



**Tender Specification for:
Internal Audit Services 2026-29**

(April 2026)

1. Introduction

Established in 2017, Galileo is a mixed Multi Academy Trust (MAT) responsible for ten primary schools in Redcar and Cleveland; two of which are Church of England schools in the Diocese of York. We are an inclusive, collaborative community-based Trust serving over 3,000 children from 2 to 11 years old.

Further information about the Trust can be found on the Trust website: www.galileotrust.co.uk

Although each of the individual schools maintain their own budget, the finance function is run centrally, and all day-to-day banking of the Trust is carried out by the central team. Each School works with the same chart of accounts and nominal structure, inputting information into Iris Financials. The central team then prepare consolidated management figures and financial reporting on behalf of the Trust.

We are seeking tenders to appoint a competent registered Internal Audit firm who are suitably qualified and experienced in audit, accountancy, and the charity sector to provide independent assurance to the Board and provide comfort that the Executive Team is doing things in the right way.

2. Scope

The Academies Handbook (AH) requires all trusts to have a programme of internal scrutiny to provide independent assurance to the board that its financial and non-financial controls and risk management procedures are operating effectively. The AH states that the work must focus on:

- Evaluating the suitability of, and level of compliance with, financial and non-financial controls. This includes assessing whether procedures are effective and efficient, and checking whether agreed controls and procedures have been followed.
- Offering advice and insight to the board on how to address weaknesses in financial and non-financial controls, acting as a catalyst for improvement, but without diluting management's responsibility for the day to day running of the Trust.
- Ensuring all categories of risk are adequately identified, reported, and managed.

To help ensure the Trust has effective oversight and monitoring of its internal control environment, the appointed firm will:

- Provide assurance to the Board.
- Help the trust improve governance, risk, and control arrangements, and
- Provide comfort that the Executive Team is doing the right things in the right way.

3. Requirements

The successful firm will work closely with the Chief Financial & Operating Officer (CFOO) to ensure the Trust complies with the AH, and to ensure their programme of work contributes to the development of an effective governance and accountability framework. This will help the Executive Team and the Board of Trustees ensure that its priorities are delivered. To facilitate this, we expect:

- A meeting within 1 month of appointment with the CFOO and/or CEO to help understand the organisation and key risks.
- Development of a bespoke internal audit approach to best suit the organisation
- Work with the CFOO and Trust Board, specifically the Audit & Risk Committee to devise and operate an internal audit work programme, focussing on specific areas of activity/risk.

- Agree an annual Internal Audit plan early in the Autumn term that will:
 - Have financial control systems at its core and will include the evaluation of controls and some testing of controls by a sample of transactions.
 - Review other key areas including, financial governance and oversight, IT systems and Risk Management.
 - Depending on current risks and initial scope may consider less obvious topics as agreed by the Audit & Risk Committee such as organisational culture, management information, or succession planning.
- Independent Internal Visits/ Audits (to include the above) – to be undertaken 3 times per year, preferably one per school term.
- Issuing of an Internal Audit Assurance draft report to the CFOO within 5 working days of the field work/visit being completed. The report must then be finalised, and approved, within 5 working days of the draft report being issued.
- To comply with Trust governance arrangements which state all Committee papers are to be shared with Trustees 10 days in advance of a meeting, all relevant reports are required to be sent to the CFOO 10 days prior to the meeting. These dates will be provided to the successful firm at the beginning of each academic year.
- The Final Audit Report should be presented by the Lead Auditor or Director of the firm (to be agreed) to the Audit and Risk Committee. The report should detail areas tested, results of those tests and recommendations, and the level of risk that each point carries.
- To be kept updated of any ad-hoc advice and guidance on new and emerging changes to financial reporting requirements and changes to the Academies Handbook.
- Production of an annual Internal Assurance summary report to be submitted to the ESFA along with the Annual Trust Accounts. This should be produced and sent to the CFOO by the 31st of August each year.
- A commitment to a termly contract review meeting in the first year, then biannual in subsequent years.

4. Procurement timescale

Activity	Date	Lead
Approval by Audit & Risk Committee	11.03.26	A&R Chair (Mark Fletcher)
Tender documentation published	08.04.26	CFOO (Sarah Hindmarch)
Tender response deadline	01.05.26	CFOO
Shortlisting	05.05.26	CFOO/CEO (Jane Spence)
Panel Interviews / contract award	W/C 11 May	CFOO/A&R Chair/CEO
Contract start	01.09.26	CFOO

5. Duration of contract

The contract will be from 1st September 2026 to 31st August 2029 with an option to renew, and subject to an annual review.

6. Evaluation criteria

Applicants should respond to all criteria below, the weighting for each is assigned.

Criteria		Weighting
1	<p>Outline previous experience of providing similar services including the following information in respect of each example relied on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Organisation Name • Length of contract • Value of contract • Summary of the impact of the service you provided • Reference contact details 	20
2	<p>Please provide details of the Partner, Audit Manager, and team members that will be delegated to work on this contract including: -</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Name • Job title • Job role in relation to this contract • Relevant qualifications • Relevant experience including experience of Auditing MAT's. <p>What is your approach to continuity of staffing?</p>	20
3	<p>Please outline your proposed approach to service delivery and detail how you will meet the requirements listed in section 2, explaining your Internal audit procedures, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Your approach to materiality • View on audit risks • Methods of communication • Proposed timetable 	20
4	<p>Please describe the form and frequency of information/updates that the firm will provide to the Trust, to help ensure we are kept up-to-date, especially in respect of sector specific guidance.</p>	15
5	<p>Costings:</p> <p>Please complete the costing schedule in Appendix 1.</p>	25

7. Return of tender

Please submit your tender response by midnight on 01.05.26 to info@galileotrust.co.uk FAO: Sarah Hindmarch

Any queries should be directed to Sarah Hindmarch, CFOO, on 01642 777963 or via email: info@galileotrust.co.uk

Appendix 1

Annual Audit Fee for each year of the contract inclusive of:

- 3 on-site and/or virtual visits per year
- Production of three audit reports (as detailed above) and one annual summary report for submission to ESFA
- Attendance at up to 3 committee meetings per year to present findings
- Ad-hoc advice and updates to Trust Executive Team
- On-going agreement of audit programme and regular contract management meetings
- Any travel expenses

Please indicate any fees for any additional services offered.

Fee if additional School's join the Trust throughout the contract term.

Please provide details of any additional discount for early payment of invoices & any cost saving payment options if applicable.

