

Non-Executive Report of the: Audit Committee Monday 8th July 2024	 TOWER HAMLETS
Report of: Julie Lorraine - Corporate Director, Resources	Classification: Open (Unrestricted)
Schools Audits: Annual Report for 2023-24	

Originating Officer(s)	David Dobbs – Head of Internal Audit, Fraud & Risk
Wards affected	(All Wards)

Executive Summary

This report provides a thematic summary of the work of Internal Audit in relation to the audit of schools for the financial year 2023-24.

Recommendations:

The Audit Committee is recommended to:

1. Note the contents of this report including the themes highlighted by Internal Audit in relation to the audit of schools as undertaken during 2023-24.

1. REASONS FOR THE DECISIONS

- 1.1. The Audit Committee has responsibility for oversight of the arrangements for governance, risk management and control and this report assists the Audit Committee in discharging its responsibilities.

2. ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS

- 2.1. None.

3. DETAILS OF THE REPORT

- 3.1 The purpose of the report is to provide an overview of Internal Audit findings and facilitate a thematic assessment of the matters raised by Audit. It is envisaged that this assessment will be used by the Schools Finance Team and the Schools Governance Team to

enhance the financial management and governance framework within the Local Authority maintained schools.

- 3.2 During the Covid-19 pandemic, the cyclical programme of audit visits to schools to carry out regularity and compliance audits was paused with the agreement of the Corporate Director of Children and Culture in consultation with Headteachers. The programme of schools' visits resumed in 2022-23 and 15 school audit visits were carried out by the Internal Audit contractor BDO LLP.
- 3.3 During 2023-24, 14 schools' audits were carried out. Each audit visit involved compliance testing of system and procedures in seven key areas of control in accordance with a pre-agreed audit test programme. The detailed annual report for schools is appended to this report.

4. EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 There are no specific statutory implications.

5. OTHER STATUTORY IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 The Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015 require authorities to ensure they have a sound system of internal control which:
- facilitates the effective exercise of its functions and the achievement of its aims and objectives;
 - ensures that the financial and operational management of the authority is effective; and
 - includes effective arrangements for the management of risk.

6. COMMENTS OF THE CHIEF FINANCE OFFICER

- 6.1 There are no specific financial implications arising from the content of this report.

7. COMMENTS OF LEGAL SERVICES

- 7.1 This report and the appendices comply with the Council's legal obligations in respect of auditing and the management of risk. It also demonstrates that the Council has appropriate systems in place to manage its financial affairs in compliance with the Corporate Director Resources' duties under s.151 of the Local Government Act 1972.

Linked Reports, Appendices and Background Documents

Linked Report

- None.

Appendices

- Appendix – Schools Annual Report for 2023-24

Local Government Act, 1972 Section 100D (As amended)

List of “Background Papers” used in the preparation of this report

List any background documents not already in the public domain including officer contact information.

- None.

Officer contact details for documents:

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