



**North Star Community Trust  
Ltd**

**Annual Report and Financial  
Statements**

Year ended 31 August 2023

Company Limited by Guarantee  
Registration Number  
07355559 (England and Wales)

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## Reference and administrative details

<b>Members</b>	Dr D Graham (Chair) Prof. A O’Hear ( Resigned 24/01/23) Prof. D M Hewitt Mr A Lancaster Ms J Tallis Cllr D Taylor (appointed 29/08/23)
<b>Trustees</b>	Dr D Graham (Chair) Mr A Ayoade Mr D Broadbent Mr R Bryant Mr M Charalambous (Ex-Officio) Ms S El Hadri Ms A Haig Davies ( Resigned 27 June 2023) Ms E Jackson ( appointed 1 June 2023) Ms M Jones Ms J Tosh
<b>Company Secretary</b>	Mrs Susan Ellingham
<b>Trust Senior Management Team</b>	
CEO	Mr Marino Charalambous
Director of Finance	Mrs Susan Ellingham
Head Teacher	Miss Nicola Ross – Woodpecker Hall Academy
Head Teacher	Ms Gemma Vincent Kingfisher Hall Academy
	Mr Arthur Barzey – Heron Hall Academy
Head Teacher	Justyna Powrie– Enfield Heights Academy
Head Teacher	
<b>Principal and Registered Office</b>	Harmony House Cuckoo Hall Lane Edmonton London N9 8DR
<b>Company Registration Number</b>	07355559 (England and Wales)
<b>Auditor</b>	Buzzacott LLP 130 Wood Street London EC2V 6DL

## Reference and administrative details

**Bankers** National Westminster Bank plc  
9 The Town  
Enfield  
N2 6LE

**Solicitors** Hill Dickinson LLP  
1 St Paul's Square  
Liverpool  
L3 9SJ

The trustees present their annual report together with the financial statements and the auditor's reports on the charitable company for the period from 1 September 2022 to 31 August 2023. The annual report serves the purposes of both a trustees' report, and a directors' report under company law. The trust operates 1 secondary and 3 primary academies in the Enfield area.

## **STRUCTURE, GOVERNANCE AND MANAGEMENT**

### **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 Trust"). The trustees of North Star Community Trust Limited are also the directors of the charitable company for the purposes of company law. The charitable company is known as North Star Community Trust. The Trust was previously known as Cuckoo Hall Academies Trust and changed its name to North Star Community Trust on 27 March 2021.

Details of the trustees who serve on the board of the Trust are included in the Reference and Administrative Details on page 1.

### **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.

### **Trustees' indemnities**

Trustees benefit from indemnity insurance purchased at the Academy Trust's expense to cover the liability of the trustees which by virtue of any rule of law would otherwise attach to them in respect of any negligence, default or breach of trust or breach of duty of which they may be guilty in relation to the Academy Trust, provided that any such insurance shall not extend to any claim arising from any act or omission which the trustees knew to be a breach of trust or breach of duty or which was committed by the trustees in reckless disregard to whether it was a breach of trust or breach of duty or not and provided also that any such insurance shall not extend to the costs of any unsuccessful defence to a criminal prosecution brought against the trustees in their capacity as directors of the Academy Trust.

### **Trustees**

The trustees are directors of the charitable company for the purposes of the Companies Act 2006. The trustees listed on page 1 were in office during the year and at the date of approval of these financial statements (except where indicated).

## **STRUCTURE, GOVERNANCE AND MANAGEMENT** (continued)

### **Method of recruitment and appointment or election of trustees**

As at 31 August 2023 the Academy Trust sets out the following membership and recruitment structure for the Board in its articles of association and funding agreement:

- ◆ up to 9 trustees who are appointed by members;
- ◆ up to 4 chairs of the local governing bodies;
- ◆ up to 4 Head Teachers of the Academies;
- ◆ the Chief Executive Officer; and
- ◆ additional Trustees can be appointed by the Secretary of State.

Trustees are appointed for a four year period, except for the Chief Executive Officer. Any election of the Academy Trust's directors that is contested shall be held by secret ballot.

### **Induction and training of trustees, governors and directors**

Trustees of North Star Community Trust ('NSCT') and governors on local governing bodies will vary in their experience. New trustees sign up to the Purpose and Role of the Trustee & Code of Practice which sets out what is expected of a trustee or governor. The training and induction includes an annual planned programme to cover key governance areas. A skills audit is carried out periodically and training commissioned on the basis of the outcome of the skills audit.

### **Organisational structure**

Woodpecker Hall Primary Academy, Kingfisher Hall Primary Academy, Enfield Heights Academy and Heron Hall Academy are governed by the North Star Community Trust which delegates functions as appropriate to the individual School Governing Bodies, the governors of whom are appointed by the Academy Trust and include two parental representatives and one staff governor.

The organisational structure of the Academy Trust consists of three levels: the trustees, academy governors and the Senior Management Team. The aim of the management structure is to devolve responsibility and encourage involvement in decision making at all levels.

The trustees are responsible for setting general policy, adopting an annual plan and budget for the Academy Trust, monitoring progress in each Academy on a financial and performance basis at a strategic level and calling to account the individual academy governing bodies and the NSCT Senior Management Team for the progress in each academy. The trustees are also responsible for the appointment of senior staff in the Academy Trust, but may delegate appointments to the local governing body except for the appointment of a member of the NSCT Senior Management Team.

The individual academy governing bodies, along with the Chief Executive, are responsible for monitoring the performance of the Head Teachers and their Senior Leadership Teams ('SLT') on a regular basis.

**STRUCTURE, GOVERNANCE AND MANAGEMENT** (continued)

**Organisational structure** (continued)

The NSCT Senior Management Team members are the Chief Executive, Head Teachers of each of the academies, the Director of Finance and the Trust Senior Management Team. These managers control the Academy Trust at an executive level, implementing the policies laid down by the trustees and reporting back to them. As a group the senior managers are responsible for the authorisation of spending within agreed budgets and for the appointment of staff.

**Arrangements for setting pay and remuneration of key management personnel**

The key management personnel of the Trust are the members, directors and Senior Management Team. Pay decisions at NSCT are ultimately made by the NSCT Board but are delegated to the Chief Executive and the Head Teachers of the individual academies. The NSCT Board determine the Chief Executive's pay, the pay of the Head Teachers and other members of the Senior Management Team in consultation with the Chief Executive Officer.

**Trade union facility time**

**Relevant union officials**

Number of employees who were relevant union officials during the period	Full-time equivalent employee number
1	1

**Percentage of time spent on facility time**

Percentage of time	Number of employees
0%	—
1% - 50%	1
51% - 99%	—
100%	—

**Percentage of pay bill spent on facility time**

Total cost of facility time	£878
Total pay bill	£16,307,000
Percentage of the total pay bill spent on facility time, calculated as: (total cost of facility time ÷ total pay bill) x 100	0.005%

**Paid trade union activities**

Time spent on paid trade union activities as a percentage of total paid facility time hours calculated as: (total hours spent on paid trade union activities by relevant union officials during the relevant period ÷ total paid facility time hours) x 100	—
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## **STRUCTURE, GOVERNANCE AND MANAGEMENT** (continued)

### **Engagement with employees (including disabled persons)**

The Trust values its employees highly and makes the following pledges to all its employees within its three-year strategy:

- ◆ Our Trust will be a caring, meaningful place to work and learn, a place to be proud of, with every member of staff playing their part in our vision – to provide every child with an enriching and inspirational educational experience.
- ◆ Our Trust will support every member of staff in their career development, working with each individual to understand their hopes and aspirations for the future;
- ◆ Our Trust will provide professional development opportunities and support of the highest standard, drawing on experts within and beyond our Trust;
- ◆ Our Trust will be committed to ensuring workload is fair and manageable, drawing on our professional community to share resources and planning wherever possible;
- ◆ Our Trust will support staff to maintain a healthy work life balance, recognising that our staff are also parents, carers and people with wider interests and responsibilities.

The Trust has demonstrated its commitment to these pledges with a number of actions during a challenging year for staff:

- ◆ A weekly e-letter from the CEO sent to all staff which celebrates successes, informs staff of what is happening in all parts of the Trust, welcomes new staff, and provides wellbeing tips and advice;
- ◆ There is a Staffing and Operations sub-committee of the Trust Board which reviews staff-related metrics on a termly basis.
- ◆ The Trust undertook an equality, diversity and inclusion review to enable improvement where needed.
- ◆ The Trust carried out a survey on staff well-being so that any areas of concern could be identified and addressed.
- ◆ The Trust has developed a People Plan to deliver on our vision to help as many children as possible to succeed at school and in life.
- ◆ The Trust continues to develop leaders through regular training focusing on a Trust-wide approach and a united culture
- ◆ The Trust successfully delivered an Aspiring Leaders programme during 2022/23 to enhance our talent development and build our capacity and culture. We hope to deliver this program again.

### **Engagement with suppliers, customers and other stakeholders**

Being at the heart of its communities is a hallmark of the Trust and the Trust makes the following pledges in its three-year strategy:

- ◆ Our Trust will ensure that each school will always be led by exceptional educationalists with a strong-track record of leading within high-performing schools;



## **STRUCTURE, GOVERNANCE AND MANAGEMENT** (continued)

### **Engagement with suppliers, customers and other stakeholders** (continued)

- ◆ Our Trust will foster a community of schools committed to supporting one another's improvement and success; with expert teachers working together – across schools – to enhance the curriculum, teaching and learning, professional development, and much more;
- ◆ Our Trust will provide the highest standards of safeguarding support, ensuring all pupils and staff are safe and secure;
- ◆ Our Trust will provide high quality mental health and wellbeing support, ensuring that children and young people are supported with care and are ready to learn;
- ◆ Our Trust will provide high quality and ethical governance at all levels, providing schools with the necessary balance of support and challenge in order for them to succeed;
- ◆ Our Trust will foster a range of key relationships with external agencies and organisations, including those across our communities, who can contribute to our efforts to ensure every child and school thrives;
- ◆ Our Trust will work in partnership to improve educational, employment and social opportunities for parents, carers and others in our wider school community.

The Trust has an active and effective Community Outreach team We also set up a hardship fund to support families struggling during the COVID-19 crisis which continues to support families through the current cost of living crisis. This provides both uniform and food support to our families. The Trust has also reviewed it's uniform policy in order to reduce uniform costs for our families. The Trust has continued to implement long term targeted catch up programmes following on from the effects of covid lockdowns.

### **Connected organisations, including related party relationships**

Solar for Schools is a Community Benefit Society (CBS) which has previously installed solar panels on the sites of 4 schools in the Trust. The Trust CEO, Marino Charalambous is a Non-Executive Director of the CBS on behalf of the Trust. A new related party contract with Solar for Schools was entered into during the year, increasing the solar panel array at Heron Hall Academy.

Transactions with trustees and governors are set out in note 19 to the accounts.

## **OBJECTIVES AND ACTIVITIES**

### **Objects and aims**

The principal object and activity of the Charitable Company is the operation of academies to provide a broad and balanced education including English, Mathematics and Science as all-ability inclusive schools.

North Star Community Trust is responsible for the operation of Woodpecker Hall Academy (which opened in September 2011 and amalgamated with Cuckoo Hall Academy in July 2021), Kingfisher Hall Academy (which opened in September 2012), Enfield Heights Academy (which joined NSCT on 1 September 2014) and Heron Hall Academy (a new Secondary free school which opened in September 2013).

## **OBJECTIVES AND ACTIVITIES** (continued)

### **Objects and aims** (continued)

All academies established by North Star Community Trust will:

- ◆ Ensure that all of our children will have the opportunity to become highly educated, active and well rounded citizens whose talents and personal qualities will be nurtured.
- ◆ Ensure our children will have the opportunity to develop a love of learning, as well as excellent knowledge and skills, preparing them for a world which is changing due especially to technology and globalisation.
- ◆ Provide a curriculum and learning experience that is inclusive, inspiring, open to the wider world and which encourages creativity and resilience.
- ◆ ensure they and the Trust are at the heart of their communities, providing children with a sense of place and with relationships which are built on care, inclusivity, respect and trust; be schools that are full of role models – pupils, staff, governors who care deeply and are inspirational in equal measure.
- ◆ Ensure that by the time our students complete their education with us, we have provided them with the opportunity to partake in many enriching experiences, both culturally and socially, ensuring they leave with a well-rounded education.

The aims of the North Star Community Trust are to:

- ◆ Ensure that each school will always be led by exceptional educationalists with a strong track record of leading within high performing schools.
- ◆ Foster a community of schools committed to supporting one another's improvement and success; with expert teachers working together -across schools – to enhance the curriculum, teaching and learning, professional development, and much more;
- ◆ Provide the highest standards of safeguarding support, ensuring all pupils and staff are safe and secure;
- ◆ Provide high quality mental health and wellbeing support, ensuring that children and young people are supported with care and are ready to learn.
- ◆ Will provide high quality and ethical governance at all levels, providing schools with the necessary balance of support and challenge in order for them to succeed.
- ◆ Will foster a range of key relationships with external agencies and organisations, including those across our communities, who can contribute to our efforts to ensure every child and school thrives.
- ◆ Will work in partnership to improve educational, employment and social opportunities for parents, carers and others in the wider community.

## **OBJECTIVES AND ACTIVITIES** (continued)

### **Objectives, strategies and activities**

The key priorities for the year are contained in the development plans for each academy and these are available from the Chief Executive Officer.

The key objectives for the North Star Community Trust are to:

- ◆ prepare students for the future;
- ◆ ensure Trust academies are at the heart of their communities;
- ◆ demonstrate high quality leadership;
- ◆ become an employer of choice; and
- ◆ ensure the sustainability of the Trust.

Our mission is to work with disadvantaged communities to make a real and lasting difference in order to give children the very best chance to succeed academically and socially. We will achieve this through Education, Community and Opportunity (ECO):

- ◆ **Education:** Every child at a North Star Community Trust school will receive an excellent education
- ◆ **Community:** Every child at a North Star Community Trust school will be able to make a difference in their community
- ◆ **Opportunity:** Every child at a North Star Community Trust will have opportunities to help them develop into well-rounded citizens of the future.

### **Public Benefit**

In setting the Academy Trust's objectives and planning its activities, the board of trustees have given careful consideration to the Charity Commission's general guidance on public benefit.

## **STRATEGIC REPORT**

### **Achievements and performance**

#### ***Secondary***

Heron Hall Academy remains a very popular school in the Borough of Enfield, The school is situated in the second most deprived ward in the borough and has a high proportion of disadvantaged, EAL and high needs students and ethnic groups compared to national averages. The deprivation factor is also higher than national.

The school remains over - subscribed filling it's 240 places in year 7 and the outcomes remain good. The school sets high expectations and standards for all staff and students to ensure that it provides a happy , friendly and safe place to study.

## **STRATEGIC REPORT** (continued)

### **Achievements and performance** (continued)

#### **Secondary** (continued)

The provisional key performance measures of progress 8 (+0.33) , Attainment 8 (4.7) and Ebacc APS (4.02) have improved since the schools pre-pandemic 2019 levels. This builds on outstanding results in 2022, which did have post pandemic support. Progress is particularly strong.

The % of students achieving 5 GCSE's Grade 5+, including English and Maths has also improved on the 2019 level.

Maths results are 5% higher than national for percentage achieving 9-4.

English Language is 8.13% higher than national for percentage achieving 9-4 whilst English Literature is currently 2.8% higher.

Triple Science continues to achieve higher than national, the % of students achieving 9-4 in double science having increased since 2019.

The success of the school at years 7-11 will be developed further in 2023/24 with the opening of our first 6th form offering places at year 12 to study both academic and vocational pathways.

#### **Highlights:**

Attainment 8 = 4.7

Progress 8 = 0.33

English Grade 5+ = 63.1%

Maths Grade 5+ =50%

Both English and Maths Grade 5+ = 46.1%

5+ GCSE's at Grade 5+ including English and Maths = 41.3%

#### **Primary**

The primary schools at North Star Community Trust continue to deliver a good level of education to all children.

The location of all of our schools means that they all see a high proportion of disadvantaged, EAL and high needs students and ethnic groups compared to national averages and a very high proportion of children come to our settings with a range of needs and development delay.

Children from our local communities were heavily impacted by the pandemic and were further behind than children from less deprived areas when returning to school. As a result all of our primaries are experiencing a marked increase in early years complex high needs.

## **STRATEGIC REPORT** (continued)

### **Achievements and performance** (continued)

#### ***Primary*** (continued)

Attainment across all three primaries this year has been a strength and has shown significant improvement.

KS2 outcomes were above the National average and above the average LA outcome combined.

Progress in the 3 core subjects was in the top 1% at Woodpecker Hall. KHA had very good progress measures and EHA made positive progress in all subjects.

Phonics continues to be a strength across all the primaries. They all have processes in place to support children throughout KS2 with learning phonics and early reading.

### **Key financial performance indicators**

#### ***Pupil numbers***

The pupil numbers from the Summer 2023 census are shown below for each individual school. There continues to be an increasingly transient community arising from high rental costs and low availability of affordable housing which has been impacting pupil numbers – particularly at primary level across the eastern part of the Borough of Enfield. Several factors including Brexit, COVID-19 and the high cost of living have also increased the number of families moving away from the area. The negative impact of a changing local demographic continued to be seen at Woodpecker Hall Academy. Heron Hall continues to be popular with parents with a healthy waiting list for places and the loss in primary numbers is currently offset by the growth at secondary level. We are aware however of the potential for reducing pupil numbers at secondary level in coming years.

#### ***Overall pupil numbers:***

Nursery: 175 (LY 180)

Primary: 1,301 (LY 1,351)

Secondary: 1,101 (LY 1,033)

Total: 2,577 (LY 2,564)

**STRATEGIC REPORT** (continued)

**Achievements and performance** (continued)

**2022/23:**

Year Group	Woodpecker Hall	Enfield Heights	Heron Hall	Kingfisher Hall
Nursery	128	0		47
Reception	79	30		59
Year 1	83	29		58
Year 2	81	26		60
Year 3	115	29		56
Year 4	113	29		54
Year 5	113	26		58
Year 6	120	28		55
Year 7			240	
Year 8			224	
Year 9			212	
Year 10			214	
Year 11			211	
<b>Total</b>	<b>832</b>	<b>197</b>	<b>1,101</b>	<b>447</b>

**Staffing Ratio:**

Total staffing costs (excluding restructuring costs and LGPS adjustments) as a proportion of total non-capital income were 82.4% (2022 – 78.4%).

**Other Key Financial Performance Indicators**

The range of key performance indicators (KPIs) that trustees may consider is constantly under review. Trustees consider it essential that they utilise a range of key financial performance indicators that are relevant and applicable to monitoring the performance of the Academy Trust. Trustees also use the DfE school resource management self-assessment tool to benchmark KPIs against similar schools, and curriculum-based planning underlies the budgeting of staffing requirements.

**Pupil Premium**

The Academy Trust acknowledges the responsibility for 'socially disadvantaged' pupils and is committed to meeting their pastoral, social and academic needs within the academies environment. The Trust is committed to 'Diminishing the Gap' between vulnerable pupils and the pupil premium forms a vital part of that process. NSCT Academies approach the pupil premium through the following principles:

- ◆ ensuring that teaching and learning opportunities meet the needs of all the pupils;
- ◆ ensuring that appropriate provision is made for pupils who belong to vulnerable groups, including ensuring the needs of socially disadvantaged pupils are adequately assessed and addressed; and

## STRATEGIC REPORT (continued)

### Key financial performance indicators (continued)

#### *Pupil Premium (continued)*

- ◆ recognising that not all pupils who receive free school meals will be socially disadvantaged or that not all pupils who are socially disadvantaged are registered or qualify for free school meals.

Provision is made through:

- ◆ enabling pupils' access to well-planned education;
- ◆ enabling pupils' access to an appropriately planned curriculum; and
- ◆ additional support and intervention within the Academy environment.

This will take the form of the following provision:

- ◆ small-group, matched-level daily English and Mathematics teaching thus overcoming gaps in learning and accelerating progress;
- ◆ 1:1 and small group tutorials in English and Mathematics thus ensuring that all pupils make the best possible progress with no pupils 'slipping through the net';
- ◆ intervention programmes to promote behaviour, social skills, expressive language development and homework/ curriculum support;
- ◆ enrichment programmes to widen pupils' experiences and knowledge through well planned cultural visits and events;
- ◆ support from trained staff to promote excellent attendance and punctuality, pastoral programmes and family support;
- ◆ additional teaching and learning opportunities provided through learning mentor, counsellors, Educational Psychologist, behaviour support, trained TAs and external agencies;
- ◆ reducing class sizes thus improving learning opportunities;
- ◆ breakfast and after school care;
- ◆ after school homework and learning clubs;
- ◆ after school curriculum clubs including provision for the more able;
- ◆ personalised provision, tailor-made to suit individual need;
- ◆ speech, language and communication provision;
- ◆ behaviour, emotional and social skills provision;
- ◆ targeting of able children on Free Schools Meals to achieve National Curriculum level 3 at the end of KS1 or level 5 at the end of KS2; and
- ◆ Educational Welfare Officer's commitment to improve attendance.

Pupil Premium of £1,182,000 was received during 2022/23 (2022 – £1,008,408)

## **STRATEGIC REPORT** (continued)

### **Going concern**

After making appropriate enquiries, the trustees have 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 on pages 39 to 43.

### **Promoting the success of the company**

The Trustees have acted in accordance with their duties codified in law, which include their duty to act in the way in which they consider, in good faith, would be most likely to promote the success of the Company for the benefit of its members, stakeholders and the matters set out in section 172(1) of the Companies Act 2006. The Charities Commission has issued guidance which explains that charitable companies should take "promoting the success of the company" to mean "promoting the success of the charity to achieve its charitable purposes."

The Trust is governed by its charitable objects. These charitable objects set out the purpose of the charity. The consequences of all decisions and activities of the charity are assessed by how they contribute towards achieving that long-term purpose, including by reference to the charity's strategy, vision and values. As an educational charity, the Trust is accountable not only to its direct beneficiaries (the pupils) but also to parents and the wider community. These stakeholders support, engage and challenge NSCT. They ensure that the decisions the Trust makes as a charity, from the ground level through to the Board, are for their benefit. The Trust is a values driven organisation and its values mean that it is informed, shaped and powered by its determination to uphold its vision. Well-established involvement and consultation mechanisms, both direct (through parent and staff surveys) and indirect (through the involvement of parents and local people on local governing bodies and Trust Board) ensure that decisions made by the Trustees are informed by the needs of the organisation's stakeholders.

### ***Long-term consequences of any decision***

Trustees consider the consequences of any strategic decision in the long-term as part of their assessment. They aim to ensure that the Trust balances its income and expenditure to ensure that long-term sustainability. This is balanced against the needs of the pupils, staff and other stakeholders, and the community, to ensure the Trust expends public funds in the most effective way to support its aims, and with integrity. This has included, for example, the decision to amalgamate Cuckoo Hall and Woodpecker Hall academies, in the light of falling pupil numbers, to ensure the continued provision of high quality education on the current site of the two academies.

### ***The interests of the company's employees***

Details of how the trustees give consideration to the interests of the organisation's employees can be found in the Engagement with employees section within this report, above.



## **STRATEGIC REPORT** (continued)

### **Promoting the success of the company** (continued)

#### ***The need to foster the company's business relationships with suppliers, customers and others***

Details of how the trustees give consideration to the interests of the organisation's other stakeholders can be found in the section Engagement with suppliers, customers and other stakeholders section of this report, above.

#### ***The impact of the Academy Trust's operations on the community and the environment***

Details of how the trustees give consideration to the impact on the community can be found in the section Engagement with suppliers, customers and other stakeholders section, above. Further information is also given in the section on Public Benefit. An example of how the Trust has considered its impact on the local community is through employment of its own dedicated community outreach team. The team works to empower and upskill parents to support their child's learning as well as providing them with opportunities to acquire employment and life skills through the offer of 60+ courses from healthy eating to Community cafes. Their work is supported by over 100 parent volunteers. The team has continued post-pandemic to work with local providers to provide food supplies to families who may not be eligible for free school meals. The Trust has also been successful in applying for grant funding to further support the local community from the Meridian Water Community Chest Fund, Enfield Wellbeing Fund and Walking and Cycling Grant. The Community Chest and Enfield Wellbeing funds provide a range of health and wellbeing activities including an inter-generational Human Library, weekly mindfulness sessions and a family physical activity and cooking 10 week course working with Age UK in the local community. The walking and Cycling grant promotes healthy and environmental benefits by encouraging students, staff and the community to use sustainable travel. The Trust is also pro-active in offering its sports facilities for local community use including the football pitch and dance facilities at Heron Hall Academy. We have over 500 attendees to our facilities every week.

#### ***The desirability of the Academy Trust maintaining a reputation for high standards of business conduct***

The Trust aims to conduct all its relationships with integrity and courtesy, and scrupulously to honour every business agreement. The trustees have approved a number of policies that help to ensure the charity maintains high standards of business conduct; these include the Investment Policy, Anti Fraud Policy, Whistleblowing Policy, and Gifts and Hospitality Policy.

#### ***The need to act fairly as between members of the Academy Trust***

All members of the Trust are treated fairly and equally, with the same access to information, the ability to directly contact trustees or senior leadership. All been members are also invited to participate in training or strategic development events, for example, our recent Trust Strategy Day.

All matters reserved for decision by the trustees are presented at Board or Committee meetings as appropriate. Trustees are briefed on any identified potential impacts and risks for stakeholders and how they are to be managed. The Trustees take these factors into account before making a final decision which together they believe is in the best interests of the Trust and its stakeholders.

## FINANCIAL REVIEW

### Financial report for the year

The financial position of the Academy Trust at the year ended 31 August 2023 is shown on page 36.

The vast majority of the Academy Trust's income is obtained from the DfE in the form of recurrent grants, the use of which is restricted to particular purposes. The grants received from the DfE during the year ended 31 August 2023 and the associated expenditure are shown as restricted funds in the Statement of Financial Activities.

The Academy Trust's total income for the year ended 31 August 2023 amounted to £19,632,000 (2022: £18,652,000), including £17,049,000 (2022 – £16,160,000) related to recurrent ESFA revenue grants, and £199,000 (2022 – £287,000) related to capital grants. These restricted grants for fixed assets include grants from the DfE for energy efficient equipment which was used to install energy efficient LED lighting. In accordance with the Charities Statement of Recommended Practice, 'Accounting and Reporting by Charities' (SORP 2015), such grants are shown in the Statement of Financial Activities as restricted income in the fixed asset fund. The restricted fixed asset fund balance is reduced by annual depreciation charges over the useful life of the assets concerned as defined in the Academy Trust's accounting policies.

In addition to its recurrent ESFA revenue grants, the Trust was also in receipt of COVID-19 funding as follows:

- ◆ Pupil premium recovery funding of £191,000 of which £68,000 was spent on additional catch up classes, resources and IT equipment. Unspent funding will be carried forward to 2023/24.
- ◆ School Led tutoring Grant of £144,000 of which £110,000 was used to deliver additional tuition to pupils identified as being most in need of educational recovery and support. Unspent funding will be returned.

Expenditure on the Academy Trust's educational operations for the year amounted to £20,833,000 (2022 – £19,924,000), the increase being due mainly to higher direct staff costs.

## FINANCIAL REVIEW (continued)

### Financial report for the year (continued)

A reconciliation of the positive net movement in funds of £325,000 (2022 – £6,560,000) to the Trust's operating deficit of £162,000 (2022 – £691,000 surplus) is shown below:

	<b>2023</b>	2022
	<b>£'000</b>	£'000
<b>Net movement in funds as shown on the SOFA</b>	<b>325</b>	6,560
(Less) add: net (income) expenditure in the fixed assets fund	<b>974</b>	810
(Less) Add: LGPS actuarial (gain)	<b>(1,526)</b>	(7,832)
Add: LGPS service cost adjustment	<b>265</b>	1,341
Add: LGPS interest cost adjustment	<b>36</b>	123
Operational surplus excluding fixed asset purchases	<b>74</b>	1,002
Less: transfer of revenue funds into fixed assets	<b>(236)</b>	(311)
Operational (deficit) surplus for the year	<b>(162)</b>	691

At 31 August 2023, the Academy Trust held total funds of £35,979,000 (2022 – £35,654,000) which comprised restricted fixed asset funds of £33,447,000 (2022 – £34,185,000), a pension reserve of £nil (2022 – £1,225,000 reserve), restricted general funds of £192,000 (2022 – £124,000).

The Trust also held unrestricted funds of £2,340,000 (2022 – £2,570,000), of which £346,000 (2022 – £346,000) were designated for use on future repair and capital projects. The Trust's operational reserves at 31 August 2023 (comprising the unrestricted and restricted general funds) therefore amounted to £2,532,000 (2022 – £2,694,000).

### Reserves policy

The trustees review the reserve levels of the Trust annually. This review encompasses the nature of income and expenditure streams, the need to match income with commitments and the nature of reserves. The trustees have agreed the revenue budget for the coming financial year 2023/24 to be supported by a transfer from reserves of £497,500 to support potential unfunded staff pay increases. In addition, unspent restricted income from grants and pupil premium recovery added to reserves during the current year will be released from reserves to be spent in 2023/24.

Trustees are cognisant that without additional funding to support staff pay increases, pressure will be put on reserves going forward. Through its budget-setting process, the Trust has identified potential strategies which will be utilised during 2023/24 to mitigate against this risk if necessary.

Reserves, from any previous years' underspend, may be utilised for infrastructure, academy improvement, or for urgent health and safety matters or exceptional circumstances agreed by Trustee's. The minimum target for these reserves is equal to at least one month's average payroll costs, approximately £1,358,000 (2022 – £1,205,000). This level of reserves is intended to provide sufficient working capital to cover delays between spending and receipts of grants and to provide a cushion to deal with unexpected emergencies such as urgent maintenance.

## **FINANCIAL REVIEW** (continued)

### **Reserves policy** (continued)

The trustees have also identified the need for a separate designated reserve of £346,000 (2022 – £346,000) to be created to provide for future repairs and maintenance. Some of the Trust estate is in poor condition and the trustees wish to make prudent provision for costs likely to arise in future years. A review of the long-term requirement is in progress and the designated reserve will be updated next year to reflect these plans. The Academy Trust's current level of free reserves (total funds less the amounts held as fixed asset funds and pension reserve) is £2,532,000 (2022 – £2,694,000), which exceeds the reserve target.

The trustees are satisfied that the level of free reserves held is adequate but not excessive given the ongoing economic uncertainty of increasing costs and of falling pupil numbers on grant income funding.

### **Investment policy**

The Academy Trust currently holds no investments. Current accounts were held with NatWest bank during the year and any surplus funds above £1,000 were swept at the end of the banking day to a Business Interest Reserve Account which pays a higher rate of interest.

### **Financial and risk management objectives and policies**

The Academy Trust has agreed a risk management strategy and a risk register. These have been discussed by the trustees and include the financial risks to the schools. The register is constantly reviewed in light of any new information and formally reviewed through the Audit Committee on a regular basis.

## **PRINCIPAL RISKS AND UNCERTAINTIES**

Trustees' recognise their responsibilities to ensure that the Trust's estate is safe, well maintained and complies with relevant regulations. The main risk to this currently is the potential availability of reserve funding to be able to maintain and invest in the estates base. Long term investment in buildings and plant will normally be funded from reserves and so it is vital that The Trust is able to maintain a level of reserves that will enable planning for long term investment- particularly in the older sites at Woodpecker Hall and Heron Hall.

The Trust has recently moved its annual audit of health and safety to a new provider who have carried out a more thorough and robust audit of all sites. To complement this approach, the Trust has also invested in a new software infrastructure which will support regular review and monitoring of all compliance requirements and health and safety checks.

### **PRINCIPAL RISKS AND UNCERTAINTIES** (continued)

The Academy Trust's principal risks and uncertainties are surrounding the future financing of education and the implications for the Academy Trust. In the current economic climate, there is uncertainty around future funding towards a higher level of staff pay increases. With the academies' robust forward planning, curriculum based planning and pooling of GAG funding as an Academy Trust we believe we are well placed to meet the financial uncertainties we will face in the future, albeit with possible support required from existing reserves. The trustees seek to ensure that there are appropriate structures to meet the needs of the organisation as a Multi-Academy Trust.

A growing risk for all of our schools is the increased numbers of pupils with complex high needs where the funding is insufficient to support their needs. This risk impacts on many areas across the Trust including financial, meeting the educational needs of all pupils across our schools and the recruitment, retention and wellbeing of staff.

The trustees have considered strategic risks and uncertainties rather than the detailed operational list. These strategic risks, in addition to the risks identified above, focused on the following areas:

- ◆ cost pressures on revenue budgets for primary academies exacerbated by falling pupil numbers make setting a balanced budget for the next three years a significant challenge;
- ◆ inability to maintain the Trust estate and replace equipment on a timely basis due to budgetary constraints;
- ◆ inability to adequately support pupils with Education, Health and Care Plans due to insufficient funding;
- ◆ inability to deliver a high-quality wider curriculum at primary level due to inexperienced staff; and
- ◆ Increased exposure to cyber security risk

The trustees identify the likelihood of each risk happening via RAG ('Red', 'Amber', 'Green') ratings, their impact, the response to the risk and the control procedures in place to meet the risk.

### **FUNDRAISING**

The Academy Trust only held small fundraising events predominantly to raise funds for third party charities. The Academy Trust does not work with professional fundraisers or companies who carry out fundraising on its behalf. During the year, no complaints or issues have arisen as a result of the fundraising events.

**STREAMLINED ENERGY AND CARBON REPORTING**

<b>UK Greenhouse gas emissions and energy use data for the period 1 September 2022 to 31 August 2023</b>	<b>2023</b>	<b>2022</b>
Energy consumption used to calculate emissions (kWh)	<b>3,846,451</b>	<b>4,645,602</b>
Energy consumption break down (kWh) (optional)		
♦ gas,	2,618,919	3,538,759
♦ electricity,	1,205,188	1,089,809
♦ transport fuel	21,167	16,688
<u>Scope 1 emissions in metric tonnes CO<sub>2</sub>e</u>		
Gas consumption	478.11	645.97
Owned transport – mini-buses	5.06	0.60
<u>Total scope 1</u>	483.17	646.57
<u>Scope 2 emissions in metric tonnes CO<sub>2</sub>e</u>		
Purchased electricity	249.56	210.75
<u>Scope 3 emissions in metric tonnes CO<sub>2</sub>e</u>		
Business travel in employee owned vehicles	0.21	0.06
<b>Total gross emissions in metric tonnes CO<sub>2</sub>e</b>	<b>732.94</b>	<b>857.38</b>
Pupil numbers (including Nursery)	<b>2,534</b>	<b>2,558</b>
<u>Intensity ratio</u>		
Tonnes CO <sub>2</sub> e per pupil (including Nursery)	<b>0.29</b>	<b>0.34</b>

**Quantification and Reporting Methodology**

We have followed the 2023 HM Government Environmental Reporting Guidelines. We have also used the GHG Reporting Protocol – Corporate Standard and have used the 2023 UK Government's Conversion Factors for Company Reporting.

**Intensity measurement**

The chosen intensity measurement ratio is total gross emissions in metric tonnes CO<sub>2</sub> emitted per pupil, the recommended ratio for the sector.

**Measures taken to improve energy efficiency**

Solar panels are installed on all four of the academies and the array at our Secondary School Heron Hall was increased during 2023. which reduces the requirements for electricity from the National Grid. Across the Trust an array of over 1,519 solar panels are installed, delivering over 450KWpeak. This helps to reduce carbon emissions by 91 tonnes per year. The Trust has also installed modern energy efficient LED lighting at Heron Hall and continues to review other areas of energy efficiencies to mitigate against the higher energy prices.

## **PLANS FOR FUTURE PERIODS**

The Trustees, in consultation with staff, parents and pupils, have further developed the three-year strategy for the Trust "Stronger Together". This has the over-arching aim of providing every child and young person associated with the Trust with an enriching and inspiring educational experience, where they can thrive academically and socially, both during the time with the Trust and in the future.

The key objectives for the next three years are grouped into five themes.

### **1. Preparing students for the future**

- ◆ In partnership with parents, ensuring students are ready to learn.
- ◆ Enriching and inspiring teaching, learning and curriculum.
- ◆ Future-focused learning experiences.
- ◆ Providing an education in the roundest sense.

### **2. Schools at the heart of their communities**

- ◆ High quality and free support for parents and parenting.
- ◆ Responding to the needs of our community, respecting diversity.
- ◆ Working with a range of selected local and national partners.

### **3. An employer of choice for our staff**

- ◆ Providing an environment for meaningful work.
- ◆ Provision of career pathways and professional development.
- ◆ Nurturing professional communities and shared resources.
- ◆ Promoting flexible approaches to working wherever possible.

### **4. High quality leadership**

- ◆ Recruiting and retaining excellent leaders.
- ◆ Developing Trust leaders through experience, coaching and mentoring.
- ◆ Investing in formal continuing professional development and training.

### **5. A sustainable Trust**

- ◆ Enacting committed governance.
- ◆ Maintaining financial viability.
- ◆ Implementing and sustaining efficient and effective central systems and processes.
- ◆ Developing an estates strategy to ensure appropriate buildings and learning environments.

**AUDITOR**

In so far as the trustees are aware:

- ◆ there is no relevant audit information of which the charitable company's auditor is unaware; and
- ◆ 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.

Approved by order of the members of the board of trustees and signed on its behalf by:

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Donald Graham", is written over a horizontal line. The signature is cursive and somewhat stylized.

Dr. Donald Graham  
Chair of Trustees

Date: 12 December 2023



### **Scope of responsibility**

As trustees, we acknowledge we have overall responsibility for ensuring that North Star Community 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.

The trustees have delegated the day-to-day responsibility to the Chief Executive 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 the Academy Trust and the Secretary of State for Education. The Chief Executive is also responsible for reporting to the board of trustees any material weaknesses or breakdowns in internal control.

### **Governance**

The board of trustees has formally met three times during the year, and attendance during the year at meetings of the board of trustees was as follows:

<b>Trustee</b>	<b>Meetings attended</b>	<b>Out of a possible</b>
Dr D Graham (Chair)	3	3
Mr A Ayoade	2	3
Mr D Broadbent	3	3
Mr R Bryant	3	3
Mr M Charalambous	3	3
Ms S El Hadri	2	3
Ms A Haig-Davies	2	2
Ms E Jackson	1	1
Ms M Jones	2	2
Ms J Tosh	3	3

A skills audit is carried out periodically and training commissioned on the basis of the outcome of the skills audit. Using a national leader in governance Trustees and Governors receive focused training sessions three times a year on areas such as Ofsted readiness and Impact Challenge Evidence (ICE) training. An annual review is undertaken by Trustees and governors once a year. Other external annual reviews of academies such as Challenge Partners always include governance as part of the process.

The Finance, Risk and Audit Committee is a sub-committee of the main board of trustees. Its purpose is to assist the board in ensuring sound management of the Academy Trust's finances and resources, including proper planning and monitoring and ensuring that there is probity. It also considers matters relating to internal controls, risk management and auditors' reports (internal and external). The committee recommended approval of the budgets for 2023/24 for NSCT and its academies, as well as monitoring in-year financial performance.

**Governance** (continued)

Attendance at Finance, Risk and Audit Committee meetings in the year was as follows:

<b>Trustee</b>	<b>Meetings attended</b>	<b>Out of a possible</b>
Mr M Charalambous	3	3
Dr D Graham	3	3
Ms S El Hadri	3	3
Ms M Jones	2	3

Following covid, meetings have continued to be carried out online.

The Board of Trustees have also created a sub-committee focusing on staffing and operations management (SOM) matters to ensure scrutiny and challenge in all areas of the organisation including, HR, IT and Cyber Security, Estates, Health & Safety, Data Protection Admin and Marketing. During the year one of the primary academies has had an Ofsted inspection and governance was deemed to be a strength.

**Conflicts of interest**

The Trust maintains a register of interests which is updated regularly and is reported on the Trust's website. The register is referenced when new suppliers are being considered to ensure that the Trust is compliant with related party reporting requirements. Conflicts of interest are a standing item on the agenda of all committee and trustee meetings and are declared at the beginning of the meetings.

**Review of Value for money**

As Accounting Officer, the Chief Executive 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 in the following ways:

- ◆ The Trust has established a centralised purchasing function, which collates and processes all purchase orders for the Trust. A commitment based accounting system requires all requisitions to be authorised by the relevant budget holder and prevents financial commitments in excess of budget.
- ◆ Pay costs are controlled centrally and each post is reviewed when it becomes vacant to ensure that staffing levels are as efficient as possible. A curriculum-based approach to financial planning supports the development of efficient staffing structures across the Trust.
- ◆ New contracts procured during the year include the telephone system generating substantial savings for the Trust over the period of the contract. We compare quotes from public sector frameworks with suppliers from outside of the education sector to ensure we achieve value for money.

### **Review of Value for money (continued)**

- ◆ The Trust has recently moved its annual audit of health and safety to a new provider who have carried out a more thorough and robust audit of all sites. To complement this approach, the Trust has also invested in a new software infrastructure which will support regular review and monitoring of all compliance requirements and health and safety checks. The Trust has invested in energy efficient LED lighting and additional solar panels as well as new boilers at one of its schools which will reduce energy costs substantially.

### **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 therefore only provide reasonable and not absolute assurance of effectiveness. The system of internal control is based on an ongoing process designed to identify and prioritise the risks to the achievement of the Academy Trust's 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 the Academy Trust for the year ended 31 August 2022 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 ongoing process for identifying, evaluating and managing the Academy Trust's significant risks that has been in place for the year ended 31 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.

### **The risk and control framework**

The Academy Trust's system of internal financial control is 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, Risk and Audit 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; and
- ◆ identification and management of risks.

**The risk and control framework** (continued)

The trustees appointed UHY Hacker Young to carry out a programme of internal checks and scrutiny on the Academy Trust's financial systems. In 2022/23 the risk-driven programme of work covered compliance with financial regulations, regularity and governance, income, purchases, payroll, fixed assets, cash management, control accounts, VAT, cyber security and Central Trust function. There were no high risk areas identified and only a small number of low and medium risk recommendations, all of which the Trust were already working on or have since addressed.

**Review of effectiveness**

As Accounting Officer, the Chief Executive has responsibility for reviewing the effectiveness of the system of internal control. During the year in question, the review has been informed by:

- ◆ the work of the external firm reviewing the financial systems;
- ◆ the work of the external auditor;
- ◆ the financial management and governance self-assessment process; and
- ◆ the work of the executive managers within the Academy Trust who have responsibility for the development and maintenance of the internal control framework.

The Accounting Officer has advised the Finance, Risk and Audit Committee of the implications of his review of the system of internal control and a plan to address weaknesses and ensure continuous improvement of the system is in place.

Approved by order of the board of trustees and signed on their behalf by:



Dr. Donald Graham

(Chair of Trustees)



Marino Charalambous

(Accounting Officer)

Approved on: 12 December 2023

**Statement on regularity, propriety and compliance 31 August 2023**

As Accounting Officer of North Star Community Trust, I have considered my responsibility to notify the Academy Trust board of trustees and the Education and Skills Funding Agency of material irregularity, impropriety and non-compliance with ESFA terms and conditions of all funding, including for estates safety and management, under the funding agreement 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 Academy Trust 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 Financial Handbook.

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.



Marino Charalambous

Accounting Officer

Date: 12 December 2023

## Statement of trustees' responsibilities 31 August 2023

The trustees (who are also the directors of the Academy Trust for the purposes of company law) are responsible for preparing the trustees' report and the financial statements in accordance with the Academies Accounts Direction published by the Education & Skills Funding Agency, United Kingdom Accounting Standards (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice) and applicable law and regulations.

Company law requires the trustees to prepare financial statements for each financial year. Under company law, the trustees must not approve the financial statements unless they are satisfied that they give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the Academy Trust and of its incoming resources and application of resources, including its income and expenditure, for that 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 FRS 102 and the Academies Accounts Direction 2022 to 2023;
- ◆ make judgments and estimates that are reasonable and prudent;
- ◆ state whether applicable United Kingdom Accounting Standards 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 Academy Trust will continue in operation.

The trustees are responsible for keeping adequate accounting records that are sufficient to show and explain the Academy Trust's transactions and disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time the financial position of the Academy Trust 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 Academy Trust 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 Academy Trust applies financial and other controls, which conform with the requirements both of propriety and of good financial management. They are also responsible for ensuring grants received from the ESFA/DfE 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 and signed on its behalf by:



Dr. Donald Graham  
Chair of Trustees

Date: 12 December 2023

**Independent auditor's report to the members of North Star Community Trust Ltd**

**Opinion**

We have audited the financial statements of North Star Community Trust Ltd (the 'charitable company') for the year ended 31 August 2023 which comprise the statement of financial activities, the balance sheet, the statement of cash flows, the principal accounting policies and the notes to the financial statements. The financial reporting framework that has been applied in their preparation is applicable law, United Kingdom Accounting Standards, including Financial Reporting Standard 102 'The Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland' (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice), 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) (the Charities SORP FRS 102) and the Academies Accounts Direction 2022 to 2023.

In our opinion, the financial statements:

- ◆ give a true and fair view of the state of the charitable company's affairs as at 31 August 2023 and of its income and expenditure, for the period then ended;
- ◆ have been properly prepared in accordance with United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice;
- ◆ have been prepared in accordance with the requirements of the Companies Act 2006; and
- ◆ have been prepared in accordance with the Charities SORP FRS 102 and Academies Accounts Direction 2022 to 2023.

**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 charitable company 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 charitable company's ability to continue as a going concern for a period of at least twelve months from when the financial statements are 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 trustees are responsible for the other information. The other information comprises the information included in the annual report other than the financial statements and our auditor's report thereon. 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.

In connection with our audit of the financial statements, 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 audit or otherwise appears to be materially misstated. If we identify such material inconsistencies or apparent material misstatements, we are required to determine whether there is a material misstatement in the financial statements or a material misstatement of the other information. 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, which is also the directors' report for the purposes of company law and includes the strategic report, for the financial year for which the financial statements are prepared is consistent with the financial statements; and
- ◆ the trustees' report, which is also the directors' report for the purposes of company law and includes the strategic report, has been prepared in accordance with applicable legal requirements.

### **Matters on which we are required to report by exception**

In the light of the knowledge and understanding of the charitable company and its environment obtained in the course of the audit, we have not identified material misstatements in the trustees' report including the strategic 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 trustees' 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 trustees' responsibilities statement, the trustees (who are also the directors 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 charitable company'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 charitable company 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:

Our approach to identifying and assessing the risks of material misstatement in respect of irregularities, including fraud and non-compliance with laws and regulations, was as follows:

- ◆ the engagement partner ensured that the engagement team collectively had the appropriate competence, capabilities and skills to identify or recognise non-compliance with applicable laws and regulations;
- ◆ we identified the laws and regulations applicable to the charitable company through discussions with management, and from our knowledge of the academy trust sector;
- ◆ the identified laws and regulations were communicated within the audit team regularly and the team remained alert to instances of non-compliance throughout the audit;
- ◆ we considered the legal and regulatory frameworks that are applicable to the charitable company and determined that the most significant are the Companies Act 2006, the Charities SORP FRS 102, the Academies Accounts Direction 2022 to 2023, the Academies Financial Handbook 2021, and the academy trust's funding agreement with the ESFA as well as legislation pertaining to safeguarding in the UK;

**Auditor's responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements** (continued)

- ◆ we understood how the charitable company is complying with those legal and regulatory frameworks by making inquiries to management and those responsible for legal, compliance and governance procedures. We corroborated our inquiries through our review of the minutes of trustees' meetings and papers provided to the trustees.
- ◆ we planned and carried out a separate limited assurance engagement in respect of regularity, propriety and compliance in accordance with the Framework and Guide for External Auditors and Reporting Accountants of Academy Trusts issued by the ESFA, as set out in our separate independent reporting accountant's assurance report on regularity.

We assessed the susceptibility of the charitable company's financial statements to material misstatement, including obtaining an understanding of how fraud might occur, by:

- ◆ making enquiries of management and those charged with governance as to where they considered there was susceptibility to fraud, their knowledge of actual, suspected and alleged fraud; and
- ◆ considering the internal controls in place to mitigate risks of fraud and non-compliance with laws and regulations.

To address the risk of fraud through management bias and override of controls, we:

- ◆ performed analytical procedures to identify any unusual or unexpected relationships;
- ◆ tested journal entries to identify unusual transactions;
- ◆ tested the authorisation of expenditure as part of our substantive testing thereon;
- ◆ assessed whether judgements and assumptions made in determining the accounting estimates set out in the accounting policies were indicative of potential bias; and
- ◆ used data analytics to identify any significant or unusual transactions and identify the rationale for them.

In response to the risk of irregularities and non-compliance with laws and regulations, we designed procedures which included, but were not limited to:

- ◆ agreeing financial statement disclosures to underlying supporting documentation;
- ◆ reviewing the minutes of trustees' meetings;
- ◆ enquiring of management and those charged with governance as to actual and potential litigation and claims;
- ◆ reviewing any available correspondence with Ofsted, ESFA and HMRC; and
- ◆ the work undertaken in relation to the limited assurance engagement in respect of regularity, propriety and compliance in accordance with the Framework and Guide for External Auditors and Reporting Accountants of Academy Trusts issued by the ESFA, as set out in our separate independent reporting accountant's assurance report on regularity.

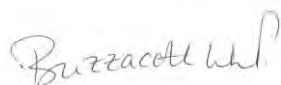
**Auditor's responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements** (continued)

There are inherent limitations in our audit procedures described above. The more removed that laws and regulations are from financial transactions, the less likely it is that we would become aware of non-compliance. International Standards on Auditing also limit the audit procedures required to identify non-compliance with laws and regulations to enquiry of the trustees and other management and the inspection of regulatory and legal correspondence, if any.

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](http://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 charitable company'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 charitable company'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 charitable company and the charitable company's members as a body, for our audit work, for this report, or for the opinions we have formed.



Shachi Blakemore (Senior Statutory Auditor)  
For and on behalf of Buzzacott LLP, Statutory Auditor  
130 Wood Street  
London  
EC2V 6DL

Date: 12 December 2023

**Independent reporting auditor's assurance report on regularity to North Star Community Trust Ltd and the Education and Skills Funding Agency**

In accordance with the terms of our engagement letter dated 17 November 2021 and further to the requirements of the Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA) as included in the Academies Accounts Direction 2022 to 2023, we have carried out an engagement to obtain limited assurance about whether the expenditure disbursed and income received by North Star Community 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 North Star Community Trust and the ESFA in accordance with the terms of our engagement letter. Our work has been undertaken so that we might state to North Star Community 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 North Star Community Trust and the ESFA, for our work, for this report, or for the conclusion we have formed.

**Respective responsibilities of North Star Community Trust's accounting officer and the reporting auditor**

The accounting officer is responsible, under the requirements of North Star Community Trust's funding agreement with the Secretary of State for Education dated 19 July 2011 and the Academies Financial Handbook, extant from 1 September 2022, 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.

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.

**Approach** (continued)

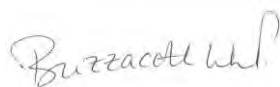
Our engagement includes examination, on a test basis, of evidence relevant to the regularity and propriety of the academy trust's income and expenditure.

The work undertaken to draw to our conclusion includes:

- ◆ An assessment of the risk of material irregularity and impropriety across all of the Academy Trust's activities;
- ◆ Further testing and review of the areas identified through the risk assessment including enquiry, identification of control processes and examination of supporting evidence across all areas identified as well as additional verification work where considered necessary; and
- ◆ Consideration of evidence obtained through the work detailed above and the work completed as part of our financial statements audit in order to support the regularity conclusion.

**Conclusion**

Nothing has come to our attention which suggests that in all material respects the expenditure disbursed and income received during the period from 1 September 2022 to 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.



Buzzacott LLP  
Chartered Accountants  
130 Wood Street  
London  
EC2V 6DL

Date: 12 December 2023

**Statement of financial activities (including income and expenditure account) Year to 31 August 2023**

	Notes	Restricted funds		2023 Total funds £'000	2022 Total funds £'000
		Un- restricted general fund £'000	General £'000		
<b>Income from:</b>					
Donations and capital grants	1	—	—	199	287
Charitable activities					
. Funding for the academies' educational operations	4	—	18,722	—	17,676
Other trading activities	2	629	18	—	688
Investments	3	64	—	—	1
<b>Total income</b>		<b>693</b>	<b>18,740</b>	<b>199</b>	<b>18,652</b>
<b>Expenditure on:</b>					
Charitable activities					
. Academies' educational operations	6	693	18,967	1,173	19,924
<b>Total expenditure</b>	5	<b>693</b>	<b>18,967</b>	<b>1,173</b>	<b>19,924</b>
<b>Net (expenditure)</b>		<b>—</b>	<b>(227)</b>	<b>(974)</b>	<b>(1,272)</b>
Transfers between funds	15	(230)	(6)	236	—
<b>Other recognised gains and losses</b>					
Actuarial gains on defined benefit pension scheme	18	—	1,526	—	7,832
<b>Net movement in funds</b>		<b>(230)</b>	<b>1,293</b>	<b>(738)</b>	<b>6,560</b>
<b>Reconciliation of funds</b>					
Total fund balances brought forward at 1 September		2,570	(1,101)	34,185	29,094
<b>Total fund balances carried forward at 31 August</b>		<b>2,340</b>	<b>192</b>	<b>33,447</b>	<b>35,654</b>

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

All recognised gains and losses are included in the Statement of Financial Activities.

**Balance sheet** 31 August 2023

	Notes	2023 £'000	2023 £'000	2022 £'000	2022 £'000
<b>Fixed assets</b>					
Tangible fixed assets	12		<b>33,447</b>		34,185
<b>Current assets</b>					
Debtors	13	<b>652</b>		493	
Cash at bank and in hand		<b>3,429</b>		<u>3,632</u>	
		<b>4,081</b>		<u>4,125</u>	
<b>Liabilities</b>					
Creditors: amounts falling due within one year	14	<u>(1,549)</u>		<u>(1,431)</u>	
<b>Net current assets</b>			<b>2,532</b>		2,694
<b>Total assets less current liabilities</b>			<b>35,979</b>		36,879
Defined benefit pension scheme liability	18		—		(1,225)
<b>Total net assets</b>			<b>35,979</b>		<u>35,654</u>
<b>Funds of the Academy</b>					
Restricted funds					
. Fixed asset fund	15		<b>33,447</b>		34,185
. Restricted ESFA fund	15		<b>192</b>		124
. Pension reserve	15		—		(1,225)
<b>Total restricted funds</b>			<b>33,639</b>		<u>33,084</u>
Unrestricted income funds					
. General fund	15		<b>1,994</b>		2,224
. Designated fund	15		<b>346</b>		<u>346</u>
<b>Total funds</b>			<b>35,979</b>		<u>35,654</u>

The financial statements on page 36 to 61 were approved by the trustees, and authorised for issue and are signed on their behalf by:



Dr. Donald Graham  
Chair

Date: 12 December 2023

North Star Community Trust Ltd  
Company Limited by Guarantee  
Registration Number: 07355559 (England and Wales)

## Statement of cash flows Year to 31 August 2023

		2023 £'000	2022 £'000
<b>Net cash flows from operating activities</b>			
Net cash provided by operating activities	A	(31)	1,322
<b>Cash flows from investing activities</b>	B	(172)	(296)
<b>Change in cash and cash equivalents in the year</b>		(203)	1,026
<b>Reconciliation of net cash flow to movement in net funds:</b>			
Cash and cash equivalents at 1 September		3,632	2,606
<b>Cash and cash equivalents at 31 August</b>	C	<b>3,429</b>	<b>3,632</b>

### A Reconciliation of net expenditure to net cash flows from operating activities

		2023 £'000	2022 £'000
<b>Net expenditure for the year (as per the statement of financial activities)</b>		(1,201)	(1,272)
<b>Adjusted for:</b>			
Depreciation charges (note 12)		1,173	1,097
Capital grants from DfE/ESFA and other capital income		(199)	(287)
(Gain) on disposal of fixed assets		—	(14)
Interest receivable (note 3)		(64)	(1)
Defined benefit pension scheme cost less contributions payable (note 18)		265	1,341
Defined benefit pension scheme finance cost (note 18)		36	123
(Increase) decrease in debtors		(159)	419
Decrease (increase) in creditors		118	(84)
<b>Net cash provided by operating activities</b>		<b>(31)</b>	<b>1,322</b>

### B Cash flows from investing activities

		2023 £'000	2022 £'000
Interest received		64	1
Proceeds from sale of tangible fixed assets		—	14
Purchase of tangible fixed assets		(435)	(598)
Capital grants from DfE/ESFA		199	287
<b>Net cash used in investing activities</b>		<b>(172)</b>	<b>(296)</b>

### C Analysis of changes in net debt

	At 1 September 2022 £'000	Cash flows £'000	At 31 August 2023 £'000
Cash at bank and in hand	3,632	(203)	<b>3,429</b>
<b>Total cash and cash equivalents</b>	<b>3,632</b>	<b>(203)</b>	<b>3,429</b>



### **Statement of 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.

### **Basis of preparation**

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 ESFA, the Charities Act 2011 and the Companies Act 2006.

North Star Community Trust Ltd meets the definition of a public benefit entity under FRS 102. These financial statements are presented in sterling and rounded to the nearest thousand pounds.

### **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.

### **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**

Grants are 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.

The 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.

**Income** (continued)

**Grants** (continued)

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 the hire of facilities, is recognised in the period it is receivable and to the extent the academy trust has provided the goods or services.

**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 stated net of recoverable VAT.

**Tangible fixed assets**

Assets costing £2,500 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 life. 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 directly 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.

#### **Tangible fixed assets** (continued)

Depreciation is provided on all tangible fixed assets other than freehold land, at rates calculated to write off the cost/valuation of each asset on a straight-line basis over its expected useful economic life, as follows:

- ◆ Freehold and leasehold buildings 50 years
- ◆ Fixtures, fittings and equipment 5 years
- ◆ Long-life equipment 10 years
- ◆ Motor vehicles 5 years

A full year of depreciation is charged in the year of acquisition.

Assets in the course of construction are included at cost. Depreciation on these assets is not charged until they are brought into use.

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.

#### **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.

#### **Leased assets**

Rentals under operating leases are charged on a straight line basis over the lease term.

#### **Financial instruments**

The academy trust only holds basic financial instruments as defined in FRS 102. The financial assets and financial liabilities of the academy trust and their measurement basis are as follows:

*Financial assets* – trade and other debtors are basic financial instruments and are debt instruments measured at amortised cost. Prepayments are not financial instruments.

*Cash at bank* – is classified as a basic financial instrument and is measured at face value.

*Financial liabilities* – trade creditors, accruals and other creditors are financial instruments, and are measured at amortised cost. Taxation and social security are not included in the financial instruments disclosure definition. Deferred income is not deemed to be a financial liability, as the cash settlement has already taken place and there is an obligation to deliver services rather than cash or another financial instrument.

### **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 Chapter 3 Part 11 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.

### **Pensions benefits**

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. As stated in note 18, the TPS is a multi-employer scheme and there is insufficient information available to use defined benefit accounting. The TPS is therefore 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.

### **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.

Designated funds represent those general funds which have been set aside by the trustees for specific purposes.

**Fund accounting** (continued)

Restricted fixed asset funds are resources which are to be applied to specific capital purposes imposed by the Education and Skills Funding Agency, Department for Education or other funders where the asset acquired or created is held for a specific purpose.

Restricted general funds comprise all other grants received from the Education and Skills Funding Agency.

Restricted other funds comprise all other restricted funds received and include grants from the Local Authority, London Borough of Enfield.

**Critical accounting estimates and areas of judgement**

Estimates and judgements are continually evaluated and are based on historical experience and other factors, including expectations 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 (income) for pensions include the discount rate. Any changes in these assumptions, which are disclosed in note 18, 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 2022. 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.
- ◆ The net book value of tangible fixed assets is based on the original cost of the asset net of provision for depreciation. The depreciation provision to date is based on the trustees' assessment of the estimated useful economic lives of such assets.
- ◆ Holiday pay accrual.

**Critical areas of judgement**

There have been no judgements made in the preparation of these financial statements that are considered to have had a significant impact.

### 1 Donations and capital grants

	Unrestricted funds £'000	Restricted funds £'000	2023 Total funds £'000
Capital grants	—	199	199
	—	199	199
			2022 Total funds £'000
Capital grants	—	237	237
Donated fixed assets	—	50	50
	—	287	287

### 2 Other trading activities

	Unrestricted funds £'000	Restricted funds £'000	2023 Total funds £'000
Hire of facilities	110	—	110
Trip income	62	—	62
Catering income	283	—	283
Miscellaneous income	174	18	192
	629	18	647
			2022 Total funds £'000
Hire of facilities	123	—	123
Trip income	47	—	47
Catering income	282	—	282
Miscellaneous income	219	17	236
	671	17	688

### 3 Investment income

	Unrestricted funds £'000	Restricted funds £'000	2023 Total funds £'000
Interest receivable	64	—	64
	64	—	64
			2022 Total funds £'000
Interest receivable	1	—	1
	1	—	1

**4 Funding for academies' educational operations**

	Unrestricted funds £'000	Restricted funds £'000	<b>2023 Total funds £'000</b>
<b>DfE/ESFA grants</b>			
. General Annual Grant (GAG)	—	15,636	<b>15,636</b>
.. Universal Infant Free School Meals	—	129	<b>129</b>
.. Pupil Premium	—	1,182	<b>1,182</b>
.. Teachers Pay Grant	—	5	<b>5</b>
.. Teacher Pension Grant	—	13	<b>13</b>
. Other DfE Group grants	—	84	<b>84</b>
	—	17,049	<b>17,049</b>
<b>Other government grants</b>			
. Local authority grants	—	1,392	<b>1,392</b>
	—	1,392	<b>1,392</b>
<b>COVID-19 additional funding (DfE/ESFA)</b>			
. Catch-up premium	—	190	<b>190</b>
. Other DfE/ESFA COVID-19 funding	—	91	<b>91</b>
	—	281	<b>281</b>
<b>2023 total funds</b>	—	18,722	<b>18,722</b>

The Academy trust received £191,000(2022 – £125,000) of funding for catch-up premium and costs incurred in respect of this funding and the £46,000 brought forward from 2021/22 totalled £113,000 (2022 – £184,000) with the remaining £123,000 (2022 – £46,000) to be spent in 2023/24.

The Trust also received School Led Tutoring Grant of funding of £144,000 (2022 - £127,000). A provision is included in the financial statements for the return of £53,000.

The Trust received COVID-19 Mass Testing Funding of £nil (2022 – £18,000).

**4 Funding for academies' educational operations (continued)**

	<i>Unrestricted funds £'000</i>	<i>Restricted funds £'000</i>	<i>2022 Total funds £'000</i>
<i>DfE/ESFA grants</i>			
. General Annual Grant (GAG)	—	14,832	14,832
.. Universal Infant Free School Meals	—	161	161
.. Pupil Premium	—	1,008	1,008
.. Teachers Pay Grant	—	10	10
.. Teacher Pension Grant	—	27	27
. Other DfE Group grants	—	122	122
	<u>—</u>	<u>16,160</u>	<u>16,160</u>
<i>Other government grants</i>			
. Local authority grants	—	1,273	1,273
	<u>—</u>	<u>1,273</u>	<u>1,273</u>
<i>COVID-19 additional funding (DfE/ESFA)</i>			
. Catch-up premium	—	125	125
. Other DfE/ESFA COVID-19 funding	—	118	118
	<u>—</u>	<u>243</u>	<u>243</u>
<i>2022 total funds</i>	<u>—</u>	<u>17,676</u>	<u>17,676</u>

**5 Expenditure**

		<i>Non pay expenditure</i>		<b>2023 Total funds £'000</b>
	<i>Staff costs £'000</i>	<i>Premises £'000</i>	<i>Other costs £'000</i>	
<i>Academies' educational operations</i>				
. Direct costs	11,983	1,173	1,348	<b>14,504</b>
. Allocated support costs	4,324	941	1,064	<b>6,329</b>
<b>2023 total funds</b>	<u>16,307</u>	<u>2,114</u>	<u>2,412</u>	<b>20,833</b>

<b>Net income for the year includes:</b>	<b>2023 £'000</b>
Operating lease rentals	<b>39</b>
(Gain)/loss on disposal of assets	—
Depreciation	<b>1,173</b>
Fees payable to auditor	
. Statutory audit	<b>19</b>
. Other services	<b>19</b>



Notes to the Financial Statements Year to 31 August 2023

5 Expenditure (continued)

	Staff costs £'000	Non pay expenditure		2022 Total funds £'000
		Premises £'000	Other costs £'000	
<i>Academies' educational operations</i>				
. Direct costs	11,172	1,097	1,233	13,502
. Allocated support costs	4,631	797	994	6,422
<b>2022 total funds</b>	<b>15,803</b>	<b>1,894</b>	<b>2,227</b>	<b>19,924</b>
<i>Net income for the year includes:</i>				2022 £'000
Operating lease rentals				36
<i>(Gain)/loss on disposal of assets</i>				(14)
Depreciation				1,097
<i>Fees payable to auditor</i>				
. Statutory audit				16
. Other services				17

6 Charitable activities – academies' educational operations

	2023 Total funds £'000	2022 Total funds £'000
Direct costs	14,504	13,502
Support costs	6,329	6,422
	<b>20,833</b>	<b>19,924</b>
<b>Analysis of support costs</b>		
Support staff costs	4,324	4,631
Technology costs	202	210
Premises costs	941	797
Legal costs – other	43	60
Other support costs	765	674
Governance costs	54	50
<b>Total support costs</b>	<b>6,329</b>	<b>6,422</b>

## Notes to the Financial Statements Year to 31 August 2023

### 7 Comparative information

Analysis of income and expenditure in the year ended 31 August 2022 between restricted and unrestricted funds:

	Notes	Restricted funds		2022 Total funds £'000
		Unrestricted general fund £'000	Fixed assets fund £'000	
<i>Income from:</i>				
Donations and capital grants	1	—	—	287
<i>Charitable activities</i>				
. Funding for the academies' educational operations	4	—	17,676	—
Other trading activities	2	671	17	—
Investments	3	1	—	—
<b>Total income</b>		<b>672</b>	<b>17,693</b>	<b>287</b>
<i>Expenditure on:</i>				
<i>Charitable activities</i>				
. Academies' educational operations	6	—	18,827	1,097
<b>Total expenditure</b>	5	<b>—</b>	<b>18,827</b>	<b>1,097</b>
<b>Net income (expenditure)</b>		<b>672</b>	<b>(1,134)</b>	<b>(810)</b>
<b>Transfers between funds</b>	15	<b>—</b>	<b>(311)</b>	<b>311</b>
<i>Other recognised gains and losses</i>				
Actuarial gains (losses) on defined benefit pension scheme	18	—	7,832	—
<b>Net movement in funds</b>		<b>672</b>	<b>6,387</b>	<b>(499)</b>
<i>Reconciliation of funds</i>				
Total fund balances brought forward at 1 September		1,898	(7,488)	34,684
<b>Total fund balances carried forward at 31 August</b>		<b>2,570</b>	<b>(1,101)</b>	<b>34,185</b>

### 8 Staff

#### (a) Staff costs

Staff costs during the year were:

	2023 Total funds £'000	2022 Total funds £'000
Wages and salaries	11,281	10,403
Social security costs	1,192	1,101
Pension costs (including a current service cost adjustment of £265,000 (2022 – £1,341,000))	2,273	3,258
	<b>14,746</b>	<b>14,762</b>
Supply staff costs	1,556	1,016
Other restructuring costs	5	25
	<b>16,307</b>	<b>15,803</b>

**8 Staff (continued)**

**(a) Staff costs (continued)**

	<b>2023 Total funds £'000</b>	2022 Total funds £'000
Staff restructuring costs comprise:		
Redundancy payments	—	9
Severance payments	<b>5</b>	16
Other restructuring costs	—	—
	<b>5</b>	<b>25</b>

**(b) Severance payments**

The academy trust paid severance payments in the year, disclosed in the following bands:

	<b>2023 No.</b>
£0 - £25,000	<b>1</b>

**(c) Staff numbers**

The number of persons (including the senior management team) employed by the charitable company during the year ended 31 August 2023, expressed as average headcount, was as follows:

<b>Charitable activities</b>	<b>2023 No.</b>	2022 No.
Teachers	<b>139</b>	140
Administration and support	<b>213</b>	210
Management	<b>6</b>	6
	<b>358</b>	<b>356</b>

**(d) Higher paid staff**

The number of employees whose emoluments fell within the following bands was:

	<b>2023 No.</b>	2022 No.
£60,001 – £70,000	<b>7</b>	9
£70,001 – £80,000	<b>7</b>	3
£80,001 – £90,000	<b>2</b>	2
£90,001 – £100,000	<b>1</b>	—
£100,001 – £110,000	—	1
£110,001 – £120,000	<b>2</b>	1
£120,001 – £130,000	<b>1</b>	1

Fifteen of the above employees (2022 – eleven employees) participated in the Teachers' Pension Scheme and four of the above employees (2022 – five employees) participated in the Local Government Pension Scheme. The total value of employers' contributions to these schemes in respect of higher paid staff was £272,000 and £62,000 respectively (2022 – £203,000 and £70,000 respectively). One member of higher paid staff (2022 – one) did not participate in either pension scheme. Details of the schemes are provided in note 18.

## 8 Staff (continued)

### (e) Key management personnel

The key management personnel of the Academy Trust comprise the trustees and the Senior Management Team as listed on page 1. The total amount of employee benefits (including employer pension and national insurance contributions) received by key management personnel for their services to the academy trust was £795,000 (2022 – £758,000).

## 9 Trustees' remuneration and expenses

The Principal and staff trustees only receive remuneration in respect of services they provide undertaking the roles of Principal and staff and not in respect of their services as trustees. Other trustees did not receive any payments, other than expenses, from the Academy Trust in respect of their role as trustees. The value of trustees' remuneration and other benefits was as follows:

	2023 £'000	2022 £'000
Mr M Charalambous, CEO		
. Remuneration	125-130	120-125
. Employer's pension contributions	20-25	20-25

During the year ended 31 August 2023, travel and subsistence expenses totalling £502 (2022 – £337) were reimbursed to one trustee (2022 – one trustee) in their role as trustees.

## 10 Central services

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

- ◆ human resources;
- ◆ financial and administration services;
- ◆ legal services;
- ◆ educational support services; and
- ◆ operational support.

The Trust charges for these services on the basis of full cost recovery as a percentage of GAG net of central income.

The actual amounts charged during the year were as follows:

	2023 £'000	2022 £'000
Heron Hall Academy	736	685
Kingfisher Primary Academy	186	186
Woodpecker Hall Academy	376	407
Enfield Heights Academy	103	96
	<b>1,401</b>	<b>1,374</b>

## 11 Trustees' and Officers' insurance

In accordance with normal commercial practice the Academy Trust has purchased insurance to protect trustees and officers from claims arising from negligent acts, errors or omissions occurring whilst on Academy Trust business. The insurance provides cover up to £10,000,000 on any one claim and the cost for the year ended 31 August 2023 was included within a wider policy (as in 2022).

## 12 Tangible fixed assets

	Freehold land and buildings £'000	Leasehold land and buildings £'000	Fixtures, fittings and equipment £'000	Motor vehicles £'000	Total £'000
<b>Cost/valuation</b>					
At 1 September 2022	11,677	27,813	3,801	10	<b>43,301</b>
Additions	9	35	391	—	<b>435</b>
At 31 August 2023	<u>11,686</u>	<u>27,848</u>	<u>4,192</u>	<u>10</u>	<b>43,736</b>
<b>Depreciation</b>					
At 1 September 2022	2,097	4,169	2,840	10	<b>9,116</b>
Charge in year	255	568	350	—	<b>1,173</b>
At 31 August 2023	<u>2,352</u>	<u>4,737</u>	<u>3,190</u>	<u>10</u>	<b>10,289</b>
<b>Net book value</b>					
<b>At 31 August 2023</b>	<u><b>9,334</b></u>	<u><b>23,111</b></u>	<u><b>1,002</b></u>	<u><b>—</b></u>	<u><b>33,447</b></u>
At 31 August 2022	9,580	23,644	961	—	34,185

The land on which Cuckoo Hall and Enfield Heights are sited is owned by the Academy Trust. For the purposes of these financial statements, the freehold land is deemed to have no commercial value.

The land on which Woodpecker Hall Academy is sited is currently leased from the London Borough of Enfield at a peppercorn rent over a term of 125 years. The land on which Kingfisher Hall Academy is sited is currently leased from the College of Haringey, Enfield and North East London at a peppercorn rent over a term of 125 years. The land on which Heron Hall Academy is sited is currently leased from the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government at a peppercorn rent over a term of 125 years. The value of the leasehold land has not been included in these financial statements because the sites are designated for educational purposes only and have no open market value.

## 13 Debtors

	2023 £'000	2022 £'000
Trade debtors	19	10
VAT recoverable	102	100
Other debtors	30	3
Prepayment and accrued income	501	380
	<u>652</u>	<u>493</u>

**14 Creditors: amounts falling due within one year**

	<b>2023</b>	2022
	<b>£'000</b>	£'000
Trade creditors	<b>415</b>	494
Taxation and social security	<b>292</b>	272
ESFA creditor: abatement of GAG	<b>212</b>	66
Other creditors	<b>303</b>	275
Accruals and deferred income	<b>327</b>	324
	<b>1,549</b>	1,431
<b>Deferred income</b>		
Deferred income at 1 September	<b>148</b>	162
Resources deferred in the year	<b>(148)</b>	148
Received (released) during the year	<b>78</b>	(162)
Deferred income at 31 August	<b>78</b>	148

Deferred income of £78,000 (2022 – £148,000) consists of Universal Infant Free School Meal grants relating to 2023/24 but received in advance of the funding period (2022 Universal Infant Free School meal and Devolved Formula Capital Grant).

Notes to the Financial Statements Year to 31 August 2023

**15 Funds**

	Balance at 1 September 2022 £'000	Income £'000	Expenditure £'000	Gains, losses and transfers £'000	Balance at 31 August 2023 £'000
<b>Restricted general funds</b>					
. General Annual Grant (GAG)	31	15,636	(15,661)	(6)	—
. Pupil Premium	—	1,182	(1,182)	—	—
. Universal Infant Free School Meals	—	129	(129)	—	—
. Teachers' Pay Grant	—	5	(5)	—	—
. Teachers' Pension Employer Contribution Grant	—	13	(13)	—	—
. Catch-up premium	46	190	(113)	—	123
. Other COVID-19 funding	—	91	(91)	—	—
. Other DfE Group grants	—	84	(84)	—	—
. Pension reserve	(1,225)	0	(301)	1,526	—
	(1,148)	17,330	(17,579)	1,520	123
<b>Other restricted funds</b>					
Local authority grants	35	1,392	(1,375)	—	52
Other restricted funds	12	18	(13)	—	17
	47	1,410	(1,388)	—	69
<b>Restricted fixed assets fund</b>					
. Transfer on conversion	5,212	—	(179)	—	5,033
. DfE/ESFA capital grants	27,121	199	(931)	—	26,389
. Capital expenditure from GAG	1,787	—	(61)	236	1,962
. Private sector capital sponsorship	65	—	(2)	—	63
	34,185	199	(1,173)	236	33,447
<b>Total restricted funds</b>	<b>33,084</b>	<b>18,939</b>	<b>(20,140)</b>	<b>1,756</b>	<b>33,639</b>
<b>Unrestricted funds</b>					
. General funds	2,224	693	(693)	(230)	1,994
. Designated funds	346	—	—	—	346
<b>Total unrestricted funds</b>	<b>2,570</b>	<b>693</b>	<b>(693)</b>	<b>(230)</b>	<b>2,340</b>
<b>Total funds</b>	<b>35,654</b>	<b>19,632</b>	<b>(20,833)</b>	<b>1,526</b>	<b>35,979</b>

The specific purposes for which the funds are to be applied are as follows:

**General Annual Grant (GAG)**

The General Annual Grant (GAG) represents the core funding for the educational activities of the academies that has been provided to the Academy Trust via the Education and Skills Funding Agency by the Department for Education. The General Annual Grant Fund has been set up because the GAG must be used for the normal running costs of the academies. GAG was received for all NSCT Academies in 2021.

Under the funding agreement with the Secretary of State, the Academy Trust was not subject to a limit on the amount of GAG that it could carry forward at 31 August 2023.

**15 Funds (continued)**

**General Annual Grant (GAG) (continued)**

A transfer of £6,000 (2022 £311,000) was made from GAG and £230,000 (2022 £nil) from unrestricted funds for additions to the fixed assets fund.

**Pension reserve**

The pension reserve represents the net deficit on the LGPS defined benefit pension scheme. Future GAG funding from the ESFA is expected to be sufficient to fund the deficit.

The other restricted grants represent incoming resources for the following specific purposes:

**Local Authority Grants**

Local authority funding comprises SEN and Early Years funding.

**Other restricted funds**

Other restricted represent funding received from either the ESFA or DfE in support of the Academy Trust's educational operations.

**Restricted fixed assets fund**

The donated fixed assets on conversion and acquisition fund was set up to recognise the tangible assets gifted to the Academy Trust upon conversion by the local authority, which represent the school site inherited from the local authority including the freehold land and buildings and all material items of plant and machinery included therein. Depreciation charged on those inherited assets is allocated to the fund.

As well as capital expenditure from GAG, other restricted and unrestricted funds have been set up to recognise the tangible assets purchased using these respective funds. Depreciation charged on these purchased assets is allocated to the funds. Capital grant funding is allocated to this fund when receivable.

**Designated fund**

The trustees have identified the need for a separate designated reserve to be created to provide for future repairs and maintenance. Some of the Trust estate is in poor condition and the trustees wish to make prudent provision for costs likely to arise in future years. A review of the long term requirement is in progress and the designated reserve will be updated next year to reflect these plans.

**Analysis of academies by fund balance**

All of the Trust's fund balances are held centrally by the Trust as part of a GAG pooling arrangement.

	2023 £'000	2022 £'000
Central Trust	2,532	2,694
Total before fixed assets and pension reserve	2,532	2,694
Restricted fixed asset fund	33,447	34,185
Pension reserve	—	(1,225)
<b>Total</b>	<b>35,979</b>	<b>35,654</b>



**15 Funds (continued)**

**Analysis of Academies by cost**

Expenditure incurred by each academy during the year was as follows (excluding depreciation which is not allocated between entities):

	Teaching and educational support staff Costs £'000	Other support staff costs £'000	Educational supplies £'000	Other costs (excluding depreciation) £'000	<b>2023 Total £'000</b>
Enfield Heights Academy	684	463	179	65	<b>1,391</b>
Heron Hall Academy	5,599	920	550	547	<b>7,616</b>
Kingfisher Hall Academy	1,533	613	179	153	<b>2,478</b>
Woodpecker Hall Academy	3,103	899	324	345	<b>4,671</b>
Central Trust	355	2,136	114	899	<b>3,504</b>
	<b>11,274</b>	<b>5,031</b>	<b>1,346</b>	<b>2,009</b>	<b>19,660</b>

	Teaching and educational support staff Costs £'000	Other support staff costs £'000	Educational supplies £'000	Other costs (excluding depreciation) £'000	2022 Total £'000
<i>Enfield Heights Academy</i>	<i>806</i>	<i>155</i>	<i>93</i>	<i>53</i>	<i>1,107</i>
<i>Heron Hall Academy</i>	<i>4,840</i>	<i>680</i>	<i>479</i>	<i>397</i>	<i>6,396</i>
<i>Kingfisher Hall Academy</i>	<i>1,583</i>	<i>369</i>	<i>146</i>	<i>108</i>	<i>2,206</i>
<i>Woodpecker Hall Academy</i>	<i>3,064</i>	<i>865</i>	<i>331</i>	<i>288</i>	<i>4,548</i>
<i>Central Trust</i>	<i>324</i>	<i>3,117</i>	<i>181</i>	<i>948</i>	<i>4,570</i>
	<b>10,617</b>	<b>5,186</b>	<b>1,230</b>	<b>1,794</b>	<b>18,827</b>

15 Funds (continued)

**Comparative information**

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

	<i>Balance at 1 September 2021 £'000</i>	<i>Income £'000</i>	<i>Expenditure £'000</i>	<i>Gains, losses and transfers £'000</i>	<i>Balance at 31 August 2022 £'000</i>
<i>Restricted general funds</i>					
. General Annual Grant (GAG)	—	14,832	(14,490)	(311)	31
. Pupil Premium	—	1,008	(1,008)	—	—
. Universal Infant Free School Meals	—	161	(161)	—	—
. Teachers' Pay Grant	—	10	(10)	—	—
. Teachers' Pension Employer Contribution Grant	—	27	(27)	—	—
. Catch-up premium	105	125	(184)	—	46
. Other COVID-19 funding	—	118	(118)	—	—
. Other DfE Group grants	—	122	(122)	—	—
. Pension reserve	(7,593)	—	(1,464)	7,832	(1,225)
	(7,488)	16,403	(17,584)	7,521	(1,148)
<i>Other restricted funds</i>					
Local authority grants	—	1273	(1,238)	—	35
Other restricted funds	—	17	(5)	—	12
	—	1,290	(1,243)	—	47
<i>Restricted fixed assets fund</i>					
. Transfer on conversion	5,383	—	(171)	—	5,212
. DfE/ESFA capital grants	27,710	287	(876)	—	27,121
. Capital expenditure from GAG	1,524	—	(48)	311	1,787
. Private sector capital sponsorship	67	—	(2)	—	65
	34,684	287	(1,097)	311	34,185
<b>Total restricted funds</b>	<b>27,196</b>	<b>17,980</b>	<b>(19,924)</b>	<b>7,832</b>	<b>33,084</b>
<i>Unrestricted funds</i>					
. General funds	1,552	672	—	—	2,224
. Designated funds	346	—	—	—	346
<b>Total unrestricted funds</b>	<b>1,898</b>	<b>672</b>	<b>—</b>	<b>—</b>	<b>2,570</b>
<b>Total funds</b>	<b>29,094</b>	<b>18,652</b>	<b>(19,924)</b>	<b>7,832</b>	<b>35,654</b>

## 16 Analysis of net assets between funds

	Unrestricted funds £'000	Restricted General Funds £'000	Restricted Fixed Asset Fund £'000	Total 2023 £'000
<b>Fund balances at 31 August 2023 are represented by:</b>				
Tangible fixed assets	—	—	33,447	<b>33,447</b>
Current assets	2,340	1,741	—	<b>4,081</b>
Current liabilities	—	(1,549)	—	<b>(1,549)</b>
Pension scheme liability	—	—	—	—
<b>Total net assets</b>	<b>2,340</b>	<b>192</b>	<b>33,447</b>	<b>35,979</b>

	Unrestricted funds £'000	Restricted General Funds £'000	Restricted Fixed Asset Fund £'000	Total 2022 £'000
<i>Fund balances at 31 August 2022 are represented by:</i>				
<i>Tangible fixed assets</i>	—	—	34,185	<i>34,185</i>
<i>Current assets</i>	<i>2,570</i>	<i>1,555</i>	—	<i>4,125</i>
<i>Current liabilities</i>	—	<i>(1,431)</i>	—	<i>(1,431)</i>
<i>Pension scheme liability</i>	—	<i>(1,225)</i>	—	<i>(1,225)</i>
<b>Total net assets</b>	<b>2,570</b>	<b>(1,101)</b>	<b>34,185</b>	<b>35,654</b>

## 17 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

## 18 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 the London Borough of Enfield. Both are multi-employer defined benefit schemes.

Prior to 31 August 2023, the latest actuarial valuation of the TPS related to the period ended 31 March 2016 and of the LGPS 31 March 2022. A further valuation of the TPS scheme, relating to the period ended 31 March 2020 was published in October 2023

Contributions of £233,000 (2022: £226,000) were outstanding at the end of the financial year. There were no prepaid contributions at either the beginning or end of the financial year.

## 18 Pension and similar obligations (continued)

### ***Teachers' Pension Scheme***

The Teachers' Pension 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.

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' Pension 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 actuarial valuation of the TPS which applied during the year ended 31 August 2023 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; and
- ◆ 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 latest actuarial TPS valuation results, as at 31 March 2020, were released in October 2023. The valuation result is due to be implemented from 1 April 2024, from this date employer contribution rates will increase to 28.68% (including a 0.08% administration levy). The employer's pension costs paid to TPS in the period amounted to 1,882,000 (2022 – £1,554,000).

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 a 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.

**18 Pension and similar obligations (continued)**

***Local Government Pension Scheme (LGPS)***

The LGPS is a funded defined-benefit scheme, with the assets held in separate trustee-administered funds. The total contribution made for the year ended 31 August 2023 was £925,000 (2022 – £851,000) of which employer’s contributions totalled £683,000 (2022 – £626,000) and employees’ contributions totalled £242,000 (2022 – £225,000). The agreed contribution rates for future years are 17.7% for employers and 5.5-11.4% for employees.

Parliament has agreed, at the request of the Secretary of State for Education, to a guarantee that, in the event of an academy trust closure, outstanding Local Government Pension Scheme liabilities would be met by the Department for Education. The guarantee came into force on 18 July 2013 and on 21 July 2022, the Department for Education reaffirmed its commitment to the guarantee, with a parliamentary minute published on the GOV.UK website.

<b>Principal Actuarial Assumptions</b>	<b>At 31 August 2023 %</b>	<b>At 31 August 2022 %</b>
Rate of increase in salaries	<b>4.1</b>	4.2
Rate of increase for pensions in payment / inflation**	<b>2.6</b>	2.7
Discount rate for scheme liabilities	<b>5.0</b>	4.0
Inflation assumption (CPI)	<b>2.6</b>	2.7
Pension accounts revaluation rate	<b>2.6</b>	2.7

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

	<b>At 31 August 2023 No.</b>	<b>At 31 August 2022 No.</b>
<i>Retiring today</i>		
Males	<b>21</b>	22
Females	<b>24</b>	23
<i>Retiring in 20 years</i>		
Males	<b>23</b>	24
Females	<b>25</b>	25

**18 Pension and similar obligations** (continued)

**Local Government Pension Scheme (LGPS)** (continued)

The effect on the net pension liability as a result of changes in actuarial assumption would be as follows:

	<b>At 31 August 2023 £'000</b>	At 31 August 2022 £'000
Discount rate +0.1%	(218)	(295)
Discount rate -0.1%	228	305
Mortality assumption – 1 year increase	248	305
Mortality assumption – 1 year decrease	(248)	(295)

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

	<b>Fair value at 31 August 2023 £'000</b>	Fair value at 31 August 2022 £'000
Equities	4,749	4,589
Bonds	2,761	1,918
Property	546	1,815
Cash and other liquid assets	1,878	987
<b>Total market value of assets</b>	<b>9,934</b>	<b>9,309</b>

The actual return on scheme assets was £200,000 (2022 – £179,000).

<b>Amounts recognised in statement of financial activities</b>	<b>2023 £'000</b>	2022 £'000
Current service cost	948	1,965
Past service cost	—	2
Interest income	(389)	(156)
Interest cost	425	279
<b>Total amount recognised in the SOFA</b>	<b>984</b>	<b>2,090</b>

<b>Changes in the present value of defined benefit obligations were as follows:</b>	<b>2023 £'000</b>	2022 £'000
At 1 September	(10,534)	(16,401)
Current service cost	(948)	(1,965)
Past service cost	—	(2)
Interest cost	(425)	(279)
Employee contributions	(242)	(225)
Actuarial loss	2,847	7,201
Experience loss on defined benefit obligation	(732)	966
Benefits paid	100	171
<b>At 31 August</b>	<b>(9,934)</b>	<b>(10,534)</b>

**18 Pension and similar obligations (continued)**

**Local Government Pension Scheme (LGPS) (continued)**

Changes in the fair value of the Academy's share of scheme assets:	2023 £'000	2022 £'000
At 1 September	9,309	8,808
Interest income	389	156
Actuarial (loss) gain	(589)	(335)
Employer contributions	683	626
Employee contributions	242	225
Benefits paid	(100)	(171)
<b>At 31 August</b>	<b>9,934</b>	<b>9,309</b>

As the LGPS surplus is irrecoverable, recognition of the surplus on the balance sheet has been restricted to £nil. The adjustment of £9k has been offset against the overall actuarial gain for the year.

**19 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 member or a trustee has an interest. All transactions involving such organisations are conducted at arm's length and in accordance with the Academy Trust's financial regulations and normal procurement procedures.

Solar for Schools is a Not for Profit Community Benefit Society which has previously installed solar panels on the sites of four schools in the Trust. The Trust CEO, Marino Charalambous is a Non executive Director of the CBS on behalf of the Trust. No new related party contracts were entered into during the year.

As a result of previously installed solar panels, the Trust paid £26,000 for electricity charges to Solar for Schools during the year (2022- £23,000).

**20 Capital commitments**

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

**21 Commitments under operating leases**

	2023 £'000	2022 £'000
Amounts due within one year	26	39
Amounts due between one and five years	44	70
	<b>70</b>	<b>109</b>