

Supplier Brief

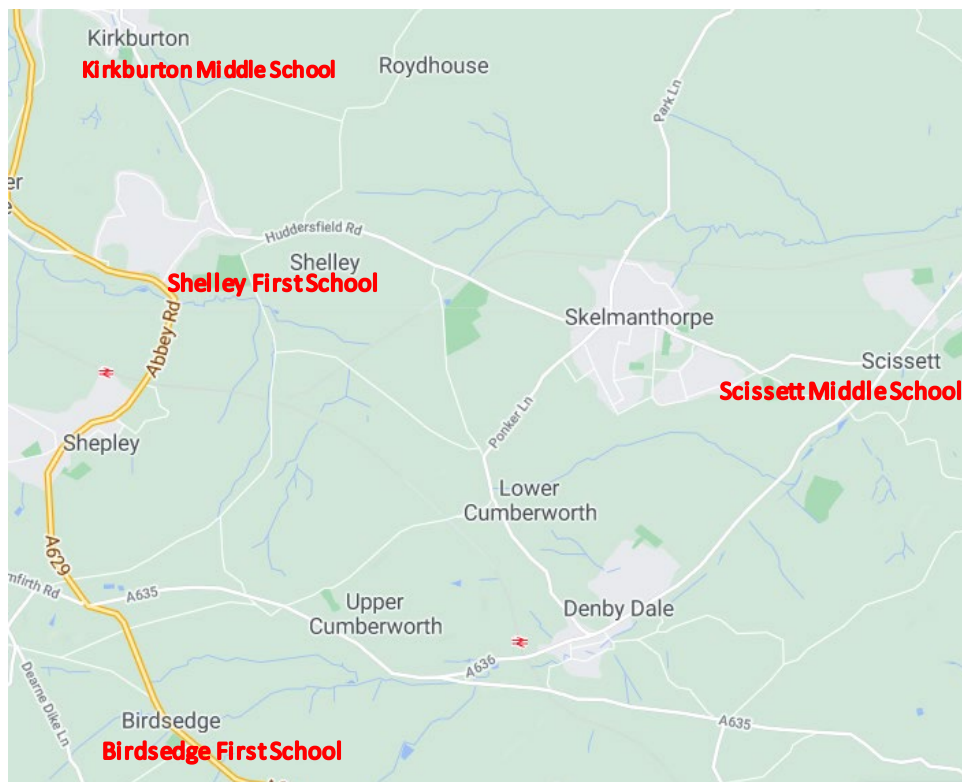
External Audit Services



Introduction

The Mast Academy Trust is seeking to review the provision of our External Audit Services to ensure best value for money.

The MAST Academy Trust was established in December 2016 to build upon strong, existing partnerships around the pupils and families in our locality through academy status. The Trust currently comprises of four schools consisting of Birdsedge First School, Shelley First School, Kirkburton Middle School and Scissett Middle School with approximately 1400 pupils across the 4-13 years age range. All schools are located within 10 minutes drive of each other.



We are a collaborative Trust, with all leaders supporting the development of MAST within the context of an Executive Leadership Team. Working strategically together, within our Pyramid of schools and with other services, we aim to transform provision and outcomes for pupils and their families.

Our vision for our pupils, staff and schools at the Mast Academy Trust is not defined by a statement but a set of key principles; principles that when united reveals our overarching vision. As individual schools and a Trust:

- We celebrate **individuality**
- We **collaborate** for the good of our children and staff
- We **inspire** our children, and our employees to **achieve** their ambitions
- We all **learn** from our experiences
- We ensure a **safe** and **caring** environment for everyone

We commit to:

- Put the **children** at the heart
- Value all our **people** and respect their well-being
- Serve the **community** around us
- **Respect** different opinions and then unite together
- Be willing to **challenge** and accept challenge
- **Support** all areas within the MAST Academy Trust
- Adhere to the Nolan Principles

Our Schools

Birdsedge First School – A First School serving pupils in Reception to Year 5 with a capacity of 90 pupils

Kirkburton Middle School – A Middle School serving pupils in Year 6 to Year 8 with a capacity of 510 pupils.

Scissett Middle School – A Middle School serving pupils in Year 6 to Year 8 with a capacity of 620 pupils.

Shelley First School – A First School serving pupils in Reception to Year 5 with a capacity of 204 pupils.

Procurement Best Practice Criteria

The Mast Academy Trust have agreed a set of best practice principles in relation to the procurement of this service. These principles provide a framework to ensure that we act in an ethically and commercially responsible way in our contractual arrangements. Adhering to these principles is an integral part of the procurement process for the Mast Academy Trust.

We will:

- seek value for money for its pupils;
- harness the capability, diversity and innovation of our suppliers to add value to the Trust;
- adhere to a procurement process which is equitable, lawful and compliant with regulations;
- work with suppliers to ensure goods and services that we buy are made or executed in a socially and environmentally responsible manner;
- seek to be easy to do business with in order to minimise costs, risks and time;
- ensure the confidentiality of information in line with regulations;

Scope of Work

The scope of works is as follows:

1. The Mast Academy Trust will be working with an external auditor that has the proven specialism for working with Multi Academy Trust structures. It is crucial that our external audit partner has up to date knowledge of all the requirements of the academies sector and of a Multi Academy Trust organisation.
2. The Trust will be operating a central accounting team at Multi Academy Trust level that is responsible for producing financial accounts and preparing statutory accounts in line with the requirements of the Companies Act, the Charities SORP and the Academy Accounts Direction as published annually by the ESFA. The team is supported by a companywide accounting system that is focussed on academy sector accounting.
3. The central team processes a limited number of transactions aligned to the operation of a small central team. They also provide guidance to each academy on accounting requirements for the Trust in line with the agreed scheme of delegation and the Academies Financial Handbook. Some of the more complex accounting tasks are undertaken centrally. The central team will play a major role in the consolidation of year end accounts and writing reports as required by the Academy Accounts Direction.
4. Each academy has access to the accounting system for their school and this will have a standard chart of accounts designed to allow consolidation of their accounts within the Academy Trust.

5. The core elements of the service required will be

- Annual statutory accounts auditing, ensuring compliance with the relevant legislation and the Academy Accounts Direction
- Creation of accounting reports from Trial Balance to document stage
- Review and liaison with Executives and Directors with regards to key reporting requirements, including value for money review and regularity reporting
- Full details of the proposed audit programme in advance to establish client and auditor responsibilities
- Interim and final audit visits
- Teachers Pensions Audit submission and audit
- Approval and review of the Academies Account Return
- Entry of the Academy Accounts Return to DfE portals
- Advice on accounting issues facing the Trust
- Presentation of findings to Trustees and other stakeholders in an audit management letter

6. Information from the supplier is required on

- Services as specified above and pricing assuming 4 academies in 2020/21 and pricing for incremental academies in future years
- The team and their qualifications
- Location of offices and staff
- Number of academies and academy trusts that you are currently dealing with
- How you would plan to deliver the services and what information / contact you would require from both our central team and our academies including
 - o Proposed length of visits / resource to be allocated
 - o Proposed Programme of work and accounts testing
 - o Proposed involvement / oversight of regularity and other reporting
 - o Proposed method of approving the Academy Accounts Report
 - o How Teachers Pensions Audit would be conducted and timeline for this

Supplier required working practices

The following factors will be taken into account in assessing a supplier's suitability.

Insurance

All suppliers should carry insurance and as a matter of course, an appropriate level of public liability insurance.

Health & Safety

All relevant Health & Safety documentation eg safe working practices, risk assessments should be made available to Shelley First School as part of the procurement process.

Safety and Security

An awareness of, respect for and ability to meet safety and security aspects such as safe recruitment checks on your staff, will be important to our assessment.

Capacity/Capability

We need to be confident that you have the right capacity and capability in the relevant area.

Legal Considerations

Our contracts require that suppliers comply with all applicable laws and regulations.

Data

Any data processing you undertake on behalf of the Trust must adhere to current GDPR regulations.

Accreditations or Professional Standards

We will want to assure ourselves that where these are appropriate these are current and that you have not been charged with any grave professional misconduct.

Instructions to Suppliers

Quotations should be submitted in accordance with the above scope of work. Prices / costs are to be submitted inclusive of Value Added Tax (VAT), detailing the exclusive of VAT price / cost and any VAT (detailing the rate applied) that may be applicable as a separate figure / column.

All information should be submitted to Jason Field, Chief Finance Officer, via email at jfield@themast.co.uk by the closing date detailed below:

Stage / Activity	Indicative Date
Closing date for submission of quotations	16.07.2021

- Each bid will be evaluated by the Trust and suppliers may be asked to attend a presentation with an evaluation panel.
- It is the intention of the Trust to award a contract for an external audit supplier after ratification by the Audit committee early in the Autumn Term.

Acceptance

The Mast Academy Trust does not bind itself to accept the lowest quotation, or any quotation, and may choose to accept all or any part of the quotation.

The submission of the quotation shall not in any way bind The Mast Academy Trust to enter into an Agreement with the supplier or involve The Mast Academy Trust in any financial commitment in this respect.

The Mast Academy Trust reserves the right to cancel the procurement process and reject all quotations at any time prior to award of Agreement without incurring any liability to the affected suppliers.

You will not be entitled to claim for any costs or expenses, which you may incur in preparing your quotation whether or not your quotation is successful.