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The Trustees of HERA Primary Academy Trust
Lawford Mead Primary School
Chelmsford
Essex
CM1 2JH

29 November 2019

Dear Governors

Letter of Comment (“Management Letter”) for the Period Ended 31 August 2019

Following the completion of our audit fieldwork, we are writing to summarise and advise you of matters that have come to our attention of which you should be made aware. In accordance with International Standards of Auditing (UK and Ireland), we are expected to communicate to those charged with Governance and Management relevant issues arising from the audit. This letter of comment supplemented by our detailed systems report includes all such communication.

Approach and Scope

We have listed herein and separately within our interim systems report, recommendations in respect of possible improvements to accounting and internal control systems. This does not comprise a comprehensive statement of all weaknesses that may exist or of all improvements that could be made. It addresses only those matters that have come to our attention as a result of the audit procedures we have performed for the purpose of expressing an opinion on the financial statements. As required by International Standards on Auditing (UK and Ireland), the audit included consideration of internal control relevant to the preparation of the financial statements in order to design appropriate audit procedures but not for the purpose of expressing an opinion on the effectiveness of internal control.

This letter should not be considered in isolation from our interim systems report and we strongly recommend that this letter should be considered alongside and in conjunction with it.

For ease of reference, we have summarised and prioritised findings from our systems report within this letter.

(a) Expected modifications to the auditor’s report

There are no expected modifications to the audit report on the Financial Statements. Auditors are also required to provide a second regularity report in their role as Independent Reporting Accountants and this too is expected to be unmodified.

(b) Audit adjustments

Set out in **Appendices 1-3** to this letter are surplus reconciliations for the Trust and each Academy listing the adjustments made throughout the course of our audit.

Registered Auditors and Chartered Tax Advisers

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In addition to the adjustments set out in the surplus reconciliation, some presentational adjustments have been made in the financial statements for transfers between funds where required (e.g. to reflect the source of funding for fixed asset additions), although these have had no impact on the total of fund balances.

(c) Recommendations in respect of accounting and internal control systems arising from work performed during the audit

We have set out below a summary of the matters we have raised within our system report, **Appendix 4**. We have included our view of the priority (low, medium or high) of each point. In arriving at our view of priority we have considered both the potential impact of the weakness identified and the likelihood of the related risk materialising.

Point Raised	Priority
1. Not all business interests that were declared on the register of interest forms were disclosed on the website.	Medium
2. The year end bank reconciliations had not been approved in a timely manner. On reviewing other months reconciliations this appears to be an isolated incident.	Medium

(d) Regularity Issues

As stated earlier herein, our regularity report within the financial statements is expected to be unmodified. Other than the points raised in (d), above, we have no suggestions to make in regard to regularity issues found during the audit.

(e) Letter of representation

A draft letter of representation is attached at **Appendices 5 and 6**. There is one letter of representation for the audit, and one for regularity. The representations requested are important, but standard.

(f) Significant difficulties, if any encountered during the audit

We did not encounter any significant difficulties during the audit.

(g) Significant matters, if any arising from the audit

There are no further significant matters that we need to bring to your attention.

(h) Independence Issues

As agreed with you, the provision of non audit services to you results in a potential threat to our independence. We can confirm that as required by professional ethical standards, we have implemented appropriate safeguards to deal with this threat, in accordance with the guidance issued by your professional body.



(i) Other Action Points – Reminders and Submissions

- (i) **A written reply should be prepared** in response to this letter. Please return it to us keeping a signed copy for your own records and for submission to ESFA.
- (ii) On return to us of the signed statutory accounts and representation letter, we will certify the audit report(s) and send you the certified accounts for submission to the ESFA (**the filing deadline is 31 December**). You must also publish the accounts in full on your website by **31 January 2020**.
- (iii) An accounts return must be completed, signed and submitted to the ESFA. The deadline for submission has not yet been set, but we believe this will be brought forward to 20 January 2020. We will correspond with you separately on this, if we have not already done so.

Please note that this report has been prepared for the sole use of the Trustees of HERA Primary Academy Trust. We appreciate that a copy of this letter is required to be submitted to the ESFA. Apart from that however, it must not be disclosed to third parties, quoted or referred to, without our prior written consent. We assume no responsibility to any other person.

We would like to take this opportunity of expressing our thanks to your staff for their assistance during the course of our audit. If you have any queries regarding the matters raised in this letter, or other issues of concern please contact us as soon as possible.

Yours faithfully

Edmund Carr LLP