

Important Information for Schools

Chief Executive Officer (CEO) Fraud

The council has recently been advised of a significant increase in the number of schools targeted by fraudsters, making financial requests whilst purporting to be the Head Teacher or Principal. As these requests often concern the authorisation of financial transfers or 'urgent' one off payments of up to £10,000, a number of schools have suffered substantial financial losses as a result.

Contact is generally targeted with emails sent to staff holding financial management responsibilities, from spoofed email accounts or addresses very similar to that of the headteacher or principal. The instructions given are usually very basic and designed to put pressure on the recipient by requesting that the payment is made as soon as possible.

Staff awareness and compliance with robust internal payment procedures are vital in identifying fraudulent requests to ensure that only genuine payments are processed. In the event that school staff receive suspicious emails or suspected fraudulent payment requests, the details should be reported to audit services.