

St Brendans Sixth Form College Annual Report of the Audit Committee to the Board of Governors December 2025

Introduction

The role of the Audit Committee is to advise the Board of Governors on the adequacy and effectiveness of the College's systems of internal control, risk management and good governance. In doing this, the Committee has regard to:

- 1) The ESFA Post-16 Audit Code of Practice 2023-2024
- 2) The work of the College's Internal Auditor-Validera
- 3) The work of the College's External Auditor-Monahans (part of the Sumer Group)
- 4) Other external inspections/reviews of the College
- 5) College Management reports and assurances-the Senior Management team

The following paragraphs refer to the financial year to 31 July 2025

Internal Audit (see Validera Internal Audit Annual Report for the year ended 31 July 2025)

The internal audit service is provided by Validera. The audit plan is prepared in the light of an audit needs assessment and the College's Risk register and is approved by the committee. The Committee receives regular reports of progress against audit recommendations including those for prior years, and good progress has been made on these.

The internal auditors overall opinion is that the College's governance, risk management and internal control processes are "Adequate". This is the second of 4 assurance levels Validera adopt. This year's internal audit focused on Commercial Activities (rated as Adequate), Core Financial Controls (rated as Substantial), Student Records (rated as Substantial) and Health and Safety Management (rated as Limited). There were no material recommendations resulting from the audits.

External Audit (see Monahans Audit Summary Report for the year ended 31 July 2025)

The external audit service is provided by Monahans. The external auditor examines the College's year-end financial statements. The auditor lists the significant risks surrounding the financial records and the reports drawn from them. Specific errors are identified and appropriate corrections recommended.

The auditor has confirmed that they will be able to provide a clean (unqualified) report indicating that in the external auditor's opinion the College's financial statements give a true and fair view of the College's affairs, that they have been properly prepared; that proper accounting records have been kept, and that the statements are in agreement with the accounting records. Once available the Financial Statements will include a Statement of Regularity addressed to the Board and the DfE signed by Monahans with a reminder that the duty of the reporting Accountant is to "obtain limited assurance and report in accordance with the engagement letter and the requirements of the Joint Audit Code of Practice".

The Auditor did not report on any adjusted or unadjusted misstatements identified in the course of their work. The Committee notes this and has complimented the Executive Finance Director and his Finance Team on its good work.

The Auditor pointed out the DfE confirms that no action will be taken on the previous loan breach and the College continues to pay the loan on time and is managing its cashflow well. The Auditor

pointed out that the Diocese's wishes for all schools and colleges in the Diocese to join a MAT and specifically St Brendan's by 2026 which they understand to be an unrealistic timeframe. The Auditor stated that until there is greater information from the Diocese about the MAT and has that this is included in the Board of Management report that in their opinion should include that a material uncertainty relating to an Ongoing Concern exists in relation to this issue. The Auditor confirmed that we should include this in our accounts report.

Financial Regulations

The regulations are reviewed annually by the Governors Audit Committee in conjunction with professional advice. The Committee is content that appropriate regulations are adhered to.

Management Assurances

The Risk Management Procedure requires the SLT to report annually on the effectiveness of the internal control system. The SLT report dated November 2025 provides detail of the management of the Risk Register process.

Audit Committees Opinion

On the basis of this evidence, the Audit Committee's opinion is that the College's systems internal control and risk management are, in general, good.

Recommendation

That the Board of Governors notes the Annual Reports of the Governors' Audit Committee and the Senior Leadership Team.

Roger Bridgeman
Chair of Audit Committee
December 2025