated into the Child Protection policy to allow the assessment of training requirements to coincide with the policy's annual review.</p> <p>As a minimum, Level 1 Safeguarding training should be promptly arranged for any staff that are yet to have undertaken the course.</p> <p>MANAGEMENT RESPONSE</p> <p>Agreed.</p> <p>The Leadership Team accept the recommendations and will ensure that a record of training is kept with annual training delivered to staff as appropriate, particularly for new staff and those entering the profession as NQTs.</p> <p>Child Protection Officer will ensure record is kept and deliver training annually as appropriate.</p>	30 September 2014
7.3.1	<p>AGREED RECOMMENDATION</p> <p>A charging policy for all types of room / facilities hire should be developed and agreed annually by the Governing Body.</p> <p>The agreed hourly rates should be applied and care taken to ensure that VAT is correctly accounted for where appropriate.</p>	30 April 2014

	<p>Evidence should be retained to demonstrate that all lettings have been approved by the Headteacher i.e. the booking form / confirmation letter signed by the Headteacher.</p> <p>MANAGEMENT RESPONSE</p> <p>Agreed</p> <p>A charging policy for all types of room/facilities hire has been developed at the school but hasn't been agreed annually by the GB. A revised policy will be taken to the Finance Committee for ratification in the new financial year.</p> <p>Hourly rates have been agreed, however due to the findings of inconsistencies the School's Finance Officer will complete a monthly audit of all invoices raised for hire of premises etc.</p> <p>Prior to all lettings a letter of confirmation will be sent out signed by the Head teacher.</p>	
7.4.1	<p>AGREED RECOMMENDATION</p> <p>The practice of administering school trips through the personal bank account of the member of staff should cease with immediate effect.</p> <p>Income records maintained in respect of the New York / Washington trip should be examined to ensure they accurately reflect all monies received from pupils. Once verified, the total amount received should be passed to the Fund Treasurer to be banked into the School Private Fund and any future income / expenditure should be processed via this account.</p> <p>All records relating to School Private Fund should be retained as per point 17.1 of the School Private Fund Regulations.</p> <p>MANAGEMENT RESPONSE</p> <p>Agreed and this practice has ceased.</p>	Implemented.
7.4.2	<p>AGREED RECOMMENDATION</p> <p>The income discrepancies highlighted for the 4 pupils on the New York / Washington trip should be resolved to ensure all records accurately reflect contributions received.</p> <p>This trip should be administered via the School Private Fund as per recommendation 7.4.1.</p> <p>Trip records which demonstrate the pupils name, amount received and the date received should be maintained for all trips.</p> <p>Upon completion of a trip, a statement of account and all supporting records should be passed to the Fund Treasurer to be retained as per the School Private Fund regulations.</p> <p>MANAGEMENT RESPONSE</p>	Implemented.

	<p>Agreed. The income discrepancies have now been resolved for New York / Washington 2014.</p> <p>Since the transfer of all income has taken place this recommendation has now been implemented in line with all other school trips (New York / Washington 2014).</p> <p>Trip Organiser for the Oakwood Park 2013 will be reminded of this recommendation.</p>	
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EDUCATION & LIFELONG LEARNING		
SAFEGUARDING		
Date: 12/03/2014		
INTRODUCTION		
<p>Section 175 of the Education Act 2002 requires local authorities and governing bodies to have arrangements for exercising their functions with a view to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children.</p> <p>In Safeguarding Children: Working Together Under the Children Act 2002, safeguarding is defined as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Protecting children from abuse and neglect • Preventing impairment of their health and development; and • Ensuring that they receive safe and effective care...so as to enable them to have optimum life chances <p>The Education and Lifelong Learning Directorate has established a working group who are utilising a self evaluation framework devised by Estyn. Specific lead officers from across the Council have been allocated elements of the framework in order to collate and coordinate responses. The purpose of the working group is to measure compliance as well as identifying where areas could be strengthened further.</p>		
AUDIT OPINION		
<p>The Self Evaluation framework utilised by the working group has proved an effective tool to document processes already in place, while identifying further improvements required. Using the identified actions as the basis for a formal plan to implement should provide a means of monitoring and measuring improvement while strengthening the safeguarding arrangements.</p> <p>A central, collated record of all training undertaken in respect of Safeguarding is yet to have been established. Management should ensure that identifying an appropriate means of collectively demonstrating that all relevant staff are equipped, is incorporated into the aforementioned action plan.</p> <p>A specific area for Safeguarding is currently in development via Moodle, with a number of documents collated in an effort to provide sufficient information for all School users. The audit report contains several observations regarding the progress so far, with recommendations to enhance the look and format of the existing information. If agreed by Management, then the ultimate aim of providing Schools with a suite of clear policies and guidance will be met.</p>		
Report Reference Number	High Priority Audit Recommendations made & Agreed by Management	Agreed Implementation Date
7.1.3	<p>AGREED RECOMMENDATION</p> <p>A designated area entitled 'Safeguarding' has been established on the Moodle site to establish and circulate a suite of model policies for Schools. The area, which is yet to go 'live,' currently contains a number of documents that have been identified and collated by individuals on the Working Group.</p> <p>As the section of the site is still under construction, the following issues ought to be</p>	May 2014

	<p>considered in its ongoing development:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• The contents are divided into different subjects, with a brief introduction for each. However the detail contained for each subject introduction differs, for example, by:<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Providing a brief synopsis of the policy contents/aims.○ Providing guidance on the key components required for the aforementioned policy○ Providing a description of the purpose/legislative origins of the document (on occasion this is provided in both English and Welsh) <p>It is also noted that in their current guise, the documents attached to their respective subject areas appear to stand-alone, rather than forming part of a cohesive suite of policies.</p> <p>MANAGEMENT RESPONSE</p> <p>Agreed. The Education & Lifelong Learning Directorate has established a multi-disciplined working group that has been tasked with embedding robust safeguarding arrangements in place across the Directorate. This item will be discussed by the group and Management will then progress with implementing the recommendations.</p>	
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