

## AUDIT AND RISK COMMITTEE - MINUTES

**Minutes** of the Audit and Risk Committee held virtually on Monday 12<sup>th</sup> May 2025 at 4pm.

Trustees: Mr D Austin (Chair), Mr J Dunn, Mr A Milliner and Ms A-M Sim.

Also Present: Dr Blunden (Chief Executive), Mr S Davis (Chief Financial Officer), and Mrs B Couch (Head of Corporate Governance).

Apologies: None

Item	Decision	Action
1.	<b>Welcome, Introductions and Apologies</b> The chair welcomed all to the meeting, apologies were <b>RECEIVED</b> and <b>ACCEPTED</b> from Mr C Waldie.	
2.	<b>Minutes of 27<sup>th</sup> November 2024</b> The Minutes of the meeting held on 27 <sup>th</sup> November 2024 were <b>APPROVED</b> as an accurate record of proceedings.	
3.	<b>Matters arising</b> None	
4.	<b>Internal Audit 2024/25 progress update</b> Trustees <b>NOTED</b> the previously circulated report with information regarding the three internal audits undertaken this academic year. Trustees <b>NOTED</b> these being in health and wellbeing, payroll and health and safety. Trustees <b>NOTED</b> the verbal reasonable assurance provisional judgements for both health and wellbeing and payroll. Trustees <b>NOTED</b> the final report for health and safety is awaited from the auditors and will be shared once received. Trustees <b>NOTED</b> there was a parallel health and safety audit undertaken by the Trust insurers, the RPA, this highlighted that TPAT is demonstrating best practice in the majority of assessment fields and at good standard for the remainder. Trustees <b>NOTED</b> progress continues against the residual 2023/24 action plan and a full update will be shared with the committee at its July meeting. Overall Trustees <b>NOTED</b> the progress against the 2024/25 Internal Audit Plan.	
5.	<b>Internal Audit Programme Procurement 2025/26 – 2027/28</b> Trustees <b>RECEIVED</b> the previously circulated report <b>DISCUSSED</b> the benefits of internal auditors undertaking the work on site as opposed to	

	<p>remotely.</p> <p>Following <b>DISCUSSION</b>, Trustees <b>APPROVED</b> proceeding to procurement of 15-18 days per year for the 2025/26 – 2027/28 term with the option to extend twice by one year.</p> <p>Trustees <b>REQUESTED</b> costs be separated for both onsite and remote in order to see the difference.</p>	
6.	<p><b>Financial Control Monitoring Report</b></p> <p>Trustees <b>NOTED</b> the previously circulated reporting outlining an update on financial controls and good practice including areas that have been identified for further improvement.</p> <p>Trustees <b>NOTED</b> that following the implementation of the finance system and No-PO, No-Pay policy in September 2024 the transactional finance team, led by the Head of Finance, have been running regular webinars and engagement sessions with school based teams who are involved in purchasing activity.</p> <p>The Head of Finance has introduced a new Credit Card solution for the Trust which uses a mobile phone App to capture, store and code all receipts electronically and centrally. Authorisations can be proactively monitored and pursued centrally in a more focussed manner than previously achievable.</p> <p>A continued focus on raising awareness and understanding of financial process is key with the team working to widen participation in the sessions</p> <p>Trustees <b>NOTED</b> the on-going monitoring and management of financial controls.</p>	
7.	<p><b>Confidential Investment Management Report</b></p> <p>Trustees <b>RECEIVED</b> the previously circulated confidential report and <b>NOTED</b> the investment management update.</p> <p>Trustees <b>QUESTIONED</b> and <b>DISCUSSED</b> the due diligence followed to ensure investment are ethical.</p> <p>Trustees <b>THANKED</b> the CFO for this work and were pleased that this work is underway and having a positive impact.</p>	
8.	<p><b>Risk Register</b></p> <p>Trustees <b>NOTED</b> the previously circulated risk register.</p> <p>Changes highlighted in yellow were <b>DISCUSSED</b>, these included financial uncertainty due to the rise in national insurance and pay awards currently being debated nationally. Trustees <b>NOTED</b> the significant issue financial pressures bring.</p> <p>Trustees <b>QUESTIONED</b> and <b>DISCUSSED</b> the financial pressures including the legacy issue of the Cape Cornwall deficit.</p> <p>Trustees <b>DISCUSSED</b> the measures in place to look at staffing models in order to manage budgets.</p> <p>Trustees <b>DISCUSSED</b> concerns around exclusion and suspension rates and <b>NOTED</b> the appointment of the Director of Inclusion to lead this work.</p>	

	Trustees <b>DISCUSSED</b> the estate condition and the current surveys being undertaken.  Trustees <b>NOTED</b> the updated Risk Register.	
9.	<p><b>Review of Pupil Numbers on Spring Census 2025.</b></p> <p>Trustees <b>NOTED</b> the previously circulated report and <b>DISCUSSED</b> those schools with growth in numbers as well as the significant drop in NOR for some schools.</p> <p>Trustees <b>DISCUSSED</b> the drop in NOR being for a number of reasons, due to mobility as well as parents choosing to home educate in some areas covered by Trust schools.</p> <p>Trustees <b>NOTED</b> and <b>DISCUSSED</b> the Trust's commitment to rural, small schools being an integral part of the communities they serve.</p> <p>Trustees <b>CONSIDERED</b> and <b>APPROVED</b> the Spring 2025 24 Census Numbers.</p>	
10.	<p><b>Date of next meeting</b></p> <p>Wednesday 2<sup>nd</sup> July at 4pm</p>	