OWLCOTES MULTI ACADEMY TRUST

(A company limited by guarantee)

ANNUAL REPORT AND FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

for the year ended
31 August 2023

Company Registration No. 11188252

Owlcotes Multi Academy Trust
CONTENTS

Reference and Administrative Details	1
Trustees' Report	2
Governance Statement	13
Statement on Regularity, Propriety and Compliance	17
Statement of Trustees' Responsibilities	18
Independent Auditor's Report on the Financial Statements	19
Independent Reporting Accountant's Assurance Report on Regularity	22
Statement of Financial Activities Incorporating Income and Expenditure Account	24
Balance Sheet	25
Cash Flow Statement	26
Notes to the Financial Statements	27

Owlcotes Multi Academy Trust
REFERENCE AND ADMINISTRATIVE DETAILS

Members	C Waspe J Robinson J Norfolk G Grant (appointed 07 December 2022)
Trustees	R Gibson S Hall (resigned 10 July 2023) J Norfolk (Chair) L West J Woods S Greene C Harrison (resigned 10 July 2023) E Palmer A Reed (appointed 13 October 2022)
CEO and Accounting Officer	L West
CFO	K Spence (resigned 31 August 2023)
Executive Leadership Team:	L West K Spence J Parker K Dickson A Steele E Caine
Registered Office	Pudsey Primrose Hill Primary School Primrose Hill Stanningley Pudsey LS28 6AB
Company Registration Number	11188252 (England and Wales)
Independent Auditor	TC Group 6 Queen Street Leeds LS1 2TW
Bankers	Lloyds Bank 65-68 Briggate Leeds LS1 6LH
Solicitors	Stone King LLP 1 Aire Street Leeds West Yorkshire LS1 4PR

It is 5 years since the Owlcotes MAT was founded and we now have 5 primary schools in our trust as Manor Wood joined in June 2023. We have continued to develop the Central Team to support the infrastructure of systems and policy frameworks and to ensure that we are geared for growth. We have expanded the school improvement team, finance team and admin support.

We have a strong governance model with a dedicated and skilled trust board which has grown in numbers since last year. The trust board is committed to continual school improvement and is well supported by effective local governing boards.

We place a strong emphasis on collaboration and professional development in our commitment to the pursuit of excellence, with children at the heart of all we do. All of our schools have improved from their starting points; Calverley Parkside, a sponsored academy received a good Ofsted judgement in December 2022 which demonstrates excellent progress for the school. The support given by the CEO and Central Team has enabled our schools to focus on improving educational outcomes. We have continued to develop the collective expertise within the Trust which now includes two NLEs, a Trust Development Team, SLEs, trained moderators and trained coaches offering bespoke coaching for staff. The Executive Leadership Team drives the work of these teams in line with our philosophy of 'Working Together to Achieve Excellence'.

CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER'S REVIEW OF THE YEAR

We have had another successful year. In December 2022 Calverley Parkside were graded 'good' by Ofsted with a grade of Outstanding for Leadership and Management. This is a really positive achievement from a school that had a previous judgement of inadequate prior to being sponsored by Owlcotes MAT and is testament to the exceptional work of the whole staff team and school community.

We were delighted also to welcome Manor Wood Primary School to Owlcotes Trust in June 2023. Manor Wood is the fifth Primary School in our trust, an Ofsted 'Outstanding' school and the first school to have an age range of 0-11 years. We are looking forward to continuing to work closely with all our schools.

In May 2023 the Regional Director named Owlcotes as the sponsoring MAT for Spring Bank Primary School. We are working collaboratively with the school prior to conversion which is expected to happen early 2024.

Throughout the year, there has been continued collaboration between our schools. The curriculum in each school continues to be reviewed and improved and all schools are teaching a broad, balanced and suitably challenging curriculum.

Our Leadership and SENDCo networks are working well and contributing positively to staff development and sharing best practice across our schools.

As CEO, I am proud of the achievements of all of our schools and our staff teams' determination to ensure high quality teaching and learning and an ambitious curriculum offer to our pupils is central to their work. I am proud and privileged to work with school leaders and staff teams who put children at the heart of their schools.

The Trustees present their annual report together with the financial statements and auditor's report of the charitable company for the period 1st September 2022 to 31st August 2023. The annual report serves the purpose of both a Trustees' report and a directors' report under company law.

The academy trust operates five primary schools in the LS28 (Pudsey) and LS12 (Armley) and LS17 (Moortown) districts of Leeds. The schools have a combined pupil capacity of 1890 FTE pupils.

The five schools in the trust are:

- Pudsey Primrose Hill Primary School, LS28 6AB - Joined 1st March 2018
- Pudsey Waterloo Primary School, LS28 7SR – Joined 1st March 2018
- Calverley Parkside Primary School, LS28 5PQ – Joined 1st November 2018
- Armley Park Primary School, LS12 2LY – Joined 1st December 2019
- Manor Wood Primary School, LS17 5DJ – Joined 1st June 2023

The Directed Academy Order for Spring Bank will swell pupil capacity to approx. 2,100 school age pupils in the trust. There are also additional pupils on roll who have part time Nursery places or who are attending two-year-old provision. The conversion is in progress with a potential conversion date of 1st February 2024.

STRUCTURE, GOVERNANCE AND MANAGEMENT

a) Constitution

The academy trust is a company limited by guarantee and an exempt charity. The charitable company's memorandum and articles of association are the primary governing documents of the academy trust. The Trustees of Owlcotes Multi Academy Trust are also the directors of the charitable company for the purposes of company law. The charitable company is known as Owlcotes Multi Academy Trust.

Trustees who served during the year and to the date these accounts are approved are included in the Reference and Administrative Details on page 1.

b) Members' Liability

Each member of the charitable company undertakes to contribute to the assets of the charitable company in the event of it being wound up while they are a member, or within one year after they cease to be a member, such amount as may be required, not exceeding £10, for the debts and liabilities contracted before they ceased to be a member.

c) Trustees indemnities

The academy trust is a member of the DfE Academy Risk Protection scheme which provides cover to protect Trustees from claims arising against negligent acts, errors or omissions whilst on academy trust business.

d) Method of Recruitment and appointment or election of Trustees

The Articles of Association and Funding agreement are the primary documents that govern the appointment of Trustees. These allow for members to appoint up to nine Trustees to the board of the academy trust. There are currently seven Trustees appointed with the appointment of an additional trustee in October 2023.

The academy trust operates Local Governing Boards (LGBs) within its schools and each of these must have a minimum of two parent Governors. Were the academy trust to amend its structure so that Local Governing Boards were no longer established in its schools, then article 53 requires that two parent Trustees shall be appointed to the trust board by way of an appropriate election process.

Article 58 permits the Trustees to co-opt further Trustees to the board subject to the eligibility criteria. In the period covered by these statements there were no co-opted Trustees appointed.

The term of office for any Trustee shall be four years. This time limit shall not apply to the CEO. Any Trustee may be re-appointed or re-elected in accordance with the Articles of Association.

The trust, on identifying a need to recruit an additional or replacement Trustee will identify requirements based on a skills audit of the current Trustees. Candidates will be sought from within local communities and through external support agencies including Academy Ambassadors.

Any new Trustee will be proposed by the Chief Executive Officer and Chair of Trustees following interview. The candidate will then be presented to the Members and Board of Trustees who will vote on whether to accept them. All new Trustees will be required to complete an Enhanced Disclosure (through the Disclosure Barring Service) before the selection is confirmed.

e) Policies and Procedures Adopted for the Induction and Training of Trustees

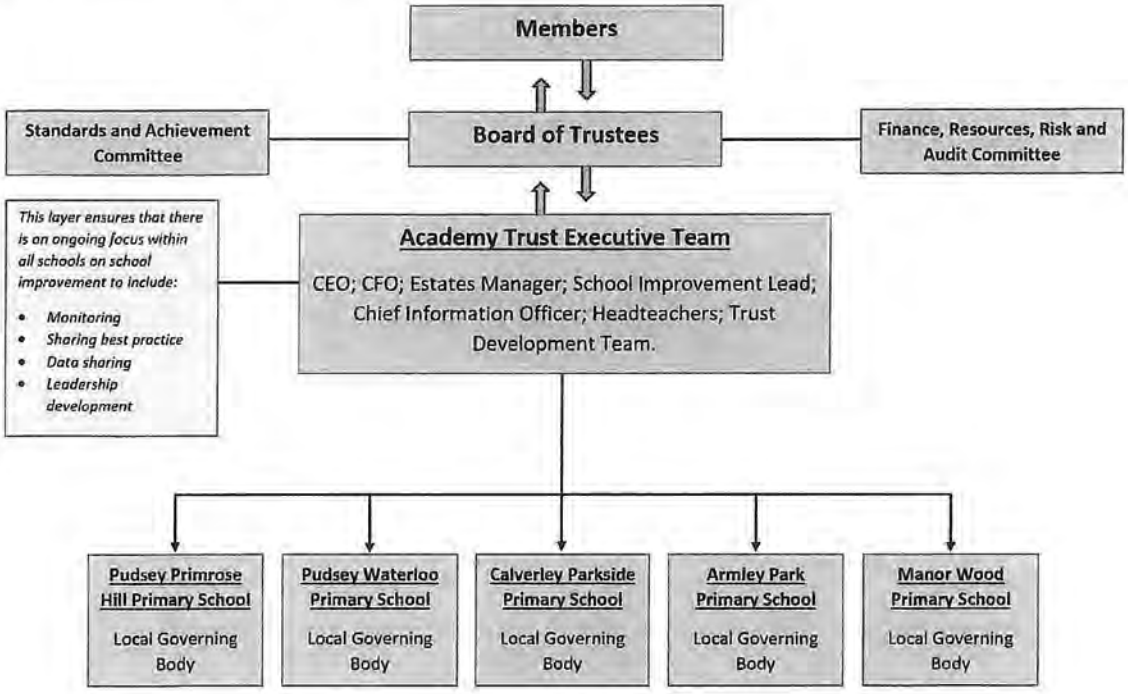
An induction programme is available to new Governors of LGBs and now also to new Trustees which is informed by their existing experience. Where necessary, induction and training will be provided on educational, legal and financial matters.

All Trustees are provided with copies of policies, procedures, minutes, accounts, budgets and other necessary documents that they will need to undertake their role as Trustees. Key materials and resources such as the Scheme of Delegation, Academy Trust Handbook, KCSiE, Trustee Code of conduct and Charity Commission information are uploaded onto the shared 'Trustee Drive'.

Trustees are invited to any appropriate training provided by the trust and are encouraged to access training as and when required provided by external agencies. Safeguard training is completed annually by all Trustees.
All Trustees are required to submit information for inclusion in a Register of Interests, which is updated on an ongoing basis and annually.

An annual skills audit is used by the trust to identify any gaps in knowledge or skill. Results of the skills audit is used to prioritise training to address any identified needs.

f) Organisational Structure



The academy trust operates an organisational structure that consists of four levels. Members; the Board of Trustees and the associated individual committees (Finance Risk and Audit and Standards and Achievement); The Executive Leadership Team; the schools' LGB and Headteachers.

The Members of Owlcotes Multi-Academy Trust (OMAT) have ultimate control over the Trust, with the ability to appoint other members and Trustees. Members monitor, challenge and hold the Trustees to account. The Board of Trustees is responsible for the overall strategic direction of the academy trust. Trustees must ensure that the academy trust complies with: Company Law & Regulations; Charity Law & Regulations; Statutes and Regulations issued by National Government via the DfE, ESFA and other relevant agencies.

Trustees must ensure that the academy trust operates in a manner that delivers an appropriate and effective stewardship of public funds. Trustees achieve this by developing appropriate policies, procedures and practices which are implemented by the executives of the trust. Trustees work together on the Board in a voluntary capacity to ensure that OMAT meets the needs of its schools and communities.

The Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of the Trust is responsible for the day-to-day operation of the Trust and is accountable to the Board. The CEO is also the accounting officer. The executive leadership team is led by the CEO and comprises of the CFO, CIO (Chief Information Officer) and Headteachers of schools in the academy trust.

The CEO, CIO and CFO have cross MAT responsibility for delivering on the strategic plans.

The Board of Trustees has two committees which act in an advice and scrutiny capacity to the board: The Finance, Risk and Audit Committee (FRAC) and the Achievement and Standards Committee (ASC)

Local Governing Boards and Headteachers have delegated responsibilities and must ensure they meet the challenge of their statutory duties and regulations and continuously improving children's outcomes. There are regular opportunities for communication between Governors, leaders and Trustees.

The Board of Trustees monitors the performance of the academy trust and its compliance with relevant laws and regulations through:

- Regular meetings of the Board of Trustees
- Regular written reports to the Trustees from the CEO
- The engagement of external third parties to undertake independent review and verification (e.g external audit; internal audit; external consultant)

g) Arrangements for setting pay and remuneration of key management personnel.
Arrangements for setting pay and remuneration are in accordance with the Owlcotes pay policy which is agreed by the Board of Trustees and reflects guidance from the ESFA. The academy trust follows the pay arrangements for maintained schools in England and Wales for teachers. The trust's pay is based on nationally agreed pay scales for teaching staff and Local Government pay arrangements for non-teaching staff.

The key management personnel of the Academy Trust comprise the Trustees, the Chief Executive Officer, The Chief Information Officer and the Chief Finance officer. Executive pay is set at an individual level and is benchmarked against similar roles.

Only one Trustee, the Chief Executive Officer, is remunerated and only receives remuneration in respect of services she provides under her contract of employment and not in respect of her role as a Trustee.

Any changes to pay and remuneration takes place through the formal performance management process. The Trustee performance management committee is responsible for reviewing the performance of the CEO. The CEO provides advice to LGB appraisal committees on the performance of Headteachers within OMAT.

h) Connected organisations, including related party relationships.
Pudsey Primrose Hill Primary works with the Josie Thirkell institute in collaboration with Exceed Academies trust to provide ITT.

The CEO is a strategic partner (but not the lead school) in the Noctua Teaching Alliance which provides continuing professional development to schools in Leeds and Bradford, she is also a Strategic partner in the Leeds Teaching School

Hub which provides CPD, leadership development and school improvement services to schools in the Leeds area. In the summer term of 2023 two schools in the trust used the services of a registered charity LS-TEN for curriculum enrichment events. The proprietor of the charity had previously been a trustee in Owlcotes MAT.

A number of staff within the Owlcotes Trust are identified as Specialist Leaders of Education (SLEs) and National Leaders of Education (NLEs). There are also a number of qualified Moderators. These staff have provided school improvement support to other schools.

i) Trade union facilities time
During the year there were no relevant union official employees. The trust buys in to Leeds City Council Union Facilities time for all schools in the trust. The trust engages effectively with trade unions via a JCC.

j) Engagement with Employees (including disabled persons)
School staff at all levels are fully involved in decision making. Leaders seek the views of staff during regular staff meetings, questionnaires / written feedback from staff and informally by other means.

Performance data and factors affecting data is regularly shared with staff and this data forms a key element of OMAT's strategic plan and each school's annual improvement plan.

Termly newsletters to all staff across the Trust enable staff to stay informed of trust-wide developments. Some common training days across the trust actively engage staff in development and learning opportunities.

OMAT has engaged with unions representing staff via a JCC. New policies in Owlcotes trust are shared with staff and union representatives for comment and local agreement.

k) Engagement with suppliers, customers and others in a business relationship with the trust

OMAT actively engages with suppliers through the undertaking of appropriate procurement procedures, contract management and engagement with external partnerships. OMAT is a member of the DfE regulated Crescent Purchasing Consortium which gives access to best value purchasing frameworks.

The Trust is a strategic partner in Noctua School Alliance and the Leeds Teaching School Hub and works alongside the Josie Thirkell institute as a delivery partner in ITT.

OMAT actively engages with parents of pupils via the individual schools' parental engagement processes.

OBJECTIVES AND ACTIVITIES

a) Objects and aims

The Owlcotes Multi Academy Trust was formed on 5th February 2018 with two schools; Pudsey Primrose Hill Primary School and Pudsey Waterloo Primary School converting to join OMAT on 1st March 2018. Calverley Parkside converted and joined OMAT on 1st November 2018 and Armley Park Primary School converted and joined OMAT on 1st December 2019 and Manor Wood converted and joined on 1st June 2023.

Our mission at Owlcotes Multi Academy trust is to improve provision and outcomes for all our pupils by sharing expertise through collaborative practice. Our aims are as follows:

- To develop inclusive schools, sharing a common purpose to provide excellent education and improved outcomes for pupils.
- To provide high-quality education for all children within the local community by inspiring innovation, creativity and aspiration through an enriched curriculum.
- To ensure co-operation and collaboration between schools with a strong focus on staff development.
- To preserve the unique identity of all schools within the trust.

b) Values

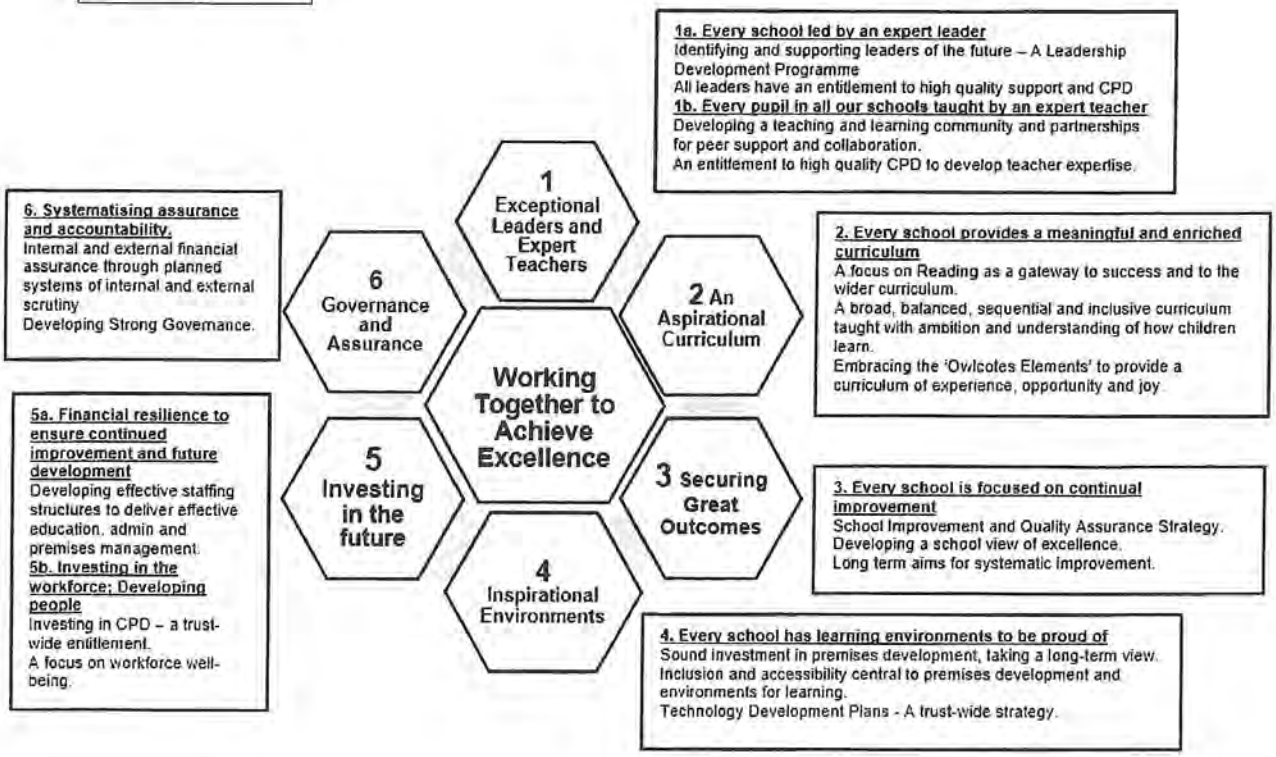
To build a strong network of schools, working collaboratively to provide excellent teaching and learning and curriculum opportunities.

- To maintain and establish excellent schools in local communities so that all schools within the trust are good or better according to Ofsted criteria.
- To keep learning, attainment and progress at the heart of each school. Developing shared accountability for the outcomes of pupils within the trust.
- To focus on making teaching as good as it can be, sharing best practice through a range of CPD opportunities.
- To develop people by attracting and retaining excellent staff, offering promotion within the trusts so that quality staff are retained.
- To ensure good value for money, making the most effective use of resources and staffing.

c) Objectives

The Trust has an established a strategic plan (2021 – 2024). 'Working Together to Achieve Excellence' . This plan builds on the successes we have achieved so far. We aim to make a positive difference in our schools by continuing our collaborative work across the following six key priorities.

Strategic Priorities



The Owlcotes Academy Trust recognises its important role in supporting schools to flourish and as such, is engaged in school to school support with schools who are not members of the trust. Currently the trust is working with three schools outside of the trust, one of which will join the trust in 2024. The trust is committed to considering other schools who may wish to join. OMAT will act as a sponsor for schools as directed by the RD.

OMAT has a transparent leadership structure, clear levels of accountability with three separate boards.

1. Local Governing Board (each school)
2. Board of Trustees
3. Board of Members

Every member of each board is recruited for the skills and expertise they bring to the academy trust and the difference they can make towards ensuring its success. The leadership structure ensures that there is an appropriate focus on school improvement and financial accountability.

The responsibilities for each board are clearly defined in the Owlcotes Multi Academy Trust's scheme of delegation. This scheme considers the requirements of the founder schools who are both 'convertor' academies and also the requirements of sponsored schools as the board recognise that the needs of schools joining later may differ depending on their position at the time of conversion.

d) Public benefit

The academy trust's aims are set out in this report and are undertaken to further its charitable purposes for the public benefit. The Trustees have referred to the guidance on public benefit provided by the Charities Commission when establishing the trust's key aims and objectives.

All the schools within the Academy Trust provide an inclusive curriculum for the pupils within their local community. All schools work with other local primary schools, sharing collaborative approaches to school improvement within the wider community, and with their local secondary schools to ensure a smooth transition into secondary education for all pupils.

STRATEGIC REPORT

Achievement and Performance

a) Context

Schools in the academy trust are geographically close, located within easy travel distance of each other. Three of the schools are two form entry and the remaining two schools are one form entry. All schools have a nursery and all offer 'wrap around' before and after school care for pupils of statutory school age. Manor Wood has an age range of 0-11 and offers education and care for babies from 6 months old and toddlers aged 2-3.

Pupil numbers are stable across our schools. Armley Park Primary has historically had issues with inconsistent pupil numbers due to high mobility in the catchment area and lower numbers attending the nursery provision, however, these have continued to increase and the school is now mostly full.

Average pupil attendance for the academic year ending July 2023 was 94%. Some schools in the trust have consistently high attendance whilst others have a number of pupils who are PA.

The schools are diverse and the contexts range from schools where there are fewer pupils eligible for free school meals or for pupil premium funding than national, schools broadly in line with national and one school where the number of disadvantaged pupils is well above national.

Although below national across the trust, there is an increasing number of pupils who have English as an additional language and one school where numbers are well above national.

b) Key performance indicators

National assessment tests took place in 2023. Average results across the trust are in line with or all above national in all measures and have increased since 2022. Average point scores are also above national average and progress between KS1 and KS2 is excellent. All assessment data has been fully analysed and reported to Trustees.

Assessment	2023 OMAT Average	2023 National Average	2022 OMAT Average	2022 National Average
Expected Standard in Reading	82%	73%	76%	75%
Expected Standard in Maths	82%	73%	75%	71%
Expected Standard in Writing	80%	71%	79%	78%
Expected Standard in Reading, Writing and Maths Combined	74%	59%	69%	59%
Expected Standard in Grammar, Punctuation and Spelling	72%	72%	69%	72%

OMAT Schools Average progress measures*	Reading	Writing	Maths
	+1.4	+2.2	+1.7

**A progress score of 0 this means that on average pupils achieved similar results at the end of KS2 (end of year 6) to pupils in other schools with similar results at the end of KS1.*

Data analysis - evaluation of successes and areas for improvement have formed the basis for each school's improvement plan for the forthcoming year.

Calverley Parkside Primary School had an Ofsted inspection in December 2022. The inspection recognised the positive improvements made in the school since the last inspection and the school was graded 'good' in all areas with a judgement of Outstanding for Leadership and Management.

All schools have implemented a knowledge rich curriculum in line with the new Ofsted framework and collaborative planning of History, Geography and Science across the trust, as well as the Owlcotes Elements curriculum, has supported all schools in this work. Schools are continuing to work on improving curriculum assessment in Foundation subjects.

c) Performance of the Trust

The key objectives in the strategic plan 2021-24 are to ensure that:

1. Every school led by an expert leader and all pupils taught by expert teachers.
2. Every school prioritises an aspirational and enriched curriculum within a culture of inclusion, diversity and opportunity.
3. Every school is focused on continual improvement from its starting point to achieve great outcomes.
4. Every school has inspirational learning environments with up-to-date technological infrastructure in premises that are fit for purpose.
5. Every school's financial resources are focused on investing in the future to ensure financial resilience and workforce development.
6. Every school demonstrates effective accountability within a framework of strong governance.

We are proud of our achievements against our objectives and the progress we have made. Key areas of success include:

i. All of our schools have improved in relation to their starting points on conversion.
ii. Average attainment and progress measures are above national at the end of KS2 in all measures.
iii. The trust has created an approach to school improvement where each school is an equal partner and can contribute to and learn from the good practice that exists within the trust. We are proud of how effectively we have achieved this ambition within a short space of time.
iv. The trust has built a Trust Development Team of accredited SLEs, trained moderators, leading practitioners and two NLEs to provide school improvement support to schools within and outside of the trust.
v. The further development of a coaching programme (ElevatED); aimed at supporting teachers to be the best they can be has been extended and additional coaches are now trained to support the offer of coaching across the trust.
vi. We have developed a leadership coaching programme which is supporting senior leaders in our schools.
vii. Leadership and SENCO networks are working effectively and are supporting staff in OMAT and other schools
viii. CPD is given a high priority for all staff in school through a planned programme of external courses, access to National Professional Leadership Qualifications, online CPD, in-school training, coaching, mentoring and peer support, particularly for teachers early in their career through the Early Career Framework to ensure that leadership development and the quality of teaching as given a high priority.
ix. We have developed a collaborative learning community across the trust, enabling all staff in our schools to engage positively with subject, phase and staff teams to share and learn from best practice.
x. Curriculum development has been given the highest priority. All schools have a clearly planned curriculum which is ambitious and appropriate and builds upon prior learning.
xi. There has been further investment in our school buildings, all of which have seen investment. We have benefitted from successful bids for additional funding which has supported capital projects and the MAT central budget has been effectively used to fund improvement projects for schools including school library refurbishments in all schools, playground improvements and improvements to IT infrastructure. Medium and long-term premises development plans for each school are in place so that further improvements can be scheduled in line with the school's budget and any CIF funding.
xii. The trust is financially secure. The CFO and CEO supports schools to review and plan their budgets in order to ensure financial stability and to plan effective short-term and long-term spending focused on school improvement. Negotiation of contracts and services across the trust has ensured best value, this includes the re-negotiation of utilities contracts.
xiii. The trust gives the highest priority to school improvement. The effective central trust team provides a raft of support for all schools, offering financial management and oversight; premises development; compliance monitoring; recruitment support and HR functions. This has enabled school leaders time to focus on improving the quality of education in their own schools.
xiv. Our employees are key to the success of the trust and therefore we are committed to developing people within the trust. We have made key senior leadership appointments at trust level which will support our drive to develop leadership at all levels.
xv. We have created a strong governance model that has a dedicated and skilled trust board committed to continual improvement, supported by strong and improving local governing bodies. The CEO and Chief Information Officer have developed a streamlined and rational cycle of governance across the schools in the trust, supported by training and systems for evaluation. Training for new Governors and new Trustees has added to the strength in governance at local and trust board level.

Going Concern
After making appropriate enquiries, the Board of Trustees has a reasonable expectation that the academy trust has adequate resources to continue in operational existence for the foreseeable future. For this reason, it continues to adopt the going concern basis in preparing the financial statements. Further details regarding the adoption of the going concern basis can be found in the Statement of Accounting Policies.

Promoting the Success of the Company
The achievements over the past year demonstrate the success of the Owlcotes Multi-Academy Trust. The strategic plan for 2021-24 sets out the aspirations for the future and how future success will be achieved. Performance against the plan is reported to the Trust Board at every meeting, ensuring that all Trustees are fully informed of all developments.

FINANCIAL REVIEW

a) Financial Position of the Trust
The financial position of the trust remains strong. The majority of the Trust's income is obtained from the Education Funding Agency (ESFA) in the form of recurrent grants. The use of which is restricted to particular purposes. The grants received during the period ended 31st August 2022 and the associated expenditure are shown under restricted funds in the Statement of Financial Activities.

Total GAG funding for the trust was £5,794,000.

The Academy Trust also receives grants for fixed assets from the DfE/ESFA. These grants are shown in the financial statement as restricted income in the fixed asset fund and for the year ended August 2023 totalled £518,000.

In addition, the trust receives income for items such as extended services (wrap around care), school meals, school trips, uniform etc. This income is treated as 'unrestricted funds'.

During the year ended 31st August 2023 total expenditure of £5,563,000 was covered by GAG funding from the ESFA.

The excess of income over expenditure was £3,972,000.

The reserves position at 31st August 2023 is as follows:
Restricted funds excluding pension reserve: £19,789 ,000.
Unrestricted funds (General Fund): £3,323,000

At the end of August 2023, no schools were in a deficit position.

b) Reserves Policy
The Board of Trustees is responsible for managing fluctuations in the overall financial position of the trust, and reviews the level of reserves annually. This review encompasses the nature of income and expenditure streams, the need to match income and commitments and the nature of the reserves. Trustees take into consideration the future plans of the Trust, the uncertainty over future income streams and other key risks identified during risk reviews.

Individual schools are expected to set balanced budgets each year, but the trust recognises that this is challenging in some schools depending on individual circumstances. In these circumstances the trust will use reserves to support the school so that any projected in-year deficit does not have a detrimental impact on school effectiveness, and will then work with the school to return them to a surplus as soon as practicable.

Trustees have a policy which outlines the levels of reserves held in each school and centrally and which outlines the restrictions on the use of the reserves to enable any investment decisions to be made across the trust as a whole. Trustees are aware that it will be necessary to ensure that the level of free reserves should provide sufficient working capital to cover delays between spending and receipt of grants and to provide a cushion to deal with unexpected emergencies such as urgent maintenance or building plans and increased utility costs.

Reserves at the end of the year are held to:

- Contribute to capital projects including IT infrastructure
- Ensure the trust can meet financial commitments which have been made
- Address short term fluctuations in pupil numbers and lagged funding
- Meet cash flow requirements
- Ensure there is a contingency against unforeseen events
- Provide immediate resource/ capacity requirements where there is a compelling need.

Schools are able to apply for a 'loan' from the reserves with an agreed pay back schedule, or a grant from the reserves, subject to a business case linked to the trust's Strategic Plan or to emergency, unforeseen situations.

The level of free reserves at 31st August 2023 was £3,510,000.

c) Investment Policy

The academy trusts funds are held in low-risk bank accounts. Trustees have agreed an Investment Policy which has the following key objectives:

- To achieve best financial return available whilst ensuring that security of deposits takes precedence over revenue maximisation.
- To only invest funds surplus to operational need or expansion based on all financial commitments being met without the academy trust or individual schools' bank account becoming overdrawn.
- To ensure that all investment decisions are exercised with care and skill and consequently in the best interests of the academy trust, commanding broad public support.

d) Principal Risks and Uncertainties

The Trustees have established a robust risk management process which has highlighted 6 major risks at this point:

i. Future funding levels

The main risk to the trust going forward is uncertainty about funding levels, with rising costs of utilities and pay increases for staff and pupil numbers on roll. Nationally there are falling rolls in primary schools and this is likely to affect the schools in the MAT in the future. Additionally, pressure within Leeds on high needs funding has meant that the costs of supporting pupils with additional needs is significantly higher than the funding received in all schools. Added into this is the 'lagged funding' situation for supporting pupils with SEND. This all contributes to the pressure on the school budgets. Measures in place to control this risk include:

- Scenario budget planning for 1; 3 and 5 years.
- Marketing school places via social media and online initiatives and open events/ community events.
- Reducing costs by sharing resources across the academy trust.
- Review of costings on renewal of key contracts for services and purchasing resources. This is an area of continued focus.
- Establishing greater 'energy efficiency' across the trust.
- Actively seeking out partnerships and new funding streams.

ii. Reduced income streams

For a number of years, the trust has generated income from ITT bursaries with Primrose Hill acting as a lead school within the area for ITT provision. The change to government funding and the removal of bursaries for Primary ITT has reduced this income significantly. The trust has sought new partnerships for future sustainability including becoming a strategic partner in the LTSH and delivering on NPQs and ECF which bring in additional funding.

iii. Failure to meet legal and statutory obligations

Trustees have identified risk from legal action if the trust fails to meet its legal obligations. This is mitigated by:

- Establishment and implementation of appropriate policies.
- Training on GDPR legislation and employing the services of a data protection officer.
- Support from specialists including health & safety, finance, legal and HR via service level agreements.

iv. Recruitment

The success of the trust is reliant on the quality of its staff. Recruitment is difficult in the current climate across many roles and grades. The trust has established a 'perks at work' scheme and other benefits such as reduced price wrap around care for staff in order to attract potential employees.

v. Decline in results

Although currently above national in all measures in KS2 a decline in results over a period of time could impact Ofsted ratings, the reputation of the Trust and its capacity to grow. Mitigating actions include:

- Focus of the Executive Leadership Team on continuous improvement in teaching and learning
- Establishment of the Trust Development Team, led by two NLEs to support school improvement across the trust including accurate self-assessment and validation of school improvement interventions.
- Prioritisation on key areas for development in each school in the academy trust with appropriate funding.
- Establishing partnerships with other multi-academy trusts to provide an external view on school effectiveness and improvement strategies.

vi. Health and Safety and the Trust's Estate
As the trust has grown there is a need to ensure that the estate is safe, well-maintained and complies with relevant regulations. The appointment of a Facilities and Estates manager has provided additional assurance to trustees. Due diligence related to schools wanting to join the trust includes an assessment of any outstanding compliance or building work and plans to address these.

Fundraising
The academy trust does not use any professional fundraiser or commercial participator to carry out activities on its behalf. Due to the low levels of fundraising the trust undertakes, the trust is not a participator of any voluntary scheme for regulating fundraising, or any voluntary standard of fundraising for the activities carried out on behalf of the trust. Fundraising has not been significantly affected by the coronavirus pandemic, with the exception of a reduction in the PTA activities and related funding across the trust.

PLANS FOR FUTURE PERIODS

The academy trust is committed to the development of inclusive schools which provide a broad, balanced and relevant curriculum. The academy trust aspires to ensure equality of opportunity for all pupils and staff.
The trust is planning for growth and has strengthened the central team in order to facilitate this. The trust is actively seeking out partnerships with other schools who are considering becoming an academy and has met with a number of governing boards who are considering joining a multi-academy trust. It is anticipated that an additional school will join the trust in early 2024.

Funds held as a Custodian Trustee on Behalf of Others.
Financial Statements do not include any balances on funds that the trust is holding as a custodian on behalf of others.

Auditor
Insofar as the Trustees are aware:

- There is no relevant audit information of which the charitable company's auditor is unaware.
- The Trustees have taken all steps that they ought to have taken to make themselves aware of any relevant audit information and to establish that the auditor is aware of that information.

The Trustees' report, incorporating a strategic report, was approved by order of the Board of Trustees, as the company directors, on ...19/12/2023 and signed on the board's behalf by:

J E Norfolk

Judith Norfolk
Chair of Trustees

As Trustees we acknowledge we have overall responsibility for ensuring that Owlcotes Multi-Academy Trust has an effective and appropriate system of control, financial and otherwise. However, such a system is designed to manage rather than eliminate the risk of failure to achieve business objectives and can provide only reasonable and not absolute assurance against material misstatement or loss.

As Trustees we have reviewed and taken account of the guidance in the DfE's Governance handbook and competency framework for governance.

The Board of Trustees has delegated the day-to-day responsibility to the Chief Executive Officer as accounting officer, for ensuring financial controls conform with the requirements of both propriety and good financial management and in accordance with the requirements and responsibilities assigned to it in the funding agreement between Owlcotes Multi-Academy Trust and the Secretary of State for Education. They are also responsible for reporting to the Board of Trustees any material weaknesses or breakdowns in internal control.

Leadership and management of schools within the academy trust
This is undertaken on a day-to-day basis by the Headteachers and senior staff in each school. The Headteachers, led by the CEO, determine the strategic issues in each school which are identified through the school improvement priorities. The Headteachers are subject to annual appraisal as is the CEO.

Governance
The information on governance included here supplements that described in the Trustees' Report and in the Statement of Trustees' Responsibilities.

The Board of Trustees has formally met four times during the period from 1st September 2022 to 31st August 2023. The Academy Trust Handbook 2022 requires Boards which meet less frequently than six times a year to describe how the Board has maintained effective oversight of funds. In Owlcotes MAT there is a Finance, Risk and Audit Committee whose remit is to focus on finance resources and risk. This committee meets six times each year. Members of the Committee are members of the Trust Board and the Chair of the committee is the trustee with financial oversight and also the vice chair of the Board of Trustees. The Committee scrutinises financial matters in detail and provides detailed feedback and minutes to each meeting of the Trust Board.

Attendance during the year at meetings of the full Board of Trustees was as follows:

Board of Trustees	Meetings Attended	Out of a Possible
Judith Norfolk (Chair)	4	4
Guy Gibson	4	4
Lesley West (CEO)	4	4
John Woods	3	4
Shayne Hall (resigned 10th July 2023)	2	3
Stephen Greene	3	4
Emma Palmer (appointed 23rd June 2022)	3	4
Carl Harrison (appointed 23rd June 2022 resigned 10th July 2023)	2	2
Ann Reed (appointed 13th October 2022)	4	4

The Finance, Risk and Audit Committee is a committee of the Board of Trustees. Its remit is to ensure sound management of the trust's finances and resources. The committee advises the Board and the accounting officer (CEO) of the effectiveness of the trusts internal controls, risk management, and financial systems and frameworks. Decisions taken are in line with the scheme of delegation and committee terms of reference.

Finance, Risk and Audit Committee	Meetings Attended	Out of a Possible
Guy Gibson (Chair)	6	6
Stephen Greene	5	6
Judith Norfolk	6	6
Lesley West (CEO)	6	6

The Achievement and Standards Committee is also a committee of the Board of Trustees. Its remit is to monitor and advise the Board of Trustees regarding outcomes for pupils, the quality of curriculum provision and performance across the trust.

Achievement and Standards Committee	Meetings Attended	Out of a Possible
John Woods	2	3
Judith Norfolk	3	3
Shayne Hall (resigned 22nd March 2023)	1	1
Lesley West (CEO)	3	3

Review of Governance
The Owlcotes Multi-Academy Trust was established on 5th Feb 2018 with the core purpose of development of providing excellent education and improved outcomes for pupils in the local community.

At the outset, founder members and Trustees with relevant experience of education, finance, business and the local community were selected. As a result of a skills audit and evaluation framework, the trust board advertised for additional Trustees to increase the number of Trustees on the board in line with identified skills gaps. This vacancy was filled on 13th October 2022 adding additional skill and capacity to the board.

Trustees, the CEO and Headteachers at each school are committed to the core purpose of the academy trust and are continuing to develop and implement plans to deliver the aims and objectives.

Trust Board Effectiveness
Significant and positive steps during this year have included: expanding the central team, expansion of the coaching programme (ElevatED) and developing networks for Deputy Head and SENC0 support. The trust is celebrating a successful Ofsted inspection at Calverley Parkside (from inadequate to good with outstanding leadership and management) and the successful conversion of Manor Wood Primary School to join Owlcotes Trust.

The continued development of the Owlcotes collaborative learning community and shared curriculum, shared planning and shared resources is supporting consistency of teaching across schools in the trust.

All Trustees have a good understanding of their financial roles and responsibilities. The CFO has reported on all financial aspects and budget monitoring to the full trust board. As a result, the full trust board has reviewed the academy trust revenue budget, received periodic budget monitoring reports; set and agreed the accounting and financial policies; ensured compliance with the Academies Financial Handbook; advised and agreed the appointment of external auditors; approved and monitored the risk assessment policy and risk register.

CEO reports to the Board of Trustees keep all Trustees informed of developments within each school and across the trust, including key priorities, standards and achievement and staffing and recruitment issues and a comprehensive trust improvement plan, supported by detailed school improvement plans is maintaining the focus on improving outcomes across all schools.

Regular 'keep in touch' meetings between the CEO, CFO, Chair and Vice Chair of Trustees are beneficial in planning the work of the Board of Trustees and in ensuring Trustee meetings have addressed issues of compliance during the year.

The scheme of delegation identifies that a system of sub-committees with delegated responsibilities operate (Finance, Risk & Audit and Achievement and Standards). Each committee membership has been confirmed including the election of chairs of each committee.

Future review of effectiveness of the trust board
The board completes an annual review of its effectiveness and skills. During the period 1st September 2022 to 31st August 2023 the Trustees undertook a comprehensive review of the effectiveness of governance via a self-evaluation tool. Actions have been planned to address any issues identified. This has included additional training and access to bespoke reading materials developed by the CEO and CIO.

As the trust has matured, the data and other information provided to the board and/or to the sub-committees has developed. A regularly updated information pack for Trustees, provides Trustees with contextual information for each school and the trust as a whole in terms of budget, finance, school improvement, staffing and outcomes.

Review of Value for Money
As accounting officer, the Chief Executive Officer has responsibility for ensuring that the academy trust delivers good value in the use of public resources. The accounting officer understands that value for money refers to the educational and wider societal outcomes, as well as estates safety and management, achieved in return for the taxpayer resources received.

The accounting officer considers how the academy trust's use of its resources has provided good value for money during each academic year and reports to the Board of Trustees where value for money can be improved, including the use of benchmarking data where available. The accounting officer for the academy trust has delivered improved value for money during the year by:

- Working to maximise areas of expertise across the academy trust so as to reduce inefficiencies.
- Adapting staffing structures in each school as appropriate to reflect trust wide developments.
- Sharing resources, including staff, across the trust to maximise value for money.
- Using expertise from established MATs to develop the efficiency and expertise of staff within the central team.
- Tight budgetary control to ensure that all purchases are approved by Headteachers.
- Buying resources 'across the MAT' at a reduced cost.
- Becoming a member of the DfE regulated Crescent Purchasing Consortium which gives access to Best Value purchasing frameworks.
- Ensuring that funding is used to address any estates issues in a timely manner, using approved contractors within a framework of procurement and tendering as outlined in the Scheme of Delegation.so that all schools offer a safe, well-maintained environment.

The purpose of the System of Internal Control
The system of internal control is designed to manage risk to a reasonable level rather than to eliminate all risk of failure to achieve policies, aims and objectives. It can provide reasonable but not absolute assurance of effectiveness.

The system of internal control is based on an on-going process designed to identify and prioritise the risks to the achievement of academy trust policies, aims and objectives, to evaluate the likelihood of those risks being realised and the impact should they be realised, and to manage them efficiently, effectively and economically.

The system of internal control has been in place at Owlcotes Multi-Academy Trust for the period 1st September 2022 to 31st August 2023 and up to the date of approval of the annual report and financial statements.

Capacity to Handle Risk
The Board of Trustees has reviewed the key risks to which the academy trust is exposed together with the operating, financial and compliance controls that have been implemented to mitigate those risks. The Board of Trustees is of the view that there is a formal on-going process in place for identifying, evaluating and managing the academy trust's significant risks that has been in place for the period 1st September 2022 to 31st August 2023 and up to the date of approval of the annual report and financial statements. This process is regularly reviewed by the Board of Trustees and the risk register is a standing agenda item at all Trustee meetings.

The Risk and Control Framework
The academy trust's system of internal financial control is designed to manage risk and based on a framework of regular management information and administrative procedures including the segregation of duties and a system of delegation and accountability. In particular, it includes:

- Comprehensive budgeting and monitoring systems with an annual budget and periodic financial reports which are reviewed and agreed by the Board of Trustees.
- Regular reviews by the Finance, Resources, Audit and Risk committee of reports which indicate financial performance against the forecasts and of major purchase plans, capital works and expenditure programmes.
- Setting targets to measure financial and other performance.
- Clearly defined purchasing (asset purchase or capital investment) guidelines.
- Delegation of authority and segregation of duties.
- Identification and management of risks.

The Board of Trustees has considered the need for a specific internal audit function and after a procurement process appointed Leeds City Council to fulfil aspects the internal audit function in relation to audit of grant funding, and an audit of financial systems and processes.

All internal auditor's role includes giving advice on financial and other matters and performing a range of checks on the trust's financial and other systems. The checks carried out in this particular period included:

- Reviewing purchasing card systems and processes.
- Reviewing the MAT's bank reconciliations and income.
- GDPR Audit
- Audit of schools' asset registers

Reports from internal audit processes are shared with the Board of Trustees through the finance, risk and audit committee. This process gives information on the operation of the systems of control being tested via a detailed report from the auditor with findings and recommendations. The statement of internal control, is an annual summary outlining areas reviewed, key findings, recommendation and conclusions to help the committee consider actions and assess year, on year progress. There were no material control issues arising as a result of the internal auditor's work. The statement of internal control for the year ended August 2023 was approved by Trustees in October 2023.

Review of Effectiveness

As accounting officer, the Chief Executive Officer has responsibility for reviewing the effectiveness of the system of internal control. During the period 1st September 2022 to 31st August 2023 the review has been informed by:

- The financial management and governance self-assessment process.
- Advice from the accountant from EPM with whom we have a SLA.
- The work of the executive managers within the academy trust who have responsibility for the maintenance of the internal control framework.
- Leeds City Council internal audit processes and findings.
- Audit of grant funding and assurance statements.
- Audit of school assets against an asset audit register.
- The work of and reports from the external auditor.

The accounting officer has been advised of the implications of the result of their review of the system of internal control by the finance, risk and audit committee and the Board of Trustees and a plan to ensure continuous improvement of the system is in place.

Approved by order of the members of the Board of Trustees on 19/12/2023 and signed on its behalf by:

J E Norfolk

Judith Norfolk
Chair of Trustees

L A West

Lesley West
Accounting Officer

Owlcotes Multi Academy Trust
STATEMENT OF REGULARITY, PROPRIETY AND COMPLIANCE

As accounting officer of Owlcotes Multi-Academy Trust, I have considered my responsibility to notify the academy trust Board of Trustees and the Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA) of material irregularity, impropriety and non-compliance with ESFA terms and conditions of funding, including for estates safety and management, under the funding agreement in place between the academy trust and the Secretary of State for Education. As part of my consideration, I have had due regard to the requirements of the Academies Handbook 2022, including responsibilities for estates safety and management.

I confirm that I and the academy trust Board of Trustees are able to identify any material irregular or improper use of funds by the academy trust, or material non-compliance with the terms and conditions of funding under the academy trust's funding agreement and the Academies Handbook 2022.

I confirm that no instances of material irregularity, impropriety or funding non-compliance have been discovered to date. If any instances are identified after the date of this statement, these will be notified to the Board of Trustees and ESFA.

Lesley West
Accounting Officer

Date: LWest 19/12/2023

Owlcotes Multi Academy Trust
STATEMENT OF TRUSTEES' RESPONSIBILITIES

The Trustees (who act as Governors of Owlcotes Multi-Academy Trust and are also directors of the charitable company for the purposes of company law) are responsible for preparing the Trustees' Annual Report including the Strategic Report and the financial statements in accordance with applicable law, United Kingdom Accounting Standards (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice) and the Academies Accounts Direction published by the Education Funding Agency.

Company law requires the Trustees to prepare financial statements for each financial period, which give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the charitable company and of the incoming resources and application of resources, including the income and expenditure, of the charitable company for the period. In preparing these financial statements, the Trustees are required to:

- Select suitable accounting policies and then apply them consistently;
- Observe the methods and principles in the Charities SORP 2015 and the Academies Accounts Direction 2021 to 2022;
- Make judgements and estimates that are reasonable and prudent;
- State whether applicable UK Accounting Standards (FRS 102) have been followed, subject to any material departures disclosed and explained in the financial statements;
- Prepare the financial statements on the going concern basis unless it is inappropriate to presume that the charitable company will continue in operation.

The Trustees are responsible for keeping adequate accounting records that are sufficient to show and explain the charitable company's transactions and disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time the financial position of the charitable company and enable them to ensure that the financial statements comply with the Companies Act 2006. They are also responsible for safeguarding the assets of the charitable company and hence for taking reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities.

The Trustees are responsible for ensuring that in its conduct and operation the charitable company applies financial and other controls which conform to the requirements both of propriety and good financial management. They are also responsible for ensuring that grants received from the Education and Skills Funding Agency and Department for Education have been applied for the purposes intended.

The Trustees are responsible for the maintenance and integrity of the corporate and financial information included on the charitable company's website. Legislation in the United Kingdom governing the preparation and dissemination of financial statements may differ from legislation in other jurisdictions.

Approved by order of the members of the Board of Trustees on 19/12/2025 and signed on their behalf by:

J E Norfolk

Judith Norfolk
Chair of Trustees

INDEPENDENT AUDITOR'S REPORT TO THE MEMBERS OF OWLCOTES MULTI ACADEMY TRUST

Opinion

We have audited the financial statements of Owlcotes Multi Academy Trust (the 'Academy Trust') for the year ended 31 August 2023, which comprise the Statement of Financial Activities incorporating Income and Expenditure Account, the Balance Sheet, the Cash Flow Statement, the Statement of Accounting Policies and the notes to the financial statements. The financial reporting framework that has been applied in their preparation is applicable law and United Kingdom Accounting Standards (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice), including Financial Reporting Standard 102 The Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland, the Charities SORP 2019 and the Academies Accounts Direction 2022 to 2023 issued by the Education and Skills Funding Agency.

In our opinion the financial statements:

- give a true and fair view of the state of the Academy Trust's affairs as at 31 August 2023, and of its incoming resources and application of resources, including its income and expenditure, for the period then ended;
- have been properly prepared in accordance with United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice; and
- have been prepared in accordance with the requirements of the Companies Act 2006, the Charities SORP 2019 and the Academies Accounts Direction 2022 to 2023 issued by the Education and Skills Funding Agency.

Basis for opinion

We conducted our audit in accordance with International Standards on Auditing (UK) (ISAs (UK)) and applicable law. Our responsibilities under those standards are further described in the Auditor's responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements section of our report. We are independent of the Academy Trust in accordance with the ethical requirements that are relevant to our audit of the financial statements in the UK, including the FRC's Ethical Standard, and we have fulfilled our other ethical responsibilities in accordance with these requirements. We believe that the audit evidence we have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our opinion.

Conclusions relating to going concern

In auditing the financial statements, we have concluded that the Trustees' use of the going concern basis of accounting in the preparation of the financial statements is appropriate.

Based on the work we have performed, we have not identified any material uncertainties relating to events or conditions that, individually or collectively, may cast significant doubt on the company's ability to continue as a going concern for a period of at least twelve months from when the original financial statements were authorised for issue.

Our responsibilities and the responsibilities of the Trustees with respect to going concern are described in the relevant sections of this report.

Other information

The other information comprises the information included in the annual report other than the financial statements and our auditor's report thereon. The directors are responsible for the other information contained within the annual report. Our opinion on the financial statements does not cover the other information and, except to the extent otherwise explicitly stated in our report, we do not express any form of assurance conclusion thereon. Our responsibility is to read the other information and, in doing so, consider whether the other information is materially inconsistent with the financial statements or our knowledge obtained in the course of the audit, or otherwise appears to be materially misstated. If we identify such material inconsistencies or apparent material misstatements, we are required to determine whether this gives rise to a material misstatement in the financial statements themselves. If, based on the work we have performed, we conclude that there is a material misstatement of this other information, we are required to report that fact.

We have nothing to report in this regard.

Opinions on other matters prescribed by the Companies Act 2006

In our opinion, based on the work undertaken in the course of the audit:

- the information given in the Trustees' Report (incorporating the Strategic Report and the Directors' Report) for the financial year for which the financial statements are prepared is consistent with the financial statements; and
- the Strategic Report and the Directors' Report have been prepared in accordance with applicable legal requirements.

Matters on which we are required to report by exception

In the light of our knowledge and understanding of the Academy Trust and its environment obtained in the course of the audit, we have not identified material misstatements in the Strategic Report and the Directors' Report.

We have nothing to report in respect of the following matters in relation to which the Companies Act 2006 requires us to report to you if, in our opinion:

- adequate accounting records have not been kept, or returns adequate for our audit have not been received from branches not visited by us; or
- the financial statements are not in agreement with the accounting records and returns; or
- certain disclosures of directors' remuneration specified by law are not made; or
- we have not received all the information and explanations we require for our audit.

Responsibilities of trustees

As explained more fully in the Statement of Trustees' Responsibilities set out on page 18, the Trustees (who are also the directors of the Academy Trust for the purposes of company law) are responsible for the preparation of the financial statements and for being satisfied that they give a true and fair view, and for such internal control as the Trustees determine is necessary to enable the preparation of financial statements that are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

In preparing the financial statements, the Trustees are responsible for assessing the Academy Trust's ability to continue as a going concern, disclosing, as applicable, matters related to going concern and using the going concern basis of accounting unless the Trustees either intend to liquidate the Academy Trust or to cease operations, or have no realistic alternative but to do so.

Auditor's responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements

Our objectives are to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial statements as a whole are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error, and to issue an auditor's report that includes our opinion. Reasonable assurance is a high level of assurance, but is not a guarantee that an audit conducted in accordance with ISAs (UK) will always detect a material misstatement when it exists. Misstatements can arise from fraud or error and are considered material if, individually or in the aggregate, they could reasonably be expected to influence the economic decisions of users taken on the basis of these financial statements.

Irregularities, including fraud, are instances of non-compliance with laws and regulations. We design procedures in line with our responsibilities, outlined above, to detect material misstatements in respect of irregularities, including fraud. The extent to which our procedures are capable of detecting irregularities, including fraud, is detailed below.

Extent to which the audit was capable of detecting irregularities, including fraud

The objectives of our audit, in respect of fraud, are: to identify and assess the risks of material misstatement of the financial statements due to fraud; to obtain sufficient appropriate audit evidence regarding the assessed risks of material misstatement due to fraud, through designing and implementing appropriate responses; and to respond appropriately to fraud or suspected fraud identified during the audit. However, the primary responsibility for the prevention and detection of fraud rests with both those charged with governance of the entity and its management.

Our procedures included the following:

- We identified areas of laws and regulations that could reasonably be expected to have a material effect on the financial statements from our general sector experience, and through discussion with the management (as required by auditing standards), and discussed with management the policies and procedures regarding compliance with laws and regulations;
- We considered the legal and regulatory frameworks directly applicable to the financial statements reporting framework (FRS 102, Charities SORP 2019, Accounts Direction 2022 to 2023, the Charities Act 2011 and the Companies Act 2006) and the relevant tax compliance regulations in the UK;
- We considered the nature of the sector, the control environment and operational performance;
- We communicated identified laws and regulations throughout our team and remained alert to any indications of non-compliance throughout the audit;
- We considered the procedures and controls that the company has established to address risks identified, or that otherwise prevent, deter and detect fraud; and how senior management monitors those programmes.

Based on this understanding we designed our audit procedures to identify non-compliance with such laws and regulations. Where the risk was considered to be higher, we performed audit procedures to address each identified risk. These procedures included: testing manual journals; reviewing the financial statement disclosures and testing to supporting documentation; performing analytical procedures; and enquiring of management, and were designed to provide reasonable assurance that the financial statements were free from material fraud or error.

Owing to the inherent limitations of an audit, there is an unavoidable risk that we may not have detected some material misstatements in the financial statements, even though we have properly planned and performed our audit in accordance with auditing standards. For example, the further removed noncompliance with laws and regulations (irregularities) is from the events and transactions reflected in the financial statements, the less likely the inherently limited procedures required by auditing standards would identify it. The risk is also greater regarding irregularities occurring due to fraud rather than error, as fraud involves intentional concealment, forgery, collusion, omission or misrepresentation. We are not responsible for preventing non-compliance and cannot be expected to detect all non-compliance with laws and regulations.

A further description of our responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements is located on the Financial Reporting Council's website at: www.frc.org.uk/auditorsresponsibilities. This description forms part of our auditor's report.

Use of our report

This report is made solely to the Academy Trust's members, as a body, in accordance with Chapter 3 of Part 16 of the Companies Act 2006. Our audit work has been undertaken so that we might state to the Academy Trust's members those matters we are required to state to them in an auditor's report and for no other purpose. To the fullest extent permitted by law, we do not accept or assume responsibility to anyone other than the Academy Trust and the Academy Trust's members as a body, for our audit work, for this report, or for the opinions we have formed.

TC Group

Peter Hart FCA (Senior Statutory Auditor)
For and on behalf of TC Group, Statutory Auditor

6 Queen Street
Leeds
LS1 2TW

Date: 20/12/23

INDEPENDENT REPORTING ACCOUNTANT'S ASSURANCE REPORT ON REGULARITY OWLCOTES MULTI ACADEMY TRUST AND THE EDUCATION AND SKILLS FUNDING AGENCY

In accordance with the terms of our engagement letter dated 20th September 2023 and further to the requirements of the Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA) as included in the Academies Accounts Direction 2021 to 2022, we have carried out an engagement to obtain limited assurance about whether the expenditure disbursed and income received by Owlcotes Multi Academy Trust during the period from 1 September 2022 to 31 August 2023 have been applied to the purposes identified by Parliament and the financial transactions conform to the authorities which govern them.

This report is made solely to Owlcotes Multi Academy Trust and the ESFA in accordance with the terms of our engagement letter. Our work has been undertaken so that we might state to Owlcotes Multi Academy Trust and the ESFA those matters we are required to state in a report and for no other purpose. To the fullest extent permitted by law, we do not accept or assume responsibility to anyone other than Owlcotes Multi Academy Trust and the ESFA, for our work, for this report, or for the conclusion we have formed.

Respective responsibilities of Owlcotes Multi Academy Trust's Accounting Officer and the reporting accountant

The Accounting Officer is responsible, under the requirements of Owlcotes Multi Academy Trust's funding agreement with the Secretary of State for Education and the Academy Trust Handbook, extant from 1 September 2021, for ensuring that expenditure disbursed and income received is applied for the purposes intended by Parliament and the financial transactions conform to the authorities which govern them.

Our responsibilities for this engagement are established in the United Kingdom by our profession's ethical guidance and are to obtain limited assurance and report in accordance with our engagement letter and the requirements of the Academies Accounts Direction 2021 to 2022. We report to you whether anything has come to our attention in carrying out our work which suggests that in all material respects, expenditure disbursed, and income received during the period from 1 September 2022 to 31 August 2023 have not been applied to purposes intended by Parliament or that the financial transactions do not conform to the authorities which govern them.

Approach

We conducted our engagement in accordance with the Framework and Guide for External Auditors and Reporting Accountant of Academy Trusts issued by ESFA. We performed a limited assurance engagement as defined in our engagement letter.

The objective of a limited assurance engagement is to perform such procedures as to obtain information and explanations in order to provide us with sufficient appropriate evidence to express a negative conclusion on regularity.

A limited assurance engagement is more limited in scope than a reasonable assurance engagement and consequently does not enable us to obtain assurance that we would become aware of all significant matters that might be identified in a reasonable assurance engagement. Accordingly, we do not express a positive opinion.

Our engagement includes examination, on a test basis, of evidence relevant to the regularity and propriety of the Academy Trust's income and expenditure.

The work undertaken to draw to our conclusion includes:

- Documenting the framework of authorities which govern the activities of the Academy Trust;
- Reviewing the evidence supporting the representations included in the Accounting Officer's statement on regularity, propriety and compliance with the framework of authorities;
- Undertaking a risk assessment based on our understanding of the general control environment and any weaknesses in internal control identified by our audit of the financial statements;
- Testing compliance with delegated authorities for a sample of material transactions;
- Testing transactions with connected parties to determine whether the Academy Trust has complied with the 'at cost' requirements of the Academies Financial Handbook 2021;
- Confirming through enquiry and sample testing that the Academy Trust has complied with its procurement policies and that these policies comply with the delegated authorities; and
- Reviewing any evidence of impropriety resulting from our work and determining whether it was significant enough to be referred to in our regularity report.

INDEPENDENT REPORTING ACCOUNTANT'S ASSURANCE REPORT ON REGULARITY OWLCOTES MULTI ACADEMY TRUST AND THE EDUCATION AND SKILLS FUNDING AGENCY

Conclusion

In the course of our work nothing has come to our attention which suggests that in all material respects the expenditure disbursed and income received during the year ended 31 August 2023 has not been applied to purposes intended by Parliament and the financial transactions do not conform to the authorities which govern them.

TC Group

Reporting Accountant
TC Group

Date: 20/12/23

Owlcotes Multi Academy Trust
STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES
Incorporating Income and Expenditure Account
for the year ended 31 August 2023

	Notes	Unrestricted funds £'000	Restricted general funds £'000	Restricted fixed asset funds £'000	Total 2023 £'000	Total 2022 £'000
INCOME FROM:						
Donations and capital grants	3	1	-	518	**519**	78
Incoming resources from charitable activities:						
Funding for the Academy Trust's educational operations	4	409	8,044	-	**8,453**	7,413
Other trading activities	5	401	-	-	**401**	-
Investment income	6	6	-	-	**6**	-
Transfer from local authority on conversion		433	(90)	3,180	**3,523**	-
Total		1,250	7,954	3,698	**12,902**	7,491
EXPENDITURE ON:						
Charitable activities:						
Academy Trust's educational operations	8	621	8,046	263	**8,930**	8,007
Total	8	621	8,046	263	**8,930**	8,007
NET INCOME/(EXPENDITURE)		629	(92)	3,435	**3,972**	(516)
Gross transfers between funds	18	-	(43)	43	-	-
OTHER RECOGNISED GAINS						
Actuarial gain/ (loss) on defined benefit pension scheme	28	-	919	-	**919**	4,692
NET MOVEMENT IN FUNDS		629	784	3,478	**4,891**	4,176
RECONCILIATION OF FUNDS	18					
Total funds brought forward		2,694	(581)	15,921	**18,034**	13,858
TOTAL FUNDS CARRIED FORWARD		3,323	203	19,399	**22,925**	18,034

All of the Academy Trust's activities derive from continuing operations during the above two financial periods.

Owlcotes Multi Academy Trust
BALANCE SHEET
As at 31 August 2023 **Registration number: 11188252**

	Notes	2023 £'000	2023 £'000	2022 £'000	2022 £'000
FIXED ASSETS					
Tangible assets	14		19,069		15,919
Intangible fixed assets	13		-		4
Investments			-		-
			19,069		15,923
CURRENT ASSETS					
Debtors	15	1,242		131	
Cash at bank and in hand	25	3,266		3,151	
		4.508		3,282	
CREDITORS: Amounts falling due within one year	16	(662)		(543)	
NET CURRENT ASSETS			3,846		2,739
TOTAL ASSETS LESS CURRENT LIABILITIES			22,915		18,662
CREDITORS: Amounts falling due after more than one year	17		(6)		(31)
NET ASSETS EXCLUDING PENSION LIABILITY			22,909		18,631
Pension scheme liability	28		16		(597)
NET ASSETS INCLUDING PENSION LIABILITY			22,925		18,034
FUNDS OF THE ACADEMY TRUST:					
RESTRICTED FUNDS					
Fixed asset fund	19		19,399		15,921
General funds	18		187		16
Pension reserve	18		16		(597)
TOTAL RESTRICTED FUNDS			19,602		15,340
UNRESTRICTED FUNDS					
General funds	18		3,323		2,694
TOTAL UNRESTRICTED INCOME FUNDS			3,323		2,694
TOTAL FUNDS			22,925		18,034

The financial statements on pages 24 to 45 were approved by the Governors and authorised for issue on ....19/12/2023..... and are signed on their behalf by:

J Norfolk

J Norfolk
Chair of Trustees

Owlcotes Multi Academy Trust
CASH FLOW STATEMENT
for the year ended 31 August 2023

	Notes	2023 £'000	2022 £'000
CASH FLOWS FROM OPERATING ACTIVITIES			
Net cash used in operating activities	22	(613)	513
CASH FLOWS FROM INVESTING ACTIVITIES	23	6	39
CASH FLOWS FROM FINANCING ACTIVITIES	24	289	20
Cash transferred on conversion		433	
INCREASE IN CASH IN THE YEAR		115	572
CASH AND CASH EQUIVALENTS AT 1 SEPTEMBER 2022	25	3,151	2,579
CASH AND CASH EQUIVALENTS AT 31 AUGUST 2023	25	3,266	3,151

1. ACCOUNTING POLICIES

A summary of the principal accounting policies adopted (which have been applied consistently, except where noted), judgements and key sources of estimation uncertainty, is set out below.

1.1 Basis of Preparation of financial statements

The financial statements of the Academy Trust, which is a public benefit entity under FRS 102, have been prepared under the historical cost convention in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102), the Accounting and Reporting by Charities: Statement of Recommended Practice applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102) (Charities SORP (FRS 102)), the Academies Accounts Direction 2021 to 2022 issued by the ESFA, the Charities Act 2011 and the Companies Act 2006.

1.2 Going Concern

The Trustees assess whether the use of going concern is appropriate i.e. whether there are any material uncertainties related to events or conditions that may cast significant doubt on the ability of the company to continue as a going concern. The Trustees make this assessment in respect of a period of at least one year from the date of authorisation for issue of the financial statements and have concluded that the Academy Trust has adequate resources to continue in operational existence for the foreseeable future and there are no material uncertainties about the Academy Trust's ability to continue as a going concern, thus they continue to adopt the going concern basis of accounting in preparing the financial statements.

1.3 Income

All incoming resources are recognised when the Academy Trust has entitlement to the funds, the receipt is probable and the amount can be measured reliably.

- **Grants**

Grant income is included in the Statement of Financial Activities on a receivable basis. The balance of income received for specific purposes but not expended during the period is shown in the relevant funds on the balance sheet. Where income is received in advance of meeting any performance-related conditions there is not unconditional entitlement to the income and its recognition is deferred and included in creditors as deferred income until the performance-related conditions are met. Where entitlement occurs before income is received, the income is accrued.

General Annual Grant is recognised in full in the Statement of Financial Activities in the year for which it is receivable and any abatement in respect of the period is deducted from income and recognised as a liability.

Capital grants are recognised in full when there is an unconditional entitlement to the grant. Unspent amounts of capital grants are reflected in the balance sheet in the restricted fixed asset fund. Capital grants are recognised when there is entitlement and are not deferred over the life of the asset on which they are expended.

- **Donations**

Donations are recognised on a receivable basis (where there are no performance-related conditions) where the receipt is probable and the amount can be reliably measured.

- **Other income**

Other income, including hire of facilities, is recognised in the period it is receivable and to the extent the Academy Trust has provided the goods or services.

1. ACCOUNTING POLICIES (CONTINUED)

- **Donated goods, facilities and services**

Goods donated for resale are included at fair value, being the expected proceeds from sale less the expected costs of sale. If it is practical to assess the fair value at receipt, it is recognised in stock and 'Income from other trading activities'. Upon sale, the value of the stock is charged against 'Income from other trading activities' and the proceeds are recognised as 'Income from other trading activities'. Where it is impractical to fair value the items due to the volume of low value items they are not recognised in the financial statements until they are sold. This income is recognised within 'Income from other trading activities'.

- **Donated fixed assets (excluding transfers on conversion or into the academy trust)**

Where the donated good is a fixed asset it is measured at fair value, unless it is impractical to measure this reliably, in which case the cost of the item to the donor should be used. The gain is recognised as 'Income from Donations and Capital Grants' and a corresponding amount is included in the appropriate fixed asset category and depreciated over the useful economic life in accordance with the academy trust's accounting policies.

1.4 Expenditure

Expenditure is recognised once there is a legal or constructive obligation to transfer economic benefit to a third party, it is probable that a transfer of economic benefits will be required in settlement and the amount of the obligation can be measured reliably. Expenditure is classified by activity. The costs of each activity are made up of the total of direct costs and shared costs, including support costs involved in undertaking each activity. Direct costs attributable to a single activity are allocated directly to that activity. Shared costs which contribute to more than one activity and support costs which are not attributable to a single activity are apportioned between those activities on a basis consistent with the use of resources. Central staff costs are allocated on the basis of time spent, and depreciation charges allocated on the portion of the asset's use.

- **Charitable activities**

These are costs incurred on the Academy Trust's educational operations, including support costs and costs relating to the governance of the Academy Trust apportioned to charitable activities. All resources expended are inclusive of irrecoverable VAT.

1.5 Interest receivable

Interest on funds held on deposit is included when receivable and the amount can be measured reliably by the academy trust; this is normally upon notification of the interest paid or payable by the institution with whom the funds are deposited.

1.6 Taxation

The Academy Trust is considered to pass the tests set out in Paragraph 1 Schedule 6 of the Finance Act 2010 and therefore it meets the definition of a charitable company for UK corporation tax purposes.

Accordingly, the Academy Trust is potentially exempt from taxation in respect of income or capital gains received within categories covered by part 11, chapter 3 of the Corporation Tax Act 2010 or Section 256 of the Taxation of Chargeable Gains Act 1992, to the extent that such income or gains are applied exclusively to charitable purposes.

1.7 Intangible fixed assets

Intangible assets costing £2,000 or more are capitalised and recognised when future economic benefits are probable and the cost or value of the asset can be measured reliably.

Intangible assets are initially recognised at cost and are subsequently measured at cost net of amortisation and any provision for impairment.

Amortisation is provided on intangible assets at rates calculated to write off the cost of each asset on a straight-line basis over its expected useful life.

Amortisation is provided on the following basis:

Computer software	- 33%

1. ACCOUNTING POLICIES (CONTINUED)

1.8 Tangible fixed assets

Tangible fixed assets costing £2,000 or more are capitalised as tangible fixed assets and are carried at cost, net of depreciation and any provision for impairment.

Where tangible fixed assets have been acquired with the aid of specific grants, either from the government or from the private sector, they are included in the balance sheet at cost and depreciated over their expected useful economic lives. Where there are specific conditions attached to the funding requiring the continued use of the asset, the related grants are credited to a restricted fixed asset fund in the Statement of Financial Activities and carried forward in the Balance Sheet. Depreciation on the relevant assets is charged to the restricted fixed asset fund in the Statement of Financial Activities. Where tangible fixed assets have been acquired with unrestricted funds, depreciation on such assets is charged to the unrestricted fund.

Depreciation is provided on all tangible fixed assets, other than freehold land and assets under construction, at rates calculated to write off the cost of each asset, on a straight-line basis, over its expected useful life.

Depreciation is provided on the following basis:

Long-term leasehold property	-	2%
Furniture and equipment	-	20%

Assets in the course of construction are included at cost. Depreciation on these assets is not charged until they are brought into use and reclassified to freehold or leasehold land and buildings.

A review for impairment of a fixed asset is carried out if events or changes in circumstances indicate that the carrying value of any fixed asset may not be recoverable. Shortfalls between the carrying value of fixed assets and their recoverable amounts are recognised as impairments. Impairment losses are recognised in the Statement of Financial Activities.

1.9 Debtors

Trade and other debtors are recognised at the settlement amount due after any trade discount offered. Prepayments are valued at the amount prepaid net of any trade discounts due.

1.10 Cash at bank and in hand

Cash at bank and in hand includes cash and short-term highly liquid investments with a short maturity of three months or less from the date of acquisition or opening of the deposit or similar account.

1.11 Liabilities

Liabilities are recognised when there is an obligation at the balance sheet date as a result of a past event, it is probable that a transfer of economic benefit will be required in settlement, and the amount of the settlement can be estimated reliably. Liabilities are recognised at the amount that the Academy Trust anticipates it will pay to settle the debt or the amount it has received as advanced payments for the goods or services it must provide.

1.12 Provisions

Provisions are recognised when the Academy Trust has an obligation at the reporting date as a result of a past event which it is probable will result in the transfer of economic benefits and the obligation can be estimated reliably.

Provisions are measured at the best estimate of the amounts required to settle the obligation. Where the effect of the time value of money is material, the provision is based on the present value of those amounts, discounted at the pre-tax discount rate that reflects the risks specific to the liability. The unwinding of the discount is recognised within interest payable and similar charges.

1.13 Operating leases

Rentals paid under operating leases are charged to the statement of financial activities on a straight line basis over the lease term.

1. ACCOUNTING POLICIES (CONTINUED)

1.14 Pensions

Retirement benefits to employees of the Academy Trust are provided by the Teachers' Pension Scheme ('TPS') and the Local Government Pension Scheme ('LGPS'). These are defined benefit schemes.

The TPS is an unfunded scheme and contributions are calculated so as to spread the cost of pensions over employees' working lives with the Academy Trust in such a way that the pension cost is a substantially level percentage of current and future pensionable payroll. The contributions are determined by the Government Actuary on the basis of quadrennial valuations using a prospective unit credit method. TPS is an unfunded multi-employer scheme with no underlying assets to assign between employers. Consequently, the TPS is treated as a defined contribution scheme for accounting purposes and the contributions recognised in the period to which they relate.

The LGPS is a funded scheme and the assets are held separately from those of the Academy Trust in separate Trustee administered funds. Pension scheme assets are measured at fair value and liabilities are measured on an actuarial basis using the projected unit credit method and discounted at a rate equivalent to the current rate of return on a high quality corporate bond of equivalent term and currency to the liabilities. The actuarial valuations are obtained at least triennially and are updated at each balance sheet date. The amounts charged to operating surplus are the current service costs and the costs of scheme introductions, benefit changes, settlements and curtailments. They are included as part of staff costs as incurred. Net interest on the net defined benefit liability/asset is also recognised in the Statement of Financial Activities and comprises the interest cost on the defined benefit obligation and interest income on the scheme assets, calculated by multiplying the fair value of the scheme assets at the beginning of the period by the rate used to discount the benefit obligations. The difference between the interest income on the scheme assets and the actual return on the scheme assets is recognised in other recognised gains and losses.

Actuarial gains and losses are recognised immediately in other recognised gains and losses.

1.15 Fund accounting

Unrestricted income funds represent those resources which may be used towards meeting any of the charitable objects of the Academy Trust at the discretion of the Trustees.

Restricted fixed asset funds are resources which are to be applied to specific capital purposes imposed by the funders where the asset acquired or created is held for a specific purpose.

Restricted General funds comprise all other restricted funds received with restrictions imposed by the funder/donor and include grants from the Department for Education Group.

Investment income, gains and losses are allocated to the appropriate fund.

2. CRITICAL ACCOUNTING ESTIMATES AND AREAS OF JUDGEMENT

Estimates and judgements are continually evaluated and are based on historical experience and other factors, including expectation of future events that are believed to be reasonable under the circumstances.

Critical accounting estimates and assumptions:

The academy trust makes estimates and assumptions concerning the future. The resulting accounting estimates and assumptions will, by definition, seldom equal the related actual results. The estimates and assumptions that have a significant risk of causing a material adjustment to the carrying amounts of assets and liabilities within the next financial year are discussed below.

The present value of the Local Government Pension Scheme defined benefit liability depends on a number of factors that are determined on an actuarial basis using a variety of assumptions. The assumptions used in determining the net cost or income for pensions include the discount rate. Any changes in these assumptions, which are disclosed in note 28, will impact the carrying amount of the pension liability. Furthermore, a roll forward approach which projects results from the latest full actuarial valuation performed at 31 March 2019 has been used by the actuary in valuing the pensions liability at 31 August 2023. Any differences between the figures derived from the roll forward approach and a full actuarial valuation would impact on the carrying amount of the pension liability.

3 DONATIONS AND CAPITAL GRANTS

	Unrestricted funds £'000	Restricted funds £'000	2023 Total £'000	2022 Total £'000
Capital grants	-	518	**518**	78
Other Donations	1	-	**1**	-
	1	518	**519**	78

4 FUNDING FOR THE ACADEMY TRUST'S EDUCATIONAL OPERATIONS

	Unrestricted funds £'000	Restricted funds £'000	2023 Total £'000	2022 Total £'000
DfE/ESFA GRANTS				
General Annual Grant (GAG)	-	5,793	**5,793**	5,213
Other DfE/ ESFA Grants				
Pupil premium	-	433	**433**	361
Universal infant free school meals	-	156	**156**	136
Sports Grant	-	74	**74**	74
Other	-	408	**408**	177
	-	6,864	**6,864**	5,961
OTHER GOVERNMENT GRANTS				
SEN from Local Authority	-	390	**390**	-
Other Local Authority grants	-	437	**437**	828
Initial teacher training	-	4	**4**	23
Other grants	-	349	**349**	-
	-	1,180	**1,180**	851
OTHER INCOME				
Catering income	81	-	**81**	-
Academy trips	26	-	**26**	-
Music tuition	164	-	**164**	-
Supply and training	-	-	**-**	-
Other income	138	-	**138**	601
TOTAL	409	-	**409**	601
	409	8,019	**8,428**	7,413

5 OTHER TRADING ACTIVITIES

	Unrestricted funds £'000	Restricted funds £'000	2023 Total £'000	2022 Total £'000
Extended school	400	-	**400**	-
Income from lettings	1	-	**1**	-
Other income	-	-	**-**	-
	401	-	**401**	-

6 INVESTMENT INCOME

	Unrestricted funds £'000	Restricted funds £'000	2023 Total £'000	2022 Total £'000
Short term deposits	6	-	**6**	-
	6	-	**6**	-

7 EXPENDITURE

	Staff costs £'000	Non Pay Expenditure Premises £'000	Non Pay Expenditure Other costs £'000	2023 Total £'000	2022 Total £'000
Academy's educational operations:					
Direct costs	5,532	13	497	**6,042**	5,525
Allocated support costs	1,463	680	745	**2,888**	2,483
	6,995	693	1,242	**8,930**	8,008

Net income/(expenditure) for the period includes:

	2023 £'000	2022 £'000
Operating leases	**32**	19
Depreciation	**259**	326
Fees payable to auditor for:		
Audit	**-**	12
Other services	**-**	-

8 CHARITABLE ACTIVITIES

	2023 £'000	2022 £'000
Direct costs – educational operations	**6,042**	5,525
Support costs – educational operations	**2,888**	2,483
	8,930	8,008

Analysis of support costs

	Educational operation £'000	2023 Total £'000	2022 Total £'000
Staff costs	1,464	**1,464**	1,001
Depreciation	250	**250**	326
Premises costs	430	**430**	518
Governance costs	173	**173**	-
Other support costs	571	**571**	638
Total support costs	2,888	**2,888**	2,483

9 STAFF COSTS

	2023 £'000	2022 £'000
a. Staff costs		
Staff costs during the period were:		
Wages and salaries	**5,223**	4,125
Social security costs	**488**	425
Operating costs of defined benefit pension schemes	**1,245**	1,434
Apprenticeship levy	**-**	-
	6,956	5,984
Supply staff costs	**38**	10
Staff restructuring costs	**-**	-
	6,994	5,994
Staff restructuring costs comprise:		
Severance payments	**-**	-
	-	-

b. Staff numbers

The average number of persons employed by the Academy Trust during the period expressed as full-time equivalents was as follows:

	2023 No.	2022 No.
Charitable activities		
Teachers	**59**	**49**
Administration and support	**170**	**121**
Management	**16**	**13**
	245	**183**

STAFF COSTS (continued)

c. Higher paid staff

The number of employees whose employee benefits (excluding employer pension costs) exceeded £60,000 was:

	2023 No.	2022 No.
£60,001 - £70,000	2	1
£70,001 - £80,000	1	1
£80,001 - £90,000	1	-
£90,001 - £100,000	-	-
£100,001 - £110,000	-	-
£110,001 - £120,000	-	1
£120,001 - £130,000	1	-

d. Key management personnel

The key management personnel of the Academy Trust comprise the Trustees, the CEO, Finance Director and the Senior Management Team as listed on page 1. The total amount of employee benefits (including employer pension contributions and employer national insurance contributions) received by key management personnel for their services to the Academy Trust was £613,555 (2022: £217,654).

10 CENTRAL SERVICES

The Academy Trust has provided the following central services and support to its academies during the year:

- Payroll
- HR Services
- CEO/CFO
- Audit fees
- Finance system

The academy trust charges for these services on the following basis:

5% of GAG and Early Years Funding.

The actual amounts charged during the year were as follows:

	2023 £'000	2022 £'000
Pudsey Primrose Hill Primary School	102	92
Pudsey Waterloo Primary School	87	84
Calverley Primary School	47	42
Armley Park Primary School	49	42
Manor Wood Primary School	27	-
	312	260

11 RELATED PARTY TRANSACTIONS – Trustees' remuneration and expenses

One or more Trustees has been paid remuneration or has received other benefits from an employment with the academy trust. The principal and other Trustees only receive remuneration in respect of services they provide undertaking the roles of principal and staff members under their contracts of employment. The value of Trustees' remuneration and other benefits was as follows:

		2023	2022
		£000	£000
L West (Trustee and CEO)	Remuneration	**125 - 130**	115 - 120
	Pension contributions paid	**25 - 30**	25 - 30

During the year ended 31 August 2023, travel and subsistence expenses amounting to £nil (2022: £nil) was reimbursed or paid directly to a Member.

12 TRUSTEES' AND OFFICERS' INSURANCE

In accordance with normal commercial practice the Academy Trust has purchased insurance to protect governors and officers from claims arising from negligent acts, errors or omissions occurring whilst on Academy Trust business. The insurance provides cover up to £25,000,000 on any one claim. The cost of this insurance is included in the total insurance cost.

13 INTANGIBLE ASSETS

	Computer software £000
Cost	
At 1 September 2022	**29**
At 31 August 2023	**29**
Depreciation	
At 1 September 2022	**25**
Charged in the year	**4**
At 31 August 2023	**29**
Net book value	
At 31 August 2023	**-**
At 31 August 2022	**4**

14 TANGIBLE FIXED ASSETS

	Long-term leasehold property £'000	Fixtures and equipment £'000	Computer equipment £'000	Motor Vehicles £'000	2023 Total £'000
Cost					
At 1 September 2022	17,069	104	-	-	**17,173**
On conversion	3,180	-	-	-	**3,180**
Additions	109	71	30	19	**229**
Transfers	-	-	-	-	**-**
At 31 August 2023	20,358	175	30	19	**20,582**
Depreciation					
At 1 September 2022	1,209	45	-	-	**1,254**
Charged in year	230	24	2	3	**259**
At 31 August 2023	1,439	69	2	3	**1,513**
Net book values					
At 31 August 2023	**18,919**	**106**	**28**	**16**	**19,069**
At 31 August 2022	15,860	59	-	-	15,919

15 DEBTORS

	2023 £'000	2022 £'000
Trade debtors	-	-
Other debtors	**557**	62
VAT recoverable	-	-
Prepayments and accrued income	**685**	69
	1,242	131

16 CREDITORS: Amounts falling due within one year

	2023 £'000	2022 £'000
Other loans	1	8
Trade creditors	302	242
Other creditors	-	132
Accruals and deferred income	359	161
	662	543

Deferred income

	2023 £'000	2022 £'000
Resources deferred in the year:		
- UIFSM income	**92**	87
- Sponsorship Improvement	**44**	-
- Trip income	**39**	-
- FOW Contribution to Chromebooks	**2**	-
Deferred income at 31 August	**177**	87

17 CREDITORS: Amounts falling due after one year

	2023 £'000	2022 £'000
Salix loan	6	31

18 FUNDS

	Balance at 1 September 2022 £'000	Incoming resources £'000	Resources expended £'000	Gains, losses & transfers £'000	Balance at 31 August 2023 £'000
Restricted general funds					
General Annual Grant (GAG)	-	5,793	(5,563)	(43)	**187**
Pupil premium	-	433	(433)	-	-
UIFSM	-	156	(156)	-	-
Other DfE/ESFA grants	-	408	(408)	-	-
Initial Teacher Training	16	4	(20)	-	-
Other DfE/ESFA COVID-19	-	-	-	-	-
LEA and other grants	-	1,176	(1,176)	-	-
Sports grants	-	74	(74)	-	-
Other restricted					
	16	8,044	(7,830)	(43)	**187**
Pension reserve	(597)	(90)	(216)	919	**16**
	(581)	7,954	(8,046)	876	**203**
Restricted fixed asset funds					
DfE/ESFA capital grants	263	518	-	43	**824**
Donations	-	-	-	-	-
Capital expenditure from unrestricted funds	-	-	-	-	-
Transfer in on conversion	15,658	3,180	(263)	-	**18,575**
Other capital grants	-	-	-	-	-
	15,921	3,698	(263)	43	**19,399**
Total restricted funds	**15,340**	**11,652**	**(8,309)**	**919**	**19,602**
Total unrestricted funds	2,694	1,250	(621)	-	**3,323**
Total funds	**18,034**	**12,902**	**(8,930)**	**919**	**22,925**

18 FUNDS (continued)

Comparative information in respect of the preceding period is as follows:

	Balance at 1 September 2021 £'000	Incoming resources £'000	Resources expended £'000	Gains, losses & transfers £'000	Balance at 31 August 2022 £'000
Restricted general funds					
General Annual Grant (GAG)	-	5,188	(5,187)	(1)	-
Pupil premium	-	361	(361)	-	-
UIFSM	-	136	(136)	-	-
Other DfE/ESFA grants	-	1,030	(1,030)	-	-
Sports Grant	-	74	(74)	-	-
Initial Teacher Training	-	23	(7)	-	**16**
LEA and other grants	-	-	-	-	-
Other DfE/ESFA COVID-19	-	-	-	-	-
Other restricted	-	-	-	-	-
	-	6,812	(6,795)	(1)	**16**
Pension reserve	(4,598)	-	(691)	4,692	**(597)**
	(4,598)	6,812	(7,486)	4,691	**(581)**
Restricted fixed asset funds					
DfE/ESFA capital grants	214	78	(30)	1	**263**
Donations	-	-	-	-	-
Capital expenditure from other funds	-	-	-	-	-
Transferred on conversion	15,954	-	(296)	-	**15,658**
	16168	78	(326)	1	**15,921**
Total restricted funds	**11,570**	6,890	(7,812)	4,692	**15,340**
Total unrestricted funds	2,288	601	(195)	-	**2694**
Total funds	**13,858**	7,491	(8,007)	4,692	**18,034**

Total funds analysis by academy

Fund balances at 31 August 2023 were allocated as follows:

	2023 Total £'000	2022 Total £'000
Pudsey Primrose Hill Primary School	**1,341**	1,166
Pudsey Waterloo Primary School	**493**	502
Calverley Primary School	**381**	318
Armley Park Primary School	**673**	485
Central Services	**284**	239
Manor Wood Primary School	**343**	-
Manor Wood Childrens Centre	**38**	-
Total before fixed assets and pension reserve	**3,553**	2,710
Restricted fixed asset fund	**19,356**	15,921
Pension reserve	**16**	(597)
Total	**22,925**	18,034

18 FUNDS (continued)

Total cost analysis by academy

Expenditure incurred by each academy during the year (or part thereof) was as follows:

	Teaching and Educational Support Staff Costs £'000	Other Support Staff Costs £'000	Educational Supplies £'000	Other Costs (excluding Dep'n) £'000	2023 Total £'000	2022 Total £'000
Pudsey Primrose Hill Primary School	1,658	320	78	456	**2,512**	2,285
Pudsey Waterloo Primary School	1,478	453	145	335	**2,411**	2,298
Calverley Primary School	760	250	71	172	**1,253**	1,124
Armley Park Primary School	817	138	49	189	**1,193**	1,054
Central Services	124	140	13	68	**345**	919
Manor Wood Primary School	607	125	16	59	**807**	-
Manor Wood Childrens Centre	83	41	8	14	**146**	-
Academy Trust	5,527	1,467	380	1,293	**8,667**	7,680

19 ANALYSIS OF NET ASSETS BETWEEN FUNDS

Fund balances at 31 August 2023 are represented by:

	Unrestricted funds £'000	Restricted general funds £'000	Restricted fixed asset funds £'000	Total funds 2023 £'000
Tangible fixed assets	-	-	19,069	**19,069**
Current assets	3,356	703	449	**4,508**
Current liabilities	(33)	(510)	(119)	**(662)**
Non-current liabilities	-	(6)	-	**(6)**
Pension scheme liability	-	16	-	**16**
Total net assets	3,323	203	19,399	**22,925**

Comparative information in respect of the preceding period is as follows:

	Unrestricted funds £'000	Restricted general funds £'000	Restricted fixed asset funds £'000	Total funds 2022 £'000
Tangible fixed assets	-	-	15,919	**15,919**
Intangible fixed assets	-	-	4	**4**
Current assets	3,266	16	-	**3,282**
Current liabilities	(542)	-	(1)	**(543)**
Non-current liabilities	(31)	-	-	**(31)**
Pension scheme liability	-	(597)	-	**(597)**
Total net assets	2,693	(581)	15,922	**18,034**

20 CAPITAL COMMITMENTS

	2023 £'000	2022 £'000
Contracted for, but not provided in the financial statements	399	-

21 COMMITMENTS UNDER OPERATING LEASES

OPERATING LEASES
At 31 August 2023, the academy trust had commitments to make future minimum lease payments under non-cancellable operating leases as follows:

	2023 £'000	2022 £'000
Not later than 1 year	2	18
Later than 1 year and not later than 5 years	3	10
	5	28

22 RECONCILIATION OF OPERATING (DEFICIT)/SURPLUS TO NET CASH INFLOW FROM OPERATING ACTIVITIES

	2023 £'000	2022 £'000
(Deficit)/surplus on continuing operations after depreciation of assets	3,972	(516)
Depreciation (note 7)	259	327
Amortisation	4	-
(Loss)/profit on disposal of tangible fixed assets	-	-
Capital grants from DfE and other capital income	(518)	(78)
Interest receivable	(6)	-
Voluntary income – transfer from Local Authority on conversion	(3,523)	-
FRS 17 pension cost less contributions payable	200	615
FRS 17 pension finance income	16	76
(Increase)/decrease in stocks	-	-
(Increase)/decrease in debtors	(1111)	(2)
Increase/(decrease) in creditors	94	91
Net cash provided by Operating Activities	(613)	513

23 RETURNS ON INVESTMENTS AND SERVICING OF FINANCE

	2023 £'000	2022 £'000
Interest received	6	-
Cash inflows from borrowings	-	40
Repayment of borrowings	-	(1)
Net cash inflow from returns on investment and servicing of finance	6	39

24 CAPITAL EXPENDITURE AND FINANCIAL INVESTMENT

	2023 £'000	2022 £'000
Purchase of tangible fixed assets	(229)	(58)
Capital grants from DfE/ESFA	518	78
Net cash outflow from capital expenditure and financial investment	289	20

25 ANALYSIS OF CASH AND CASH EQUIVALENTS

	2023 £'000	2022 £'000
Cash in hand and at bank	3,266	3,151
	3,266	3,151

26 ANALYSIS OF CHANGES IN NET FUNDS

	At 1 September 2022 £'000	Cash flows £'000	At 31 August 2023 £'000
Cash at bank and in hand	3,151	115	3,266
Net funds	3,151	115	3,266

27 MEMBERS' LIABILITY

Each member of the charitable company undertakes to contribute to the assets of the company in the event of it being wound up while he/she is a member, or within one year after he/she ceases to be a member, such amount as may be required, not exceeding £10 for the debts and liabilities contracted before he/she ceases to be a member.

28 PENSION AND SIMILAR OBLIGATIONS

The Academy Trust's employees belong to two principal pension schemes: the Teachers' Pension Scheme England and Wales (TPS) for academic and related staff; and the Local Government Pension Scheme (LGPS) for non-teaching staff, which is managed by West Yorkshire Pension Fund. Both are multi-employer defined benefit schemes.

The latest actuarial valuation of the TPS related to the period ended 31 March 2016 and of the LGPS 31 March 2019.

There were outstanding or prepaid contributions at either the beginning or the end of the financial year.

Teachers' Pension Scheme

Introduction
The Teachers' Pensions Scheme (TPS) is a statutory, contributory, defined benefit scheme, governed by the Teachers' Pension Scheme Regulations 2014. Membership is automatic for teachers in academies. All teachers have the option to opt-out of the TPS following enrolment.

28 PENSION AND SIMILAR OBLIGATIONS (continued)

The Teachers' Pension Scheme (TPS) is a statutory, contributory, defined benefit scheme, governed by the Teachers' Pension Scheme Regulations 2014. Membership is automatic for full-time teachers in academies. All teachers have the option to opt-out of the TPS following enrolment.

The TPS is an unfunded scheme to which both the member and employer makes contributions, as a percentage of salary - these contributions are credited to the Exchequer. Retirement and other pension benefits are paid by public funds provided by Parliament.

Valuation of the Teachers' Pensions Scheme
The Government Actuary, using normal actuarial principles, conducts a formal actuarial review of the TPS in accordance with the Public Service Pensions (Valuations and Employer Cost Cap) Directions 2014 published by HM Treasury every 4 years. The aim of the review is to specify the level of future contributions. Actuarial scheme valuations are dependent on assumptions about the value of future costs, design of benefits and many other factors. The latest actuarial valuation of the TPS was carried out as at 31 March 2016. The valuation report was published by the Department for Education on 5 March 2019. The key elements of the valuation and subsequent consultation are:

- employer contribution rates set at 23.68% of pensionable pay (including a 0.08% administration levy)
- total scheme liabilities (pensions currently in payment and the estimated cost of future benefits) for service to the effective date of £218,100 million and notional assets (estimated future contributions together with the notional investments held at the valuation date) of £196,100 million, giving a notional past service deficit of £22,000 million
- the SCAPE rate, set by HMT, is used to determine the notional investment return. The current SCAPE rate is 2.4% above the rate of CPI. assumed real rate of return is 2.4% in excess of prices and 2% in excess of earnings. The rate of real earnings growth is assumed to be 2.2%. The assumed nominal rate of return including earnings growth is 4.45%.

The next valuation result is due to be implemented from 1 April 2024.

The employer's pension costs paid to TPS in the period amounted to £875,000 (2022: £527,000).

A copy of the valuation report and supporting documentation is on the Teachers' Pensions website.

Under the definitions set out in FRS 102, the TPS is an unfunded multi-employer pension scheme. The academy trust has accounted for its contributions to the scheme as if it were a defined contribution scheme. The academy trust has set out above the information available on the scheme.

Local Government Pension Scheme

The LGPS is a funded defined benefit pension scheme, with the assets held in separate trustee administered funds. The total contribution made for the year ended 31 August 2022 was £534,000 (2022: £360,000), of which employer's contributions totalled £400,000 (2022: £275,000) and employees' contributions totalled £134,000 (2022: £85,000). The agreed contribution rates for future years are 18.8% for employers and 5.5% to 12.5% for employees.

As described in note, the LGPS obligation relates to the employees of the academy trust, who were the employees transferred as part of the conversion from the maintained school and new employees who were eligible to, and did, join the Scheme in the year. The obligation in respect of employees who transferred on conversion represents their cumulative service at both the predecessor school and the academy trust at the balance sheet date.

Parliament has agreed, at the request of the Secretary of State for Education, to a guarantee that, in the event of academy closure, outstanding Local Government Pension Scheme liabilities would be met by the Department for Education. The guarantee came into force on 18 July 2013.

28 PENSION AND SIMILAR OBLIGATIONS (continued)

Principal actuarial assumptions	**At 31 August 2023**	**At 31 August 2022**
Rate of increase in salaries	**3.85%**	**3.95%**
Rate of increase for pensions	**2.60%**	**2.70%**
Discount rate for scheme liabilities	**5.00%**	**4.00%**
Inflation assumption (CPI)	**2.60%**	**2.70%**

The current mortality assumptions include sufficient allowance for future improvements in mortality rates. The assumed life expectations on retirement age 65 are:

	At 31 August 2023	**At 31 August 2022**
Retiring today		
Males	**21.0**	**21.8**
Females	**24.1**	**24.6**
Retiring in 20 years		
Males	**22.2**	**22.5**
Females	**25.1**	**25.7**

Sensitivity analysis

	At 31 August 2023 £'000	**At 31 August 2022 £'000**
Discount rate +0.1%	**7,610**	**5,259**
Discount rate -0.1%	**7,976**	**5,568**
Mortality assumption – 1 year increase	**7,594**	**5,254**
Mortality assumption – 1 year decrease	**7,984**	**5,568**
CPI rate +0.1%	**7,945**	**5,438**
CPI rate -0.1%	**7,641**	**5,384**

28 PENSION AND SIMILAR OBLIGATIONS (continued)

The Academy Trust's share of the assets in the scheme were:

	Fair value at 31 August 2023 £'000	Fair value at 31 August 2022 £'000
Equities	**6,338**	3,846
Government bonds	**492**	308
Property	**265**	188
Corporate bonds	**359**	207
Cash	**289**	193
Other	**62**	72
Total market value of assets	**7,805**	4,814
Present value of scheme liabilities		
- Funded	**(7,789)**	(5,411)
Surplus/(deficit) in the scheme	**16**	(597)

The actual return on scheme assets was £141,000 (2022 - £47,000).

Amounts recognised in the statement of financial activities	**2023 £'000**	2022 £'000
Current service cost	**(600)**	(890)
Interest cost	**(16)**	(76)
Total amount recognised in the Statement of financial activities	**(616)**	(966)

28 PENSION AND SIMILAR OBLIGATIONS (continued)

Changes in the present value of the defined benefit obligations were as follows:

	2023	2022
	£'000	£'000
At 1 September	**5,411**	9,038
Current service cost	**600**	890
Past service cost	**-**	-
Interest cost	**242**	154
Employee contributions	**134**	92
Actuarial (gain)/loss	**(1,004)**	(4,723)
Benefits paid	**(39)**	(40)
Net increase in liabilities from disposals/acquisitions	**2,445**	-
At 31 August 2023	**7,789**	5,411

Changes in the fair value of the academy trust's share of scheme assets were as follows:

	2023	**2022**
	£000	**£000**
At 1 September		
Interest income	**4,814**	4,440
Remeasurement gains/(losses) on assets	**226**	78
Employer contributions	**(85)**	(31)
Employee contributions	**400**	275
Benefits paid	**134**	
Net increase in liabilities from disposals/acquisitions	**(39)**	92
	2,355	(40)
At 31 August	**7,805**	4,814

29 RELATED PARTY TRANSACTIONS

Owing to the nature of the Academy Trust's operations and the composition of the Board of Trustees being drawn from local public and private sector organisations, transactions may take place with organisations in which a Trustee has an interest. All transactions involving such organisations are conducted in accordance with the requirements of the AFH, including notifying the ESFA of all transactions made on or after 1 April 2019 and obtaining their approval where required, and with the academy trust's financial regulations and normal procurement procedures relating to connected and related party transactions.