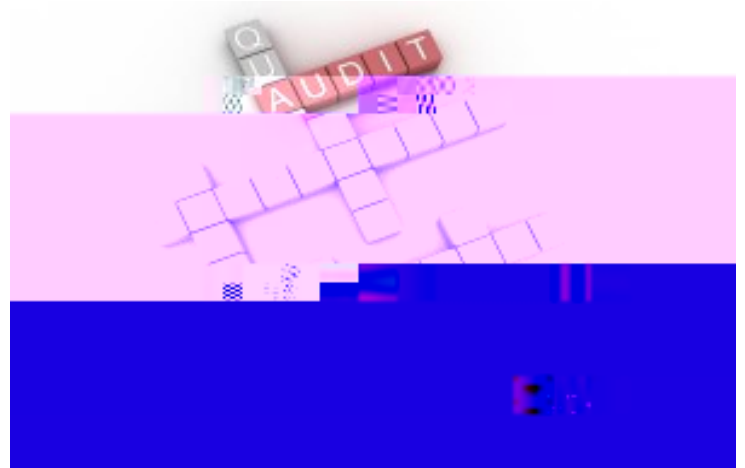


# Spring 2022 - Issue 61

*Helping you to manage risks and provide effective services*

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## Foreword written by Don Price

I have been reflecting on how things change and yet much stays the same. Pressure is always there, change itself is always there, and I think it is true to say the progress has no patience, but it does not always deliver improvement. You may notice that this terms Auditor looks a bit different – we have had to change the style and look to meet City Council Corporate Policy. We are looking at ways to make it a little more interesting for future issues.



We have seen huge change on a global scale in recent years, the coronavirus pandemic and the war in Ukraine has impacted on us all.

Of much less significance, but extremely important for the operation of the City Council, is another change. Oracle Cloud replaces Voyager and People Solutions from April. This should be a positive change for everyone but will come with its own challenges as we all un-learn, re-learn and adapt. Such changes are very rarely painless but the long term benefits are huge for everyone.

One constant is the passion for teaching and learning within Birmingham's schools. Colleagues from our schools visiting team recently had the pleasure of supporting School and Governor Support, and Schools Financial Services, with the Managing Financial Resource for Governors. It was so encouraging to meet such dedicated volunteers willing to learn and engage for the benefit of the pupils they serve. Not forgetting the school support officers who continue to learn and develop in order to keep the operational wheels turning.



# School Audits Article Written by Karen Smith Principal Auditor

I would like to take the opportunity to thank those schools that have had an audit during the Spring 2022 for supporting the audit process and our auditors.

## *Full Audits*

We have continued with our school audit visit programme throughout the Spring Term 2022 despite the continued challenges faced by schools due to the coronavirus pandemic. We have worked with each school to agree an approach and fully appreciate their flexibility when the impact on staff resources due to the pandemic has been great.

## *Intensive Progress Reviews*

We have continued with our Follow Up audits

In the interest of helping the environment and moving to our new way of working we will be asking for your support in providing evidence and documentation to us in an electronic format.

A full list of the controls reviewed during our audits is available on request. If you have any queries or concerns, please do not hesitate to contact me. Karen Smith, Principal Auditor. Telephone: 07885236038. Email: [karen.p.smith@birmingham.gov.uk](mailto:karen.p.smith@birmingham.gov.uk)







# Fraud Spotlight on Schools Article Written by John Preston Group Auditor

## *Fraud Awareness for Schools*

The Corporate Fraud Team have been working together with a



Fortunately, the fraudulently obtained payments have since been reimbursed by the school's bank.

Our advice is to remain vigilant and always question the legitimacy of any such e-mails that you receive, particularly if you weren't expecting any communication from the purported sender. Here are some practical tips listed below:

Check to see if your name and address and/or account details are given in the e-mail, as if they are not, the likelihood is that it's a scam.

Check the email address that the email has come from – does it resemble what you would expect from the organisation purportedly sending the email?

Are there spelling errors in the email address or the body of the email itself?

Do not click any links within the email itself but instead access your account separately to see if the issue being emailed about is genuine.

Do not call any telephone numbers within the email itself. Instead, find the telephone number for the organisation from another source and query the legitimacy of the correspondence.

If you are in any doubt, please contact the Corporate Fraud Team on 0121 303 9335 / 07825 979 269, or via email –

The Government's Centre for the Protection of National Infrastructure (CPNI) have provided some material for organisations to use to highlight the dangers of Spear Phishing and to remind staff to be on the lookout for such attacks.

They have produced a short video, which we would encourage you to watch on YouTube here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ygON2B9-xTw>

There are also some posters that can be printed and displayed in the school office as a visual reminder, along with booklets and guidance on the issue and even a short quiz to test your knowledge. It might even be a good subject to discuss with secondary school students!

All the material is available here: <https://www.cpni.gov.uk/security-campaign->



Details of training for governors, including modules specifically around finance and challenge can be found on the Birmingham Education Support Services [BESS](#) website or via the [School and Governor Support Current Training Offer](#) on the BCC website

### *School and Governor Support (S&GS) Contacts:*

A list of contacts can be found on the Birmingham Education Support Services [BESS](#) website including the option of emailing [school.support@birmingham.gov.uk](mailto:school.support@birmingham.gov.uk) requesting a call back at a time to suit.

