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The Trustees
Ashley Hill Multi Academy Trust
White Waltham C. of E. Academy
Waltham Road
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18 December 2023

Dear Trustees

REPORT TO THOSE CHARGED WITH GOVERNANCE

As part of the audit and regularity assurance engagement for the year ended 31 August 2023 we are required to report our audit findings to the Trustees.

These matters came to light during the course of our normal audit tests which are designed to assist us in forming our opinion on the financial statements. Our tests may not necessarily disclose all errors or irregularities and should not be relied upon to do so. However, if any irregularity did come to our attention during our audit tests, we would, of course, inform you immediately.

Accompanying this letter is a memorandum noting these points together with any recommendations we have for possible improvements which could be made.

We have complied with the Financial Reporting Council's Ethical Standard and all threats to our independence, as identified to you in our planning communication letter dated 8 September 2023, have been properly addressed through appropriate safeguards. No additional facts or matters have arisen during the course of the audit that we wish to draw to your attention and we confirm that we are independent and able to express an objective opinion on the financial statements.

This report has been prepared for the sole use of the Trustees of Ashley Hill Multi Academy Trust. We understand that you are required to provide a copy of this report to the Education and Skills Funding Agency. With the exception of this, this report must not be shown to third parties without our prior consent. Consent is, and will only be granted on the basis that such reports are not prepared with the interest of anyone other than the Academy in mind and that we accept no duty or responsibility to any other party. No responsibility is accepted by James Cowper Kreston Audit towards any party acting or refraining from action because of this report.

Finally, we would like to express our thanks to the Trustees and the Academy's staff for the assistance afforded to us during the audit.

Yours faithfully

James Cowper Kreston Audit

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Internal controls

The purpose of the audit was for us to express an opinion on the financial statements. The audit included consideration of internal control relevant to the preparation of the financial statements in order to design audit procedures that are appropriate in the circumstances, but not for the purpose of expressing an opinion on the effectiveness of internal control. Our audit is, therefore, not designed to identify all control weaknesses and the matters reported below are limited to those deficiencies that we have identified during the audit.

Priority (High/ Medium/ Low)	Control weakness identified	Potential implications	Recommendation	Management's response
Medium	The trial balance included a suspense account of £546k. Substantial audit adjustments were required to clear the suspense account.	The trial balance was incorrect. Additional audit work was required to investigate and clear the suspense account.	A suspense account should not be used.	The suspense account is only usually used for unusual transactions (for clear visibility) that are cleared within the year. If we are being advised not to use the suspense account at all then this is noted.
Medium	The fixed asset register included a duplicated asset with a cost of £108k. This had been included as an addition in 2023 and in the prior year.	The fixed asset register was incorrect.	The fixed asset register should be reviewed to identify such issues.	Noted. The asset register is now correct and balances to the TB. This will be reviewed on a monthly basis as part of the monthly management reporting.
Low	The academy is VAT registered. Business income has not been correctly declared on VAT returns and the partial exemption rules have not been appropriately applied.	VAT returns have not been correctly prepared. Although the expected financial impact is considered trivial, the academy could face penalties for incorrect filings.	We recommend that the academy looks into deregistration and preparation of 126 returns, as well as looking into the correct application of the partial exemption rules in the future.	After discussions with JCK it has been agreed that we will investigate this in January with a VAT specialist from JCK.
Low	Some errors were noted in notifying DfE (via Get information about schools) of changes in information as noted on the ATH schedule of musts. Also Companies House were not informed about changes to directors until filing of the annual confirmation statement.	Current information may not be up to date. Non compliance with regulations.	We recommend that all notifications are made correctly and promptly, in line with the requirements.	Noted. Clerk to the Directors/Governors will now ensure that the Get Information About Schools is kept up to date and CEO will check on a monthly basis. Trust Business Manager now has access to Companies House and will ensure that this is updated within the 14 day timescale.

Low	At the year end, accrued income and deferred income balances in respect of grant income had not been calculated correctly.	Income may not be recorded in the correct period.	Ensure accrued and deferred income balances are calculated at the year end correctly.	Noted. Guidance has been given by JCK.

Update on findings/recommendations from previous years

Prior year recommendation	Status in current year
At the year end, accrued income and deferred income balances had not been calculated correctly.	Still an issue and included again in 2023.
The fixed asset register did not agree to amounts included in the trial balance.	Now resolved.