



Education  
Funding  
Agency

# Review of Park View Educational Trust

May 2014 <sup>2</sup>

Park View Educational Trust received this report in draft form in April. The comments in red are PVET's comments returned to EFA on the draft Review.

## Contents

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS	3
BACKGROUND	4
SCOPE	4
FINDINGS	4

Governance and Leadership	4
Community Cohesion	7
Determination & Designation	7
Financial Regulations	8
Safeguarding	9
Education and Curriculum	10
Recruitment and Staffing	12
Compliance and Other Issues	13
RECOMMENDATIONS	13
Schedule 1: Breaches of the Funding Agreement and/or legislation applicable to Academies	16
Schedule 1: Breaches of the Academies Financial Handbook	20

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

1. This report sets out the conclusions of the work completed by the Education Funding Agency (EFA) and the Department for Education. A team led by the EFA visited the three academies in Park View Educational Trust ('the Trust') on 21, 24 and 25 March 2014. There are many weaknesses across the Trust and some areas where there are breaches of the funding agreement. The Trust has also not abided by the terms of the Academies Financial Handbook and Independent School Standards. Schedule 1 to this report sets out in more detail the breaches of the funding agreement and the areas where the Trust has not abided by the terms of the Academies Financial Handbook and the Independent School Standards.

2. The Trust has not abided by the terms of the Academies Financial Handbook. The governance arrangements for the Trust are inadequate. The Trust has appointed the executive principal as Accounting Officer, but individual academy headteachers are not accountable to her either as the Accounting Officer, or as executive principal. She has no line of responsibility for the academy headteachers. The Chair of the Trust has an inappropriate day-to-day role in the running of the schools.

The Trust has a typical multi academy trust ("MAT") governance structure which has worked well. Evidence of its success is in the strong academic performance across the Trust of all pupils.

3. We witnessed an inconsistent application of safeguarding policies and safe recruitment across the Trust. The curriculum provided by Nansen Primary School is not broad and balanced and the Trust has not taken into account the guidance issued by the Secretary of State in relation to sex and relationship education. Some elements of the curriculum, including the social, moral, spiritual and cultural provision at Park View School, Golden Hillock School and Nansen Primary School are restricted to a conservative Islamic perspective.

4. There is insufficient evidence that Park View School is welcoming to all faiths and none. It is not faith designated, but has an apparent Islamic focus and collective acts of worship are delivered at Park View School and Golden Hillock School that are not in keeping with the requirements of the funding agreement. There are also examples of non-compliance with the Equality Act 2010 and the Independent School Standards, for example the practice of segregating girls and boys in some classes in a manner which could constitute less favourable treatment of girls. There is evidence of an inappropriate external speaker being invited into Park View School to speak to children.

The Trust rejects the assertion that "there is insufficient evidence that Park View School is welcoming to all faiths and none". That is a sweeping statement in itself and the Trust does not consider there is evidence to support the statement itself.

The Trust rejects the implication that there is gender segregation and the Trust notes that the "inappropriate" external speaker gave a well-received talk on time management.

It is frustrating that the report does not state the content of the "inappropriate" speaker's talk which would be calm fears being stirred up in the public domain as regards the safety of pupils. The fact is that no external speaker has given, at any stage, inappropriate talks to our pupils and no such delivery would be tolerated. It is noted at this point that the draft Review accepts that in common with several schools there is no policy in terms of

vetting external speakers but that the Trust might (in effect) learn from the experience of the “inappropriate” speaker being sourced.

Golden Hillock School does not provide acts of collective worship. Space is provided for students and staff who wish to pray at lunchtimes, or indeed other times, but this is not school led or delivered. At Golden Hillock School there is no school policy requiring any kind of segregation in classes. The only subject where girls and boys are separated for learning is in physical education.

The draft Review alleges that the alleged segregation practises (which are in any event denied as set out above) could constitute “less favourable treatment of girls”. Such “less favourable treatment” does not show in the GCSE results at Park View School. The 2013 GCSE results at Park View School were:

**5+ A\*-Cs GCSEs (inc English and Maths)**

	Boys	Girls	Difference
2013	70%	78%	8%
2014 prediction	70%	82%	12%

At Park View School there are 61 prefects: 43 are girls and 18 are boys.

At Golden Hillock School there are 16 prefects: 8 are girls and 8 are boys.

5. There are a number of examples of poor practice across the Trust. Staffing structures are unclear and there are a number of staff in acting positions, including each of the headteachers of the schools in the Trust. In addition, staff are appointed to some posts with little experience. There is no external validation of staff appointed as references from sources outside of the Trust are not taken up. The complaints policy is compliant but the implementation of it is not, because it is poorly administered and there is no log of complaints.

On the contrary there are clear staffing structures. Staff are always appointed with appropriate experience and in the majority of cases references from outside the Trust are taken up.

Since becoming a MAT the Trust has supported two additional schools (Golden Hillock and Nansen Primary School). The Trust has adopted the common practise of deploying staff across the sponsored schools.

The immediate results have vindicated this strategy with Nansen Primary School and Golden Hillock School both achieving their highest results with less than one year’s intervention/support. At Nansen 61% of Year 6 pupils achieved Level 4 or above (in comparison to 49% previously). At Golden Hillock 52% achieved 5 or more A\*-Cs (including English and Maths). For 2014 the predicated grade achievement is 57% 5+ A\*-Cs at GCSE (including English and Maths).

The table below shows the achievement at Golden Hillock School over the past two years. In 2013, 55% of Girls achieved 5+A\*-C at GCSE compared to 49% of boys.

**Percentage achieving 5+ A\*-C GCSEs (including English and Maths) GCSEs**

	School	Local Authority	England – all schools
2012	43%	60.1%	59.4%
2013	52%	59.9%	59.2%

Whilst the draft Review refers to staff in certain posts with little experience, there is no reference to the fact that the staff are clearly providing strong academic guidance to the pupils.

## BACKGROUND

6. A team led by the EFA visited all three schools within the Trust as part of the review, which are Park View School – the Academy of Mathematics and Science, Nansen Primary School and Golden Hillock School. The team interviewed the Chair of the Trust, local Chairs of Governors, Governors, the executive principal, individual headteachers, members of the senior leadership team, heads of department, teachers and support staff. The team also observed lessons and reviewed the policies and processes established at the school to seek assurance that these met the requirements of the funding agreement, the Academies Financial Handbook, the Independent School Standards, and other legislation applicable to academies.

The background to the draft Review must be set in context. It is inescapable that the investigation itself and the methodology of questioning were driven by the media interest that had commented on the alleged Trojan Horse plot and criticisms by disaffected former members of staff.

An example of the context is the reference in report to a “speaker system, costing £70,000”. (see paragraph 42). This allegation had only surfaced in the media and whilst the draft Review accepts that the evidence did not support the allegation, it is disturbing that there is a need to mention it (or in the alternative not to criticise the distorting effects of such allegations).

## SCOPE

7. As set out in a letter to the Chair of the Trust, dated 20 March 2014, the scope of the review was to satisfy the Secretary of State that:

- systems, processes and policies are in place and being adhered to that ensure children are kept safe, well-educated, that they are supported with a broad and balanced curriculum, and that their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development meets the required standards
- there is effective oversight from the Governing Body to ensure compliance with the funding agreement and that systems and processes in place are applied
- there is a clear and transparent system of good governance and financial management within the school.

8. The Department for Education and the EFA’s review of the Trust was arranged following recent Ofsted inspections on the 5 and 6 March and 17 and 18 March and public interest.

No Trust comment is made on these paragraphs

## FINDINGS

### Governance and Leadership

9. The governance arrangements for the Trust are inadequate. The Trust has appointed the executive principal as Accounting Officer but individual academy headteachers are not accountable to her either as the Accounting Officer or as executive principal. She has no line of responsibility for the academy headteachers. The structure shows that academy headteachers are held to account only through the local governing bodies in place for each school. When interviewed, the executive principal was unaware of the names of some of the more recent appointments to the senior leadership team at Park View School.

The Trust strongly rejects the assertion that the governance arrangements are inadequate. As with all strong Trusts, the Trust accepts that there is always scope for review and improvement to present structures but that does not equate to existing arrangements being inadequate.

The Trust operates a model of high autonomy/delegation to the local governing bodies of the individual schools within the Trust. There are appropriate schemes of delegation in place to ensure accountability of management, and that Trust-wide policies are implemented to ensure consistent provision of efficient education and the delivery of strong outcomes for the pupils.

The draft Review omits to mention that the local governing body of Golden Hillock School has been in place for circa five months and that of Nansen Primary School circa eight months. Furthermore, in spite of such relatively new bodies being in place the trajectory of improvement across the schools in the Trust does not reflect an inadequate governance structure.

Whilst the Executive Principal does not directly line manage all Principals in respect of their day to day operations of the individual schools this does not, it is submitted, equate to insufficient accountability.

The Executive Principal, as the Accounting Officer of the Trust, is responsible for ensuring the implementation of the financial procedures and protocols that have been agreed. The Principals are accountable to the Executive Principal in terms of compliance with these protocols.

In addition – as stated elsewhere in this draft Review and included again here to highlight accountability – the Principals are held to account by the local governing bodies and each chair of each local governing body holds a position on the Trust Board. The Executive Principal is also a Director and sits on each local governing body, so there is a clear chain of accountability.

The draft Review states that the Executive Principal was unaware of the names of some the recent appointments to the senior leadership at Park View School. Whilst the Executive Principal may have forgotten, she was certainly not “unaware”. In fact the Executive Principal was involved in the process of shortlisting and interviewing the

candidates for the only senior leadership appointment in the Spring term (that of Vice Principal to Park View School).

There have been two other “recent” appointments to the leadership team at Park View School. Those posts are Assistant Principal Data and Assistant Principal Pastoral. The Executive Principal worked with these individuals.

10. The Chair of the Trust has an inappropriate role in the day to day running of Park View School. In interview, the Chair reflected that he had been in the school every day in the last four weeks dealing with ‘issues’.

The draft Review asserts that the Chair of the Trust has an “inappropriate” role in the day to day running of the school. The report fails to recognise or pay appropriate regard to the fact that the Chair has had to be heavily involved recently due to the high profile (and adverse publicity) surrounding the Trust. The Chair has been providing visible support for the staff and, indeed, if the Chair had not been on site then a justified criticism could have been asserted that he was not paying enough attention or giving enough time to assist the Trust through the difficult period.

In the Chair providing such support to the Trust and its schools the teaching staff have been able to concentrate on continuing to provide the high standard of teaching to the pupils across the Trust.

11. School staff informed us that the formal governance structure (described below) is circumvented by a fortnightly headteachers meeting that is chaired by the Chair of the Trust in which the individual headteachers at each school are held to account. These meetings are not open to scrutiny; there is no agenda and they are not minuted. When interviewed, the Chair of the Trust said that he did not have any regular meetings with the headteachers.

The heads of the three schools that form the Trust do meet with each other on an informal basis to share ideas and support each other. These meetings are informal with no agenda or minutes of the same. In essence they are quasi-social meetings. These meetings are not used to hold the head teachers of the schools to account, but as stated to provide support and sharing of ideas and good practice. There was no intention to circumvent accountability.

12. The Trust has a board with six directors. Each academy has its own local governing body with governors that report back to the Trust board. The local governing bodies each have a scheme of delegation that sets out spending levels and the number and type of governors to be appointed. Each local governing body includes the academy headteacher, the Trust’s executive principal and another Trust director. The local governing body is used to hold the individual headteachers to account.

13. The Chair of the Trust confirmed that no formal skills audit had taken place for any Trust directors or governors. He advised that there are three days a year allocated for governor training. On conversion to academy status, the vast majority of the local governing body at Golden Hillock School was formed from the governing body outgoing from the previous school. The Trust decided it was not appropriate to assess governors’ skills due to the sensitivities of academy conversion. There is therefore no evidence to demonstrate that the local governors have the necessary spread of skills.

It is correct that the Trust agreed as part of the sponsorship arrangement to incorporate those governors who wished to continue, on the local governing body. The rationale was that these individuals have much experience and are passionate about the education of their children. With appropriate training the governance of Golden Hillock continues to improve.

14. Although the scheme of delegation was dated 1 September 2013, discussions with key members of staff, including the principal finance officer, business managers and the headteacher of Park View School, indicated that they had either no or only limited knowledge of the scheme and its application.

The scheme of delegation was issued to all governors at a governor training event in November.

15. There are no sub-committees (e.g. finance) at either the Trust or at academy level. The Trust board and local governing bodies undertake all aspects of the Trust / academy business during a governing body meeting.

In terms of the findings that there are no sub-committees at the local governing body level this is not necessarily bad governance. The Trust acknowledges that the structure might be better set up in order to ensure that the local governing bodies work in a more streamlined and effective manner but it is noted that there is no criticism of the structure as it currently stands.

In any event the structure has worked well at Park View School and this was to be replicated across the other schools coming into the Trust. That said there is no restriction on the local governing bodies setting up their own committee structure. What matters is good governance and carrying out of functions effectively and efficiently.

16. The Academies Financial Handbook states that a Trust must have a dedicated audit committee if the Trust's budget reaches a particular threshold. The Trust does not have

a dedicated audit committee, and did not previously have a committee that fulfilled the functions of an audit committee, when it clearly meets the criteria for one.

The Trust recognises that it requires a dedicated audit committee and is taking steps to put such a committee in place.

17. The executive principal and another Trust director are members of each local governing body. However, there was insufficient evidence to confirm that the executive principal, as the Accounting Officer, has appropriate oversight of financial transactions in each of the individual academies. The executive principal could also be out-voted at meetings and so has limited operational control or influence over the budgets.

The draft Review omits to acknowledge that as a director of the Trust the Accounting Officer (i.e. the Executive Principal) can bring any concerns to the Trust where there are concerns regarding financial decisions. Any decision taken at Board level is binding on the local governing bodies and Principals of the schools.

Furthermore there is a Principal Finance Officer (PFO) who oversees all financial process and is accountable to the Accounting Officer. Intensive work has been carried out on the financial practices and procedures to ensure consistency across the Trust.

18. There was evidence that the local governing bodies were not functioning effectively. There was no documentary history of local governance for the first 13 months at Nansen Primary School. Parent governors we spoke to were confused by the governance structure and the positions they held. One of the senior leaders interviewed reported that she had never met a governor on the local governing body or been invited to a local governing body meeting although the male senior leader with similar responsibilities was invited to every meeting.

The observation regarding the documentary history of the local governance of Nansen Primary School for its first 13 months is an error. The local governing body at Nansen Primary School was only set up in September 2013; prior to that it was governed directly by the Trust.

Once Golden Hillock came into the Trust the local governance structure became operational which reflects the ability of the Trust to adjust its operations according to its size and to structure itself so as to ensure optimum provision of governance, staffing and education.

The Trust notes that there is apparent confusion amongst parent governors. This is disappointing in so far as there has been training and explanations given of the Trust structure. It is accepted that for many governors the shift from single governance of one school to a local governance structure is difficult to grasp but further training will be provided.

19. At Golden Hillock school three members of staff reported separately and adversely on the manner in which the local governing body meetings were conducted. For example, some governors will not shake the hands of female senior leaders and are

reportedly rude to women and dismissive of their input regardless of whether they are a member of staff or a school governor.

Since Golden Hillock School became an Academy, there have been three meetings of the local governing body. The allegations of rudeness and dismissive behaviour have not been observed by the Principal of Golden Hillock at these three meetings. For the avoidance of doubt the Trust Board agrees that such behaviour is unacceptable.

20. The Trust has not ensured that all Trustees have completed the register of business interests kept by the Trust and that there are measures in place to manage any conflicts of interest. Although the Trust has a register of business interests which each director and local governor should complete, our review identified that 3 out of 7 director forms had not been completed. When taking the local governors into account, it appears that relevant interests have not been registered for 19 out of 36 directors and local governors. Members of staff with budget responsibility who are not either a director or governor have not been asked to complete the register of business interests.

21. The declaration of interests forms were incomplete. Other directorships were not listed and, apart from staff employed by the Trust, none had declared what their employment, office, trade, profession or vocation was (if any). However, as is good practice, the minutes of each board and local governing body meeting shows that there is an opportunity at the start of the meeting for individuals to declare any interests.

22. The Trust has not declared any related party transactions in the 2012/13 financial statements as required in the Academies Financial Handbook. Our review showed that the chair of the Trust received 2 payments (total of £1,321) from the Trust for consultancy work relating to the set-up of a new free school. The Trust members agreed to the payments, but it is not clear whether the other governors did so in accordance with the process set out in the Articles of Association. Nansen Primary School received £17,330 over a 6 month period from Al-Hijrah school (a Voluntary Aided Muslim school in Birmingham). From records we reviewed, the income related to lettings. A Trust director is linked to Al-Hijrah school. There was no evidence that prices were agreed at arm's length.

The payments to the Chair in respect of consultancy work for the free school were made in 2013/2014.

The payments received from Al-Hijrah School were negotiated by the Executive Principal with the Local Authority at the request of the Local Authority. There is evidence held that the figure was agreed at arms' length – it was not requested.

23. The Trust does not have sufficient controls in place to identify related party transactions and would not know if such transactions had taken place. It was also unclear whether the Accounting Officer understood what is meant by a related party transaction. In interview, she referred to transactions with Birmingham City Council as related party transactions, which they are not.

24. The Trust does purchase a Responsible Officer function from the local authority for the academies who provides reports to the local governing bodies. However, there was no evidence to show that the assessment of assurance work had been agreed with the Trust board.

25. The Trust board is 'light-touch' and delegates significantly to the local governing bodies. For example, each local governing body could spend up to £100,000 without reference to the Trust board. It is questionable whether such a large amount of delegation is appropriate for a Trust of this size.

## Community Cohesion

26. There is insufficient evidence that the Trust is promoting community cohesion as required by the funding agreement. An inappropriate external speaker has been allowed to address students at the school. Sheikh Shady Al-Suleiman has spoken at the school (on 28 November 2013) and he is known to have previously extolled extremist views. Staff advised us in interview that external speakers are regularly invited into Park View School and this is aimed at developing pupils as individuals rather than promoting any particular view. Staff also said that external visitors are invited based on the needs of the students and gave the police as an example of this. The Trust has no policy in place to vet external speakers, though this is in keeping with a number of other schools. However, given this experience we would recommend that the Trust gives consideration to developing a policy to vet external speakers.

The reference to Sheikh Shady Al-Suleiman and the concerns expressed about his past is misleading. Taken out of context it is unsurprising that this has caused immense media scrutiny. Context as ever is crucial to a fair and balanced report:

- The Principal met with Mr Al-Suleiman, in advance of the talk and informed him that the school is not a faith school and that his audience would consist of children of the Muslim faith, other faiths (e.g. Sikh and Christian) and children of no faith.
- The short talk was focussed on the promotion of positive values such as time management, self-study, taking responsibility for ones' actions, excelling in education, becoming role models in the community and becoming good British citizens.
- Whilst there is no formal vetting policy in place, the school had established that Mr Al-Suleiman had visited the UK over 25 times in the previous 10 years to deliver talks and education courses. He is given unrestricted movement in the UK.
- He is known to have worked with authorities to establish a better understanding of Islamic values and to seek to eradicate the ideology of extreme elements in the Islamic community.
- Whilst the Trust does not seek to defend any previously extolled views of Mr Al-Suleiman it is important to highlight that he was not known to the Trust or the school as having extremist views.
- Furthermore the Trust robustly and vigorously denies any suggestion that it put its pupils at risk at any time.

27. Activities which did provide evidence of engagement with the local community were referred to such as Park View School's sharing of its facilities. For example, we were told in interviews with staff that a local women's group meeting was taking place in the sports hall. Also, we were told in interviews with staff that a number of sports and after school clubs, such as the Scouts, are also held at the school and are well attended by the pupils.

The extent of other work with the community is understated. A schedule is attached which sets out further examples of community cohesion undertaken by the schools within the Trust.

## Determination & Designation

28. We did not see sufficient evidence that Park View School was making active efforts to make the school attractive to all faith denominations including pupils of no faith. The school is not faith-designated, but has an Islamic focus. In interview, a senior member of staff expressed the view that some members of staff at the academy had, through some of the activities, namely the introduction of a Madrassa curriculum in Personal Development, taken the Islamic focus too far. We observed posters written in Arabic in most of the classrooms visited by the team and in corridors, advertising the virtues of prayer and promoting the Friday prayers (Jummah). Staff we spoke to said that the loudspeakers in the school were used to broadcast the call to prayer (Adhan) across the school, but were turned off on our visit because of a malfunction.

The Trust is concerned at the interpretation of the curriculum provision at Park View school. PHSE does not have a Madrassah curriculum. The curriculum provided to the inspection team indicated the focus of every Personal Development (PD) lesson including work with Prevent, fire safety, domestic violence group etc.

Park View School provided examples of resources that could be used by staff for additional ideas. These resources included the ICE project which was developed and co-ordinated by the School Development Support Agency, jointly funded by the DCSF (as it was then) and the Department for Communities and Local Government. The project team has taken the national citizenship programme of study that is used in school and the approach is essentially to teach citizenship values to Muslim pupils, who make up 98% of the pupils at Park View.

As stated one of the aims of the ICE project was to develop suitable materials which could be easily adapted to mainstream schools' use, if the school wanted to make the citizenship curriculum relevant to Muslim pupils. Lessons include tiles like staying away from groups that preach hatred.

There is a sound system in the main hall which is used to play the call to prayer once a day at lunchtime. But the main purpose of the sound system is for musical and theatrical performances on stage.

There are indeed posters informing of the time of prayers at lunchtime throughout the school. However there is no promotion of prayers and, as a matter of fact, there is no Quaranic Arabic on these posters. The poster just informs of the time and place of prayers.

29. There were posters in some classrooms at Park View School, such as the maths room, which encouraged pupils to begin and end each lesson with a short prayer (dua). Teachers told us that it was the pupil's decision whether they wanted to read the prayers

or not. Approximately 80% of girls at the school were wearing white hijabs although there was no evidence to suggest a strict Islamic dress code was being enforced.

There is only ONE classroom that had a poster of a prayer to help learning in the whole school. The poster was put up by the previous incumbent some years ago. The current teacher who occupies the room is a Hindu and would have no use for the poster.

30. Collective Islamic worship is offered at all three schools in the Trust, and on a daily basis at Park View School. None of the schools in the Trust have an active determination in place to lift the requirement set out in the funding agreement that acts of collective worship should be of a broadly Christian character.

Acts of collective Islamic worship are not delivered at Golden Hillock School. As stated above, space is provided within the school for students and staff who wish to pray at lunchtimes. However, this is not school-led or delivered.

31. Park View School reported that it had received a part-determination in 1997 which has been renewed on two occasions, the last of which was in 2008, which allowed the School to offer an Islamic form of collective worship. The part-determination in place for Park View School expired in April 2013. No request has been received by the Secretary of State for the determination to be renewed. Similarly, the determination for Nansen Primary School was not renewed following its conversion to an academy in 2012. Advice was provided in July 2013 to the then business manager on how this determination could be renewed. There is no determination in place for Golden Hillock School.

There is reference to the “determinations” in respect of the requirements for acts of collective worship to be broadly Christian in nature

For Park View School and Nansen Primary School we were of the understanding that our part determination stands as it was on the day of conversion to an academy, and as both Park View School and Nansen Primary both had part determination to deliver acts of Islamic worship on their respective days of conversion we carried on with the assumption that those determinations still stand.

For Golden Hillock School, which does not deliver Islamic acts of worship, the school has just completed its consultation exercise and is following the advice provided by the EFA in terms of its application for a determination. We have an EFA reference in relation to this.

## **Financial Regulations**

32. The Trust has not complied with a number of areas of the Academies Financial Handbook and this is a breach of its funding agreement. The Trust was incorporated on 14 February 2012. During this period, Nansen Primary School (1 October 2012) and Golden Hillock School (1 October 2013) have joined the Trust.

33. The Trust is in a strong financial position. As at 31 August 2013, the Trust had just over £1 million surplus revenue reserves and cash of £1.44 million.

34. The Trust has submitted two sets of audited financial statements since incorporation (to 31 August 2012 and 31 August 2013). The external auditors provided an unqualified audit opinion on the financial statements and nothing came to their attention regarding the regularity of income and expenditure for both years.

35. There is no agreed financial regulations/procedures (or equivalent) manual for the Trust or its academies, and we found there to be inconsistent processes within the Trust.

It is noted that EFA recognises the strong financial position of the Trust and its audited statements of account.

36. The principal finance officer is seconded from Golden Hillock School and has worked 2 days per week for the Trust since December 2013. Each academy has its own business manager, with two recent appointments, who report to their respective principal. There are no direct links to the principal finance officer.

There are direct links between the schools and the Principal Finance Officer. As explained to the EFA there are fortnightly meetings with the PFO and the three Finance Managers.

37. The principal finance officer has prepared a draft financial regulation manual and we were informed that this would be presented to the board meeting on 27 March 2014. Although it covered the majority of expected areas, it did not make reference to:

- Not for profit requirement
- Novel and contentious transactions
- Borrowing or leasing requirements
- Delegated limits within the Academies Financial Handbook
- Fraud or theft notification requirements

The Principal Finance Officer had put together the Trust's financial handbook and was scheduled to present to the Board on 27th March. Each school was still working to the old LA guidelines, which were still fit for purpose but the Trust had recognised the need to tighten its processes.

The Board acknowledges the lack of reference to specific areas [in the draft financial regulation manual] and will take steps to ensure that that the handbook is appropriately modified.

38. The Trust does not have an approved competitive tendering policy in place. The external auditors noted in the 2012/13 management letter that the appointment of [REDACTED] did not follow a competitive tendering process.

39. We found individual academies do get orders approved and from the sample check performed there were adequate order forms completed. The Trust has introduced PS Financials, which has a purchase order and approval system which is predominantly being used, although there are several cases of 'non-orders' still being processed. For our sample, the expenditure had been manually authorised.

40. No fixed asset register is in place at Park View School. There is a fixed asset register at both Nansen Primary School and Golden Hillock School. Having no fixed asset register could result in assets not being correctly accounted for within the financial

statements and/or assets being disposed of without the Trust's or local governing body's knowledge.

41. The Trust has not ensured that value for money has been achieved in asset disposals. Design & Technology and Food Technology assets installed as part of Building Schools for the Future were disposed of when Park View School converted to academy status. From records held at Birmingham City Council, the 'Art & DT' area had assets valued at between £74,000 - £80,000. We saw a record that seven ovens had been disposed of for £530 in total. There was no evidence to whom the ovens were sold, and whether best value was achieved. There is no evidence as to what else was disposed of, to whom, or when.

A significant amount of furniture and fittings from the technology room is in storage underneath the stage and has not been written off. Nobody was asked about this – only what equipment had been sold.

42. We had received reports that a "speaker system costing £70,000" had been purchased by Park View School. A review of the financial records did identify external loud speakers had been purchased, but for a total of £15,700. This included outside loud speakers and lighting. The, executive principal explained it was purchased to enable outside performances to be undertaken.

The cost of the speakers themselves was £950. The financial records for this were shown to the EFA team. In the interests of fairness this figure should be stated. The reference to £15,700 is an amalgamation of a number of different orders at different times of several months apart. It is misleading to suggest that this figure of £15,700 was to do with the speakers.

43. The Trust charges each academy 4% of income for central services. There is no cost based rationale for this level of recharge other than it is similar to the top slice charge for other MATs. However, our review indicated that the top slice is too high for the services provided. For 2012/13, the Trust charged £314,000 for services valued at £142,000.

## Safeguarding

44. The Single Central Record (SCR) at Nansen Primary School was not completed in line with guidance issued by the Secretary of State. This does not comply with the Independent School Standards. We observed the date of receipt of references for many staff was not recorded in the 'references columns' in the SCR. However, a record in the column was recorded as 'pre March 2014'. When challenged, the business manager and office manager, who administer the SCR, stated that they were unsure of the dates when references had been received and had been instructed to complete gaps in the SCR in that way. We were also told that these references were not in the personnel files at the school but held offsite in HR department at Park View School. The same entry was made for more than half of the references. At academy conversion in 2012, 37 staff left post. Therefore the number of staff marked 'pre-March 2014' leaves us to conclude that references may not have been taken up or received for many staff new to post employed between 2012 and the date of our visit in March 2014. In addition, governors', including parent governors', details were not recorded on the SCR.

There are significant inaccuracies here.

The draft Review jumps to the conclusion that references have not been taken up or received for many staff new to a post employed between 2012 and the date of the EFA visit in March 2014. This is wholly incorrect.

When Ofsted came to Park View School we advised that rather than write the wording 'yes' to confirm that a reference had been received, the date of the received reference was now being noted on the single central register. No comment, adverse or otherwise, was made by Ofsted at that point.

This process was therefore implemented at Nansen Primary School, i.e. from March 2014 the date the reference was physically received is now recorded on the single central register. To clarify the new process, where the wording in the reference column had previously stated 'yes' (to indicate receipt of a reference previously) this was amended to 'pre March 2014').

This is not an indication that Nansen Primary School did not have references prior to that date, indeed they did have such references, and those references contain the date indicated by the referees and are available for inspection.

To the extent that the observation regarding governors and DBS checks is directed at Nansen Primary School, it is accepted that not all of the individuals on the local governing body of Nansen Primary School have undertaken a DBS check. The following points are made:

- It is not a requirement for members of the local governing body to have undertaken a DBS check;
- Notwithstanding that, some of the members of the local governing body do have a DBS check;
- Nansen Primary School have sought to obtain the relevant details for the remaining members who, so far, have not had a DBS check;
- The HR Manager (if she had been spoken to by EFA) would have been able to show the EFA the diary entries made on all the occasions that attempts were made to contact governors to ask them to come in for the DBS checks

Finally, it is incorrect that the references are not held in the personnel files at Nansen Primary School. The references are held in locked cabinets in the Business Manager's

office at Nansen Primary School which is where the interview took place and, indeed, some personnel files were looked at on a random basis by the EFA Inspectors.

45. The website for Nansen Primary School does not contain accurate materials including policy information. The Child Protection Policy we reviewed is different to the one given to the team at the school and the website version does not contain topics such as forced marriage, female genital mutilation, homophobic bullying and the Prevent Strategy. We were concerned that parents were not provided with accurate information regarding school procedures and also regarding national guidelines on Child Protection.

The Child Protection Policy on the website for Nansen Primary School is the same policy as inspected by the EFA. A copy of the updated policy was also provided with the relevant information of a sensitive topic such as forced marriage, female genital mutilation, homophobic bullying, and the Prevent Strategy. As the EFA team were instructed, the updated policy clearly stated it was to be ratified at the next governing body meeting on May 6th 2014 and therefore it was not going to be put on the website until such ratification had taken place. This information was shared with the EFA team.

46. Reception checks of DBS documentation for some members of the team did not take place at both Golden Hillock School and Park View School on the first morning of our visit. Members of the team were only asked for their information after approximately three hours during which we were allowed to walk unaccompanied around each school and to interview students. It is good practice to check DBS information of visitors to the school.

The recollection of Park View School is that DBS checks at reception took place for all members of the EFA team as soon as they arrived. Reception staff then re-approached some members of the team later to make a record of their DBS numbers for record purposes. At Golden Hillock the Principal's PA reminded the receptionist as the team were coming into the school that their DBS numbers had to be collected. It is agreed and accepted that it is always good practice to check DBS information of visitors to the schools and/or have appropriate measures in place to ensure the safety of the pupils.

47. Personnel files examined at Nansen Primary School show that best practice on safer recruitment is not always followed. There are no pre-employment references taken up for some members of staff joining from outside of the Academy Trust and the only references we did find were written by members of staff employed by the Trust. There are also a number of examples of poor recruitment practice in the Trust and further comments on the findings are included from paragraph 55.

The paragraph above suggests that Nansen Primary School fails on several bases to comply with safer recruitment practice. In actual fact, as indicated in the table below, the vast majority (79%) of staff have two references and 87% of staff have at least one reference.

Number of staff appointed since October 2012	24 (this includes 2 x lunchtime supervisors)
No. of staff who have two references	19
No. of staff who have no references	3 1 x lunchtime supervisor internal transfer from Park View 1 x lunchtime supervisor who commenced

	<p>their employment in October 2012 but were appointed when the school was a maintained school</p> <p>1 x Teach First, who the school were asked to take on as the school they were at went into a category</p>
No. of staff who have one reference	<p>2</p> <p>1 x lunchtime supervisor who commenced their employment in October 2012 but were appointed when the school was a maintained school</p> <p>1 x lunchtime supervisor could only list her previous employer (cleaning company) as she did not know anyone else other than family</p>
No of staff who have no references from outside of the Trust	3
No of staff who have at least one reference from outside of the Trust	9
No of staff where both references are from outside of the Trust	9

Pre and post-employment references are taken up for teachers and post references are taken up for support staff. This has been the case for all new appointments since the TUPE of staff in October 2012. The HR Manager was not spoken to in relation to this issue and would have been able to advise the EFA team accordingly.

For the avoidance of doubt, a number of long term supply teachers working at Nansen Primary School have applied for vacancies at the school and have been successful.

These teachers have then put down Nansen Primary School as a referee, as the current/recent school they have worked at. If a referee at Nansen Primary School felt that they did not know the candidate well enough to comment on their capabilities then an additional reference would have been sought. Because a number of long term supply agency teachers applied for posts at Nansen Primary School, the School felt it was in a position to comment on the candidates' performance, as the School had been working with these long term supply teachers for a length of time.

48. There is no permanently appointed SENCO. The SLT member for Behaviour, Safety and Attendance is acting in this role and he is the staff governor. When asked he did not know the current attendance figure.

The SLT member recalls providing the inspector with the attendance information as it was displayed on the wall of the room and further that he had all the attendance figures for the past few weeks of the term to hand.

The Park View SENCO supports Nansen Primary School whilst Nansen Primary School seeks a suitable person to be appointed as its own SENCO. The SLT member for behaviour, safety and attendance is not responsible for the SENCO role, but is responsible for the assessment.

## Education and Curriculum

49. There was gender segregation in some classes at Park View School and Golden Hillock School. Some classes observed had boys sitting at the front of the class and girls around the edges. There were also lessons where boys and girls sat at the same table but on opposite sides. We also observed lessons where boys and girls were mixed. Boys and girls are taught separately for PE lessons, which is not unusual. At Park View School we also observed boys and girls being taught separately in other lessons such as PSHE and RE. Teachers were asked if the separation took place in every year group for these two subjects but their answers were evasive.

There is no school policy at Golden Hillock requiring any sort of segregation in classes save for segregation in PE. The teaching and learning policy at Golden Hillock states:

It is expected that the teacher decides the seating arrangements. No one style of seating arrangement is preferred: what works best and is most practical is acceptable. The important point is that the teacher should have considered:

- The academic ability of the student (for example, pairing students of the same ability)
- Social interactions (pairing those who work well and separating those who do not)
- Particular special needs

It is expected that teachers should keep a record of a seating plan for each of their classes.

Teachers should ensure they are balancing the comments they make, the students they ask questions to, and who they support in the lesson, so that a variety of different students are attended to. For example, ask questions from boys and girls; those of different abilities; those in different parts of the room.

Neither is there gender segregation imposed by teachers within classes at Park View School.

As observed by EFA there are various types of seating arrangements within classrooms and there will be various reasons behind such arrangements. To state it is simply due to gender is not true. There may be behaviour and/or learning issues that impact on seating arrangements. It is acknowledged in the report that in some lessons, in any event, girls and boys were mixed. However the Trust strongly emphasises there is no segregation policy.

At Park View School, girls and boys are taught separately for PE in all year groups. Since Park View is a relatively small school with only one male PE teacher and one female PE teacher, PE is timetabled against RE and PHSE thus making them single gender groups due to timetable constraints.

50. The school curriculum at Nansen Primary School is not broad and balanced at KS2. It follows a secondary model with setting throughout and specialist teaching. The timetable in year 6 does not include any lessons in the humanities, arts, music or PSHE. In year 5 there are three hours of creative curriculum on the timetable where there may be a wider range of study, for example the Ancient Greeks and the Egyptians. Younger children, including those in key stage 1 have a similarly restricted and unbalanced curriculum. Children gave feedback that there are no clubs or out of hours activities other than English and maths intervention which are not optional.

The Key Stage 2 curriculum model at Nansen Primary School was reviewed in July 2013 and specialist teaching in Arabic, physical education, religious education and ICT was to continue from September 2013. It has been identified by the Leadership Team that the curriculum does need further developing, hence we have an Educational Consultant working with Year Group Leaders to make the curriculum even more engaging for all pupils.

The Year 6 curriculum involves the children experiencing the core subjects as well RE, ICT, PE and Arabic on a weekly basis. The children have also engaged in Special Days such as: Children in Need, Sports Relief etc. SEAL (Social and Emotional Aspects of Learning) sessions are delivered on a weekly basis depending on the need of the class/group. The children in Year 6 set the precedence for the expectations of class assemblies which was a new initiative to the school at the beginning of the year.

The curriculum at Nansen Primary School allows opportunities for all children to have first-hand experiences through an external visit for children related to the year group topic or through a visitor by an educational company to the school, e.g. Year 3 went to Cadbury World when studying 'Charlie and the Chocolate Factory' and 'The Animal Man' came to visit Year 4 when they were looking at habitats.

Every term each year group will have a visit or a visitor.

Themed weeks are also planned and so far this year we have had the following themed weeks: 'Diversity Week', when we learnt about the different communities that make up Nansen School, to improve understanding of each other, 'Black History Week' to identify role models and inspire individuals that we can all achieve and 'Reading Week' where the whole school community came together (parents, children and staff) to read together and dress up as book characters.

We have also celebrated 'Internet Safety Day' and joined in with National Days such as 'Sports Relief'. Evidence of the extent of the curriculum can be found in the termly newsletter and the displays in school.

It is noted that there is no reference to the lunch time clubs that are put on for the pupils which are led by Year 6 children.

After the SATs the children have a range of activities planned for them including a visit to the Natural History Museum in London and will lead the planning of 'Health and Safety Week' to be delivered across school.

51. At Park View School we saw schemes of work for PSHE, Biology, and Sex and Relationship Education that had been restricted to comply with a conservative Islamic teaching. In Biology, GCSE year 11, discussion with pupils indicated that the teacher had briefly delivered the theory of evolution to comply with the syllabus, but had told students that 'This is not what we believe'. Pupils had been told to read the section in the text book on reproduction at home on their own. Therefore, topics such as body structure, function and the menstrual cycle were not covered in class, although pupils needed to familiarise themselves at home in preparation for the GCSE exam. Students told us that as Muslims they were not allowed to study matters such as reproduction with the opposite sex. They also told us that their teachers gave them seats in which to sit in class by gender to avoid having to mix. Students spoke openly about their belief as Muslims that boys and girls should not study certain materials together.

No scheme of work is restricted for any reason whatsoever.

In Biology the full scheme of work is covered preparing our pupils to take their GCSE examinations. Our current staffing structure for science is having three separate departments each with three teachers. The Biology department consists of a head of Biology who is also head of department and not a Muslim.

Pupils have two lessons a week just on Biology so all syllabus content is covered in depth within school. If certain topics were not covered properly and disadvantaged our pupils for exams then our pupils are very vocal and would have raised this issue a long time ago.

The draft Review expressly highlights concerns with Biology. The response of the school is as follows:

- The menstrual cycle is taught in Year 8 during the reproduction unit in the second half of the summer term. All Year 8 students are taught, including boys.
- The hormonal control of the menstrual cycle is only taught to higher ability students at GCSE as it is covered in the iGCSE and GCSE Further Additional Science specification. It does not form part of the Edexcel GCSE Science or Edexcel GCSE Additional Science specification and so is not taught.

Reproduction is taught in Year 8 to all students in single sex groups as per Park View's sex education policy. The scheme of work covers the following:

- the male and female reproductive organs
- structure of the eggs and sperm
- the menstrual cycle
- fertilisation
- pregnancy
- birth

Where students speak openly of their belief as Muslims then that is a matter for the individual.

52. RE is compulsory for all year groups at both Golden Hillock School and Park View School. At Golden Hillock School, the vast majority complete the Islamic Studies paper and follow Edexcel specification units 4 and 11. The head of department stated that there are students in year 11 who are not Muslim and five of these also wish sit the Christian GCSE paper. These students study from different texts. We were told that these students attend the same class as those who study the Islamic course but they have to teach themselves because the teacher has to give his/her time to the vast majority of students in the lesson who are doing a different course.

The draft Review expressly refers to Golden Hillock School and the Year 11 group. This is not correct.

All pupils in the Religious Studies group have been entered for the Edexcel Islam paper units 4 and 11. In Year 10, there are two pupils who have opted to do alternative GCSEs and will be studying the Sikhism and Christianity papers at the end of Year 11. These pupils will remain in lesson and will be supported by the teachers and given guidance throughout the lesson as part of the differentiated support provided.

53. Teachers at Nansen Primary School assess pupil progress regularly throughout lessons and many examples of good questioning were observed. Marking was thorough in several classes but in RE and Arabic it was not as effective in other subjects.

54. At Golden Hillock School we were told by senior staff and by 2 heads of department that staff had been given instructions by governors banning discussion with students on any matters regarding sexual orientation and intimacy. Therefore heads of department have had to change schemes of work to ensure they comply with governors' requests. Such changes mean that they have to restrict their use of resources and the information which is provided for and discussed with students. Such limitations affect the broad and balanced teaching of many subjects including art, English, RE and PSHE. The ban also precludes staff from teaching Sex and Relationships Education honestly and openly. Aspects of Safeguarding and Child Protection related to bullying in and out of school are also jeopardised. Guidance issued by the Secretary of State is clear that teachers should be able to deal honestly and sensitively with sexual orientation and answer questions.

The local governing body of Golden Hillock School has issued no such directive to staff regarding discussion with students on matters concerning sexual orientation and intimacy. It might be that the staff were referring to matters pre-conversion, but it is not the position of the local governing body of Golden Hillock School and that such matters should not be discussed.

## Recruitment and Staffing

55. There are unclear staffing structures in place across all three academies in the Trust. Each of the three headteacher roles are filled on an 'acting basis'. There was no clear timetable for when the headteacher posts would be advertised or made permanent. It was noted that the headteacher post for Nansen Primary School had been advertised in the past but that the appointments process had been cancelled. When we asked the Chair of the Trust about the temporary roles of the headteachers, he said that this gave him greater flexibility. He also said that he had direct involvement in appointments and senior appointments.

The staff structure concerns are noted however as has been indicated the academic achievements of pupils continues to improve.

56. At Nansen Primary School, as well as the headteacher, there are three further SLT posts which are held by staff in acting positions. These posts are the head of key stage 1, the head of maths and the head of English. We were told in discussion with staff at the school that the Trust has not shared its intentions with the school leaders regarding their permanence.

The Head of Key Stage 1 is an acting position because the substantive post holder is the acting Head Teacher. The post is therefore being filled at present on a fixed term basis.

The role of Head of Maths and Head of English are new to the staffing structure at Nansen Primary School. Previously the Head of Key Stage 2 was responsible for Maths but, as stated, a new Head of Maths has been appointed working two days per week before starting full time on a permanent basis after the Easter break. Similarly the Head of English, who has been appointed from another school, will be starting full time on a permanent basis after the Easter break.

57. We observed that some staff with little experience had been appointed to senior positions across the Trust. For example, there are only two permanent SLT appointments at Nansen Primary School currently and these are the head of key stage 2 (equivalent to a deputy headteacher) and the senior leadership team member with responsibility for Behaviour, Safety and Attendance, who when asked did not know the current attendance figure. The deputy headteacher was appointed deputy at Nansen Primary School only 3 years after QTS teaching.

When the deputy head was appointed at Nansen Primary School, the school was a Local Authority school not an academy. The appointment was made by Birmingham City Council.

58. The lead practitioner in Science at Golden Hillock School (██████████) is also the brother of Park View School's headteacher. Discussions with staff at the school revealed that his teaching had been rated as inadequate by the lead practitioner for Teaching and Learning at the academy, but no action had been taken as a result. A review of the lead practitioner in Science's personnel file revealed that his experience was not commensurate with his responsibility. ██████████, the role was not given to the second in Science; instead, the day before our visit it was given to the sister of a deputy headteacher at Park View School whose substantive post was as a Science teacher at Golden Hillock School. It became clear in discussions with staff and the HR manager at the school that they were unaware of the decision made to put this teacher in place. We concluded that the selection process had not been transparent for this role and have concerns that the same will apply to other positions at the other schools in the Trust.

There are several inaccuracies here:

- The Lead Practitioner in Science's teaching had not been observed and rated as inadequate. No inadequate teaching has been observed across the whole school this academic year.
- The role was not "given" to any person. Instead all TLR holders were asked to support the Department of Science. No individual person has been put in place of this individual.

There is a high level of staff turnover across the Trust and we identified that 37 staff left Nansen Primary School following conversion of which 20 were made redundant. The former headteacher was dismissed but we did not see any documentary evidence of the reasons for this.

In terms of the reference to the high level of staff turnover across the Trust we refer the EFA to the table below which sets out the reasons for leaving employment.

Redundancy	23
Voluntary resignation due to personal/family reasons	3
Voluntary resignation – career development	6
Retirement	1
To become self employed	1
End of fixed term contract (GTP)	1
Mutual agreement*	1

## Compliance and Other Issues

60. The complaints policy is compliant, but the implementation of it is not. It is poorly administered at each of the schools as there is no log of complaints in place and correspondence supporting the implementation of the policy is not included in the file. It was therefore unclear whether all the complaints received by each of the schools were included in the file. Whilst the file notes did not always show clearly that the complaints processes had been followed, when relevant members of staff were challenged they were able provide additional information required to show the policy had been followed.

The Trust accepts that the implementation of the Complaints Policy needs to be consistent although it notes that the EFA accept that the Policy is followed.

61. There is no log of whistleblowing complaints. In discussion it was claimed that none had been received, but this was not evident, there being no log. The whistleblowing policy was adequate, but would benefit from reference to external bodies as a route for raising concerns, such as the Department for Education and Public Concern at Work. Grievance policies and Disciplinary policies were reviewed and tested and had been followed.

It is noted that the Whistleblowing policy was, itself, considered adequate.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

62. The Trust must undertake a review of the governance structures in place to ensure that there is accountability between the Chair of the Trust and the executive principal.

Similarly the executive principal (as Accounting Officer) must be able to have appropriate oversight of financial transactions. The Trust must consider how this can be achieved and whether academy headteachers should have a clear line of responsibility to the executive principal. The purpose and function of local governing bodies must be included in this review. There should be transparency, compliance and clarity in governance practises.

**The Trust acknowledges the recommendations put forward by the EFA team. The Trust is committed to continued good governance and strong academic performance across its schools.**

63. The curriculum, including that for social, moral, spiritual and cultural provision at each of the Academies, must be changed to ensure that it complies with legislation and the requirements of the funding agreement, the Independent School Standards and S.1(5) of the Academies Act 2010.

64. A review of the application of Safeguarding Policies must be implemented. The Single Central Register must be reviewed to ensure that it is up to date and records accurately all the required information for checks on staff. The personnel files must contain copies of references taken up from outside of the organisation. The Trust must have regard to current published statutory guidance issued by the Secretary of State including "Keeping Children Safe in Education – Statutory Guidance for Schools."

65. Park View School must continue to develop its community engagement plan to demonstrate how it will engage further with the broader community and ensure that it is welcoming to those of all faiths and none. A copy should be shared with the Department.

**A schedule setting out Park View School's current engagement in the community is attached.**

66. The Trust must submit a request for collective determination for Park View School, Nansen Primary School and Golden Hillock School in relation to their collective Islamic worship, if they wish to maintain it. Such a request may not be granted, and the Secretary of State has power to revoke any determination which is made.

67. The Trust must ensure that any inappropriate gender segregation is eliminated.

68. The Trust should give consideration to developing a policy to vet external speakers.

69. The principles of safe recruitment should be implemented. Statutory guidance must be followed ensuring that two references external to the Trust are taken up for each new employee.

**The Trust does not take issue with points 67, 68 and 69 only to reiterate that it does not support inappropriate gender segregation.**

70. The Trust must ensure that it abides by the requirements of the Academies Financial Handbook. In particular:

- a) The Trust must establish a separate audit committee with clear terms of reference. The committee must review the risks to the internal financial control framework and must agree a programme of work that will address these risks. [AFH ref: 3.5.4 - 3.5.5]

- b) The Trust must assess and record the skills of all directors and governors on the local governing bodies to ensure the skills, knowledge and experience are in place to run the respective academy. [AFH ref 2.1]
- c) The Trust must update their financial regulations manual to ensure compliance with all areas in the current AFH. [AFH ref 2.3]
- d) The Trust must ensure that the register of business interests for all trustees (directors) has been completed [AFH ref 2.5.2]. We would recommend this includes all senior staff, all budget holders, finance staff and the local governing body governors. The register of business interest forms must be fully completed to include all interests in any outside entity. We recommend that in addition to local governing bodies having the register, that a central register is also held with the Trust in order to be able to identify related party transactions for declaring in the financial statements.
- e) Financial procedures should be more standardised within the Trust and each of its academies. Each academy must follow the Trust's policies and internal controls, with measures put in place to test compliance. [AFH ref 2.3]
- f) The Trust must ensure that a competitive tendering policy is in place and applied. [AFH ref 2.5.2]
- g) The Trust should review the 4% top slice taken from its academies to ensure that it is providing value for money. An appeals mechanism must be in place for the academy headteacher to use should s/he feel their academy has been unfairly treated. [AFH ref 2.6.27 – 2.6.28]
- h) The Trust must create for Park View School a fixed asset register and keep this up-to-date along with the fixed asset registers for the other academies in the Trust. [AFH ref: 2.1.2]

The recommendations regarding the Academies Financial Handbook are noted.

71. The Trust is required to meet all Independent School Standards (“Standards”) and in particular must take steps to ensure that it meets the following standards:

It is clearly accepted that the Trust must meet the Independent School Standards and it is noted that the draft Review sets out various steps it must undertake to ensure that this is so.

- a) 5a (ii) – enable pupils to distinguish right from wrong and to respect the civil and criminal law  
The pupils at the schools at the Trust are taught right from wrong.
- b) 5a (v) – assist pupils to acquire an appreciation of and respect for their own and other cultures in a way that promotes tolerance and harmony between different cultural traditions  
The pupils are taught to respect other cultures.

- c) 5a (vi) – encourage pupils to respect the fundamental British values of democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and mutual respect and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs  
The pupils are encouraged to respect the values of democracy, the rule of law, liberty and mutual respect etc. There is simply no evidence to suggest that the Trust is failing in meeting this standard.
- d) 5b – precludes the promotion of partisan political views in the teaching of any subject in the school  
There is no promoting of partisan views. The schools welcome healthy debate in a balanced environment.
- e) 7a – Arrangements are made to safeguard and promote the welfare of pupils at the school  
Safeguarding and the welfare of our pupils is at the forefront of our working.
- f) 7b – Such arrangements have regard to any guidance issued by the Secretary of State  
The Trust strives to ensure that all Departmental guidance is followed or taken into account.
- The Trust recognises that in order to ensure continued academic excellence it must strive to ensure that its pupils are properly educated in all aspects of school life.
- g) 22 – A register is kept of checks made, including the date on which each such

## **EFA – Review of Park View Educational Trust**

### **Addendum (Park View RESPONSE) :**

#### **Community Cohesion & Cultural awareness at Park View School**

##### **Community Cohesion & Cultural Awareness**

**Number 26** – Park View School, Promotion of community cohesion - Community cohesion work at Park View is stronger than ever. Pupils from all year groups explore cultures different from their own as well as get a deeper understanding of their own culture and society.

This is a sample (not all) of what has taken place this year so far:

**PC Rob Pedley on the topic of Gangs & Knives** – Pupils have had extended assemblies by PC Rob Pedley on the topic of Gangs & Knives. They have had inputs regarding road safety and safety also.

**PC James Somers from Prevent “Meet the Police”** – PC James has led small group sessions with each of our Yr 7 & 8 classes to enable pupils to get to know a police officer in our “Meet the Police” sessions. This has proved extremely successful and we feel it is building a platform for more work in the future.

**Easter assemblies to all year groups delivered by Birmingham Christian Mission** – extended assemblies were allotted to Birmingham Christian Mission to deliver assemblies on the importance of Easter to Christians and the themes surrounding the religious festival

**China themed half term - link with Anshan School, Shanghai** – All pupils in school took part in a series of Chinese themed activities. These included Mandarin language, making Chinese decorations, mathematics, calligraphy, history, visit to Wing Wah restaurant and many more.

**Holocaust survivor workshops** – two year groups were involved in workshops taken by a Holocaust survivor. They were given an insight into the horrors of the prisons and what conditions for the inmates looked and felt like.

**Dawud Wharnsby music workshops** – An international folk singer / poet and nasheed artist gave smaller workshops to the school choir, as well as an interactive assembly to Yr 7 & 8 and a short speech open to all students at lunch time. Well received and lots of positive feedback.

**West Midlands Fire Service assembly** – Year 8 (other year groups to follow) had an extended assembly on the dangers of arson by a local fireman. As was clear from the

well thought out questions at the end of the session this had a powerful impact on our pupils.

**Places of Worship visits** – All Year 7, 8 & 9 Pupils have now visited Birmingham Buddhist Centre in Moseley, St Pauls Church in the City Centre & Gurdwara in Handsworth. They had tours and questions and answer sessions in these places of worship and were informed of the daily life and practices of a Buddhist, Christian and Sikh. Pupils really enjoy these visits and their respectful behaviour shows how they value those of different backgrounds to themselves.

**Religion Awareness assemblies** – To give our pupils the experience and understanding of various religions the school regularly invites individuals from various religious organisations to present their beliefs and practices to the pupils. So far we have had assemblies carried out by Jewish Rabbis, Birmingham Christian Mission and we are in process of organising our next visit which is from the Gurdwara to do presentations on the Sikh religion.

**University access days** – Groups of Yr 11 pupils have relished the opportunity to take part in Access days at different Universities including Cambridge, Oxford, Birmingham and Leicester. By taking students to different universities they have been able to see different students coming together to share a experience.

**Community use** – The school has opened again for community use after school. We currently open 6pm-11pm weekdays. The school is also taking an active role in supporting a Police tasking group working on youth provision in the area. We hope that through this we can broaden our scope of SMSC work both in school and out and enrich the lives of all of our local community as well as our own pupils and ex-pupils beyond the school gates.

**International Womens Week** – All year groups were involved in assemblies delivered by a number of our female members of staff. These were centred around inspirational female leaders and figures. Pupils also took part in competitions throughout the week, all centred around Women and the massive contribution they make.

**Enterprise Sailing** - An eight day sailing expedition with some of the most vulnerable year 8&9 students. Pupils were taken on a residential trip alongside other students from around the city. The schools were from four different parts of the city. One of the key purposes of taking these students was to promote community cohesion by gelling the different cultures and promoting understanding of the different backgrounds of students. On return pupils did presentations to other pupils in assemblies on their experience. A comment from one of the pupils was “I thought all white people are racist, they are not in fact they are just like us”.

**Scouts Year 7-9** – Park View is a registered scout centre with Scouts Base and we run numerous scouting groups. Joining a scout group is one of the most exciting experiences our pupils undertake. Whether it is to make new friends by belonging to one of the largest youth organisations in the world, or whether it was to participate in different

activities which would not have otherwise been accessible. Meeting scouts from different troops around the city and sharing their stories has promoted community cohesion. This positive educational experience highlighted the diversity of the people of Birmingham for many of our pupils.

**The Duke of Edinburgh's Award** – Large groups of pupils from Years 10 & 11 take part in this award. Pupils find themselves helping others, getting involved in community project like clean Alum Rock, developing skills, going on an expeditions and taking part in a residential activities.

**Youth Philanthropy Initiative** – This is the 2<sup>nd</sup> year our year 10 pupils have been involved in this initiative, where pupils get into groups and research their chosen charity including visits to the charity and finish with presentations as to why their charity should receive the prize money. Through this pupils become aware of many charities across Birmingham and the work that they are doing.

**Sport leagues** – Our pupils participate in various sport leagues competing with other schools from around Birmingham. Meeting students from different schools and different backgrounds yet sharing the same goal, in a competitive yet friendly manner, this has allowed many of our pupils to build strong relationships with pupils from different cultures and back grounds.

We also have numerous trips and visits that increase our pupils awareness of the world around them.

## **EFA – Review of Park View Educational Trust**

### **Community Cohesion at Golden Hillock School and Community Cohesion**

Activities included:

There was a **food bank collection** which was taken to a local church, organised by head of RE Rhea Clayton

All Year 7 have visited Symphony Hall for a **classical music event**

On a special de-timetabled day, students visited a local Sikh **Gurdwara**

Special assemblies were held to explain the **Christian message at Christmas and Easter**

A collection and special activities were held in Spring 2014 which raised over £2000, beating the Children in Need total in November 2013 which was also just over £2000. A group was invited to Downing Street as a result.

Working with the City Year team, a group of volunteers who work at several schools in Birmingham and London, students completed a 'Young Heroes' programme, helping year 6 students at a local Primary School.

Students went to visit **Paris**, as part of their MFL activities.

There is the annual **Golden Hillock Mela festival** which is organised in partnership with the Feast. The Feast is an interfaith charity which is Christian but works closely with the Muslim community in an attempt to create strong links.

## **EFA – Review of Park View Educational Trust**

### **Careers Education at Park View School**

Career Education at Park View School is coordinated by the internal careers officer who works closely with the team of pastoral managers and supported by our Assistant Principal Pastoral.

This year so far:

All year 8 had various option assemblies delivered by Heads of subjects showing different career routes available through their subject areas. 40 Year 8 Pupils also went to Edgbaston Stadium on Your Future Your Choice event in March 2014. The aim of the event was to inform and inspire pupils about the breadth of different careers that exist in various sectors and industries and the type of qualifications they need to access those jobs. This was a popular event with over 500 visitors from 14 different schools.

Year 9 pupils had an external assembly delivered by Your Career Matters to show and explain how important it is to make the right choices and going through the right direction.

A full day Careers Event for all our Year 10 Pupils was organised on an Enterprise day within school. There was external providers from colleges/University's and other organisations. This was a very successful event and the feedback from the organisations and our pupils was very pleasing. The school works with an external provider to organise work experience, all our pupils have had work experience assemblies and work experience interviews, a team of 15 visitors from various organisations carried out practice interview for all our year 10 pupils to prepare them when they go out to Work Experience in July.

All of Year 10 & 11 pupils attended the Skills Show careers fair in November which is the single biggest careers event in the UK. Groups of Yr 11 pupils have relished the opportunity to take part in Access days at different Universities including Cambridge, Oxford, Birmingham and Leicester. All year 11 pupils have had assemblies carried out by our staff and local colleges regarding their ks5 applications, Joseph Chamberlain College staff also came into school for a number of days to interview pupils who chose to do courses at their college.