

Executive Summary

Cardiff West Community High School (CHS)

BACKGROUND

- 1 An Internal Audit review has been undertaken of the control environment in Cardiff West CHS. The school was established in September 2017 following amalgamation of the former Glyn Derw High School and Michaelston Community College. It has an agreed deficit budget of £878,203 for 2021/22 and as at April 2021, there were 893 pupils on roll. Accountancy support is in place, including in the development of a Medium-Term Financial Plan.
- 2 The school was subject to an Estyn inspection in November 2018 where an opinion of “adequate and needs improvement” was given for the five inspection areas. Five recommendations were made, relating to matters including raising standards and strengthening the effectiveness of leadership. Following a recent follow up inspection, the school is considered to have made sufficient progress to be removed from follow up by Estyn. The school has been subject to additional Council and Central South Consortium (Principal Improvement Partner) support since the Estyn report was received.

MAIN CONCLUSIONS

- 3 The audit identified a number of control gaps that need to be addressed to provide the necessary assurance on good governance, risk management and systems of internal control, and an audit opinion of **unsatisfactory** has been allocated.
- 4 Gaps were identified in the completeness of declarations of interest, the monitoring of governor training, the availability of sub-committee minutes, documented risk management measures in cases where staff are to start work prior to receipt of a Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check, and there was a need to review and update certain statutory policies.
- 5 At an operational level, general financial control was reported to require improved oversight and control. This included a need for school private fund account updates and audit following school amalgamation, improvements to the management trail of contracts entered and associated processes followed, the completeness of income records, and purchasing card record keeping and control.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR ACTION

- 6 The audit included twenty-two recommendations (six red, fourteen red/amber and two amber/green).
- 7 Management have agreed all of the twenty-two recommendations raised during the audit.

LATEST POSITION

- 8 Audit Management have met with the Headteacher, the Chair of Governors and the Chair of Finance to discuss the draft report. Following the meeting a formal response has been received with a commitment to deliver all recommendations.
- 9 Internal Audit will continue to monitor the internal control environment through the recommendation tracker and regular discussions with management. A further follow up audit will be undertaken in line with the audit protocol.