



**Internal Audit Report**

**FINAL**

**Community Services**

**Pupil Work Placement - Education Services**

**8 October 2010**

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## **1 INTRODUCTION**

An Audit was carried out to review the procedures operated by schools in respect of pupil work experience placement. This report therefore provides details of the findings from the audit work undertaken.

## **2 AUDIT SCOPE AND OBJECTIVES**

The specific objectives of the work undertaken by Internal Audit were:

- Establish what procedures Argyll & Bute Council operates when placing school pupils including those with additional support needs on work experience placement;
- Establish whether Council procedures are followed by schools when placing pupils with additional support needs on work experience; and
- Establish what level of assurance procedures operated by schools provides for pupils and Council.

## **3 MAIN FINDINGS**

- With regard to Council wide procedures in respect of pupil work experience placements, it was established that there was minimal knowledge of their existence within the Education Service. Quality Improvement was unaware of any corporate procedures operated by schools.
- Secondary Schools contacted by Internal Audit were unable to locate work experience placement manuals or indicated that they were in the process of drawing up procedures.
- A Work Experience Placement Manual dated 1997/99 was located by the Corporate Health & Safety Manager. Internal Audit was informed that a review of the manual had been undertaken in 2003/04 by the Health & Safety Manager and the Education Service. However, there was no supporting evidence that the manual had been updated or issued. Therefore it can be concluded that procedures do not reflect subsequent and current guidance circulated by the Scottish Government in 2006.

## **4 RECOMMENDATIONS**

There are 10 recommendations identified as a result of the audit, all have a high priority. The recommendations are shown in the action plan detailed below.

## **5 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

Internal Audit concludes that there are serious weaknesses in the controls operated by the Education Service generally, when placing pupils on work experience.

By not operating current Scottish Government legislation and guidance in respect of pupil work experience placement there has been a failure to safeguard the Council and pupils.

The review carried out by Internal Audit has established that 5 areas of risk detailed within the Strategic Risk Register have been potentially breached. These relate to Corporate Governance and Young, Old & Vulnerable.

## **6 AUDIT OPINION**

Our findings and comments are based on the information available to Internal Audit at the time of the review. Recommendations arising from our work should be implemented by the Executive Director of Community Services within the agreed timescale. Recommendations not implemented will require explanation to the Audit Committee Chairman and Strategic Management Team.

## **7 ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

Thanks are due to staff within Education Service, the corporate Health & Safety Manager and Social Work staff for their co-operation and assistance during the review.

Argyll & Bute Council's Internal Audit section has prepared this report. Our work was limited to the objectives in section 2. We cannot be held responsible or liable if information material to our task was withheld or concealed from us, or misrepresented to us.

This report is private and confidential for the Council's information only and is solely for use in the provision of an internal audit service to the Council. In any circumstances where anyone other than the Council access to this report is on the strict understanding that the Council will accept no liability for any act or omission by any party in consequence of their consideration of this report or any part thereof. The report is not to be copied, quoted or referred to, in whole or in part, without prior written consent.

**APPENDIX 2 ACTION PLAN**

<b>No.</b>	<b>FINDINGS</b>	<b>PRIORITY</b>	<b>RECOMMENDATION</b>	<b>RESPONSIBLE OFFICER</b>	<b>IMPLEMENTATION DATE</b>
1	The present procedures operated for pupil work experience placements compromise the Council.	High	An immediate stop should be put on work experience placements until there is a verifiable system of procedures in place and operational.	Quality Standards Manager	Completed
2	<p>The only evidence that the Council and Education Service has a pupil work experience manual is a copy dated 97/99 located in corporate Health &amp; Safety.</p> <p>There is no guidance on what should be retained on pupil files on work experience placements.</p>	High	Education Service - Quality Improvement should immediately in co-operation with corporate Health & Safety and Social Work prepare a manual that incorporates current Scottish Government legislation and guidance. Two school based representatives should be invited to participate in this task. The Manual should be issued to all pertinent schools and centres with confirmation of receipt being provided. 'Best practice' guidance of what should be retained on pupil files, to ensure pupils and Council are safeguarded when on	QIO Enterprise & Technology	Completed

No.	FINDINGS	PRIORITY	RECOMMENDATION	RESPONSIBLE OFFICER	IMPLEMENTATION DATE
			work experience placement should be incorporated into the Work Experience Manual.		
3	There is no adequate guidance in the 97/99 manual relational to pupils with additional support needs.	High	The revised Work Experience Manual should include additional guidance for placing students with additional support needs on a work experience placement, and should take into account all known identified risks.	QIO Enterprise & Technology	Completed
4	There is no database available for reference by schools and centres regarding approved employers who provide pupil work experience placement.	High	A database should be established that is available to all schools and centres detailing employers approved to provide work experience placements.	QIO Enterprise & Technology	31 March 2011
5	There is no apparent record of training being provided for specific school staff designated co-ordinators for pupil work experience placements.	High	Appropriate training for all staff involved in work experience placements is delivered as a priority.	QIO Enterprise & Technology	Completed

No.	FINDINGS	PRIORITY	RECOMMENDATION	RESPONSIBLE OFFICER	IMPLEMENTATION DATE
6	The review carried out by Internal Audit indicates that pupil record keeping is haphazard at one School in particular.	High	That Education Service - Quality Improvement immediately undertakes a review of all records retained for pupils on work experience placement from this School.	QIO Enterprise & Technology	31 March 2011
7	A review needs to be carried out at other schools and learning centres regarding the robustness of pupil files.	High	The Education Service – Quality Improvement should undertake a review of all records held by Secondary School and Centres regarding pupil work experience placement files, to ensure procedures are operated effectively and are robust and this should be an annual task. This should be part of the cycle of internal school reviews carried out by the Quality Improvement Officer Team.	QIO Enterprise & Technology	Annual/cyclic

No.	FINDINGS	PRIORITY	RECOMMENDATION	RESPONSIBLE OFFICER	IMPLEMENTATION DATE
8	There is no evidence that all schools have been included in circulations for the Education Service - Work Placement Manual.	High	All Schools should be included in all circulars, procedures and training relating to work experience.	QIO Enterprise & Technology	Immediate
9	There is no evidence of any collaboration between services having taken place with regard to pupils with additional support needs on work experience placement.	High	Closer collaboration and consultation should take place between appropriate Schools, Health & Safety and Social Work when consideration is being given to placing a pupil with additional support needs on a work place experience.	Head Teachers	Ongoing
10	Internal Audit has established that 5 operational risks have been potentially breached. These relate to Corporate Governance and Young, Old & Vulnerable.	High	Management need to review the 5 operational risks to ensure that controls and procedures are in place to mitigate risk.	Quality Standards Manager	30 November 2010