

THE ACADEMIES FOR CHARACTER AND EXCELLENCE

(A company limited by guarantee)

ANNUAL REPORT AND FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2024



THE ACADEMIES FOR CHARACTER AND EXCELLENCE
(A company limited by guarantee)

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THE ACADEMIES FOR CHARACTER AND EXCELLENCE
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REFERENCE AND ADMINISTRATIVE DETAILS

Members	G Kinchin (Representing Plymouth Marjon) R Dickinson J Eason EDEN (Corporate member) P Bailey (resigned 7 December 2023) Bath & Wells DBE Trust (Corporate member) (appointed 15 June 2024)
Trustees	J Gater F Sabet R Willoughby, Chair of Trustees P Mantell M Haskell J Coe (resigned 31 December 2023) G Hobbs P Bailey (appointed 7 December 2023)
Company registered number	10098444
Company name	The Academies for Character and Excellence
Principal and registered office	Totnes St Johns C of E Primary School Pathfields Totnes TQ9 5TZ
Chief executive officer	C Weyman
Senior management team	C Weyman, Chief Executive Officer N Jones-Whyte, Finance Director N Hind, Deputy CEO and Excellence Director (appointed 01 November 2023)
Independent auditors	Griffin Chartered Accountants Courtenay House Pynes Hill Exeter EX2 5AZ
Bankers	Lloyds Bank plc 234 High Street Exeter Devon EX4 3NL

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REFERENCE AND ADMINISTRATIVE DETAILS (CONTINUED)
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2024

Solicitors PHP Law LLP
6 Atlantic Building
Queen Anne's Battery
Plymouth
PL4 0LP

THE ACADEMIES FOR CHARACTER AND EXCELLENCE
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TRUSTEES' REPORT
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2024

The Trustees present their annual report together with the financial statements and auditors' report of the charitable company for the year ended 31 August 2024. The annual report serves the purposes of both a Trustees' report and a Directors' report under company law.

The Academy Trust operated 17 Primary schools across the South West of England as at 31 August 2024.

These included:

- Ashill Primary School
- Berry Pomeroy C of E Primary School
- Brixham C of E Primary School
- Buckland St Mary C of E Primary School
- Castle Cary Primary School
- Collaton St. Mary C of E Primary School
- Galmpton C of E Primary School
- Hatch Beauchamp C of E Primary School
- Holy Trinity C of E Primary School
- Newtown Primary School
- Shaldon Primary School
- St. Gabriel's C of E Primary School
- Stockland C of E Primary School
- Torre C of E Primary School
- Totnes St. John's C of E Primary School
- Trinity C of E Primary School
- Winsham C of E Primary School

The Trust's academies have a combined capacity of 3,430 in Reception to Year 6 and the schools have a roll of 2836, as recorded in the autumn 2024 school census.

During the year ending 31 August 2024, the Trust was in a Management Partnership with::

- Baltonsborough C of E VC Primary School

The following schools are due to join the Trust during the academic year 2024/25. These schools will therefore not be reflected in this report.

- Baltonsborough C of E VC Primary School.
- Milborne Port Primary School
- Stoberry Park Primary School

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TRUSTEES' REPORT (CONTINUED)
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2024

Structure, governance and management

a. Constitution

The Academy is a charitable company limited by guarantee and an exempt charity.

The charitable company's Memorandum and Articles of Association are the primary governing documents of the Trust.

The Trustees of The Academies for Character and Excellence (ACE) are also the Directors of the charitable company for the purposes of company law.

Details of the Trustees who served during the year, and to the date these accounts are approved, are included in the reference and administrative details on page 1.

The charitable company is known as The Academies for Character and Excellence.

b. Members' liability

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

c. Method of recruitment and appointment or election of Trustees

The Trust shall have the following Trustees as set out in its Articles of Association and funding Agreement:

- The number of Directors shall be not less than five, but (unless otherwise determined by ordinary resolution) shall not be subject to any maximum
- No fewer than three Foundation Directors, appointed under Articles 50 and 50A

Trustees are appointed for a four-year period. Subject to remaining eligible to be a particular type of Trustee, any Trustee can be re-appointed or re-elected. The Dioceses of Exeter is empowered under article 50A to appoint Trustees through their corporate entity known as EDEN.

When appointing new Trustees, the Board will give consideration to the skills and experience mix of existing Trustees in order to ensure that the Board has the necessary skills to contribute fully to the Trust's development. This is reflected in the skills analysis carried out by the Board.

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TRUSTEES' REPORT (CONTINUED)
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2024

Structure, governance and management (continued)

d. Policies adopted for the induction and training of Trustees

The Trust has a Trustee Recruitment, Induction and Training policy available from the Trust's Governance Professional. Key policies that we signpost our Trustees to, as part of their induction, are the Trust's Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy, KCSiE and GDPR Policy.

The training and induction (on-boarding) provided for new Trustees will depend upon their existing experience, but would always include a tour of the schools to meet staff and pupils. All Trustees are provided with copies of policies, procedures, minutes, accounts, budgets, plans and other documents that they will need to undertake their role as Trustees. Training would be given on Teams which is the platform where key documents are shared. Advantage is taken of specific courses offered by the Local Authority and other bodies. The Trust subscribes to the Confederation of School Trusts which provides ongoing support for governance. This membership offers workshops, seminars and training events which the Trustees are able to attend. Trustees are also encouraged to attend specific Trustee training which is currently provided by the CST, Devon Services and other external consultants. The Trust also subscribes to the Governance support provided by both Devon Services and The Key for School Leaders, and reports and newsletters are circulated to all Trustees and Governors in order to keep them updated on current changes within education.

e. Organisational structure Board of Trustees

The Members of the Academy Trust have a distinct and separate role as guardians of the constitution and governance of the Trust, holding the Directors to account for governance of the Trust and ensuring that the purpose of the Trust is being met and charitable purposes fulfilled.

There is a single Board of Directors which oversees the business of the Trust.

There is clear separation at each level of governance.

The Board of Directors have three strategic core functions:

- a. To provide strategic leadership;
- b. To ensure accountability and assurance; and
- c. To ensure strategic engagement with the community.

The Board of Trustees normally meets at least five times a year. The Board establishes an overall framework for the governance of the Trust and determines membership, terms of reference, procedures of Committees and other groups where established. It receives reports including policies from its Local Committees or portfolio holders for ratification where applicable, and will monitor the activities of the Local Committees through the minutes of their meetings. The Board may from time to time establish Working Groups to perform specific tasks over a limited timescale. There is a Finance and Audit and Risk Committee which includes an audit remit, a Remuneration Committee which oversees the Trust's approach to executive pay and reward; and an Ethos and Distinctiveness Committee which ensures that the Trust satisfies the requirements of SIAMS and The Church of England's Vision for Education.

Finance, Audit and Risk Committee:

The Committee meet at least five times a year and is responsible for monitoring, evaluating and reviewing financial management policy and performance, ensuring compliance with reporting and regulatory requirements, receiving internal assurance reports, monitoring the staffing establishment and drafting the annual budget. It also incorporates the role of an audit committee. The Committee discusses risk and in line with these discussions updates the Trust's Risk Register.

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TRUSTEES' REPORT (CONTINUED)
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2024

Structure, governance and management (continued)

Portfolios:

Each Director holds a portfolio area: HR; Finance; Curriculum and Standards; Ethos and Distinctiveness; Health and Safety and Estates; Community Partnerships and Safeguarding. Each director is supported by a central team specialist for their portfolio. In addition, Community Partnerships, Curriculum and Standards, Ethos and Distinctiveness and Safeguarding have their own committees which governors attend and discuss monitoring enquiries.

Local Committees:

There is a second tier of Governance within the Trust with clearly defined roles and responsibilities including portfolio responsibility linked with a Strategic Board Director. As at 31 August 2024, the structure was:

- Local Committees at all Trust Schools meeting up to 5 times per annum.

The Board of Trustees have devolved responsibility for day-to-day management of the Trust to the CEO. The Trust has a leadership and support structure which consists of:

The Trust Leadership Team:

The Chief Executive Officer is the Accounting Officer for the Trust and is appointed by the Board. The Executive Leadership team of the Trust is overseen by the CEO. This team comprises of the CEO, Director of Excellence (also Deputy CEO), Chief Finance Officer, Director of Operations and Flourishing Communities Ambassador.

During 2023/24, the Trust received a Trust Capacity Fund grant which supported a review of the Central Team necessary with the growth of the Trust.

The Education Leadership Team comprised of the CEO/Accounting Officer; Excellence Director; ACE Strategic Advisors; and Flourishing Communities Ambassador. The Excellence Director oversees the Headteachers who also have a Senior Leadership Team responsible for the strategic and operational decision making at school level, with responsibility for implementing the school improvement plan.

In 2023/24, The Central Services Team comprised of the Business Team, Education Team and Governance Team. The CEO oversees the Business Leads (Finance and Operations) as well as the Excellence Director and the Governance Lead.

The aim of the leadership structure is to devolve responsibility and encourage involvement in decision making and accountability at all levels.

The following decisions are reserved to the Board of Trustees:

- a. To consider any proposals for changes to the status or constitution of the Academy and its committee structure.
- b. To appoint or remove the Chairperson and/or Vice Chairperson, to appoint the CEO.
- c. The Directors are responsible for approving the Strategic Trust Development Plan and budget, approving statutory accounts, monitoring the Trust using budgets and other data. Making major decisions about the direction and growth of the Trust.

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TRUSTEES' REPORT (CONTINUED)
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2024

Structure, governance and management (continued)

The Trust has built a strong Central Function to support its schools:

Educational Support:

- ACE Strategic Advisor to support each school on their journey to excellence.
- Education Leadership Team for Trust Headteachers and Education Leaders.
- Specialised Education Support such as SEND, Disadvantaged, and ECTs.
- Curriculum – A Curriculum for Excellence.
- Talent Management – Individual Aspiration Plans and CPD training programmes.
- Safeguarding including annual audits and training programmes.
- Ethos and Distinctiveness including expert advice and support with SIAMS.
- Network of Teams and Trust Improvement Groups.
- Trust Monitoring Enquiries.

Business Support

- Finance support.
- Procurement.
- Human Resources.
- Well-being.
- Health and Safety and Compliance.
- Estates.
- Catering.
- Governance.
- External SLAs such as legal, IT, Marketing and branding.

f. Arrangements for setting pay and remuneration of key management personnel

The Trustees consider the Trust Leadership Team which comprises the key management personnel of the Trust to be in charge of directing and controlling, running and operating the Trust on a day-to-day basis.

The CEO's remuneration is set and agreed by Trustees as advised by an external consultant, having regard to a number of factors including performance. In 2024, the Trust established a Remuneration Committee, as a sub-committee of the Board, to review and agree the pay of the Executive Team.

The Trust sets all pay and remuneration for all other positions in line with local authority approved policy which has been consulted upon through the recognised Trade Unions and professional associations. These policies recognise the School Teachers' Pay and Conditions and Burgundy Book for those in teaching positions, and NJC terms and conditions for those in non-teaching posts.

The Trustees benchmark against pay levels against other Trusts of a similar size.

All Trustees give their time freely and no Trustee received remuneration in the year in respect to their role as a Trustee. Details of Trustees' expenses and related party transactions are disclosed in the notes to the financial statements.

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TRUSTEES' REPORT (CONTINUED)
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Structure, governance and management (continued)

g. Related parties and other connected charities and organisations

The Academies for Character and Excellence works alongside strategic partners including Exeter Diocese, Bath and Wells Diocese, the Department for Education and Local Authorities within which each school and supported school operates.

The Trust has worked in partnership with local, regional, national charitable and voluntary organisations and the schools work in partnership to deliver educational outcomes, character development and improve opportunities for pupils in the community. Through fostering links with the local community, the schools recognise the benefit to build positive reputation, strengthening the school's identity in the community it serves.

The Trust undertakes Teaching School Improvement (TSI) projects to support schools. The Trust provides support through management partnerships and in 2023/24, there was a management partnership in place with Baltonsborough C of E Primary, as well as the Trust undertaking other TSIs.

h. Engagement with employees (including disabled persons)

Employee relations: Regular contact is maintained with Headteachers to provide advice and a supportive culture of empowerment. The Trust subscribe to an Employee Assistance Programme (EAP) to support all our employees and their families through difficult times. This covers both reactive issues and extends to proactive and preventive support to ensure the best possible outcomes. This support is available 24 hours a day.

Communications: This is fostered through the alignment of the Trust through its underpinning values. Guidance is provided to Headteachers through regular meetings, one-to-ones, coaching, newsletters and the provision of resources. Union perspectives are sought where appropriate and two-way discussions facilitated through union meetings to support staff consultation, policy amendments and to address any personal concerns. Wellbeing is at the heart of supporting our staff and regular check-ins on staff wellbeing are undertaken.

Support to disabled employees: The Trust seeks to make reasonable adjustments to support recruitment from disabled groups and is helped to identify adjustments through pre-employment medical questionnaires and through the job application process. The People team advise to ensure all reasonable adjustments are made and monitored to support continued employment of disabled persons. The Trust's Recruitment and Retention and Pay and Appraisal policies seek to actively challenge discrimination.

Full details of these policies are available from the Trust's central office.

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TRUSTEES' REPORT (CONTINUED)
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2024

Structure, governance and management (continued)

i. Engagement with suppliers, customers and others in a business relationship with the Academy

The Trust seeks mutually beneficial arrangements with suppliers and customers, recognising the key role of business relations to our success.

Suppliers:

The Trust adopts a balanced approach to effective procurement, obtaining best value whilst also recognising the value of using smaller local organisations. In relation to suppliers, the Trust recognises the importance in developing and maintaining good relationships to ensure best value, expertise, effective service delivery, considerations for sustainability and quality assurance. Due diligence is applied and research undertaken to ensure alignment of the Trusts values. This is an area that the Trust will be developing further over the coming year.

The Trust is committed to developing and maintaining strong business relationships with consumers, suppliers, and wider partners. The Trust has a clear vision and values which creates the framework for a professional culture that drives positive business behaviour.

The Wider Community:

The Trust recognises the pivotal role of our schools within the local community and their involvement is recognised through the Trusts strategic priorities. We actively encourage our schools to be the hub of their communities. Community cohesion is built through a varied range of opportunities and takes various forms including community use of facilities, strong functioning PTA, placement and apprenticeships, offering community lunches and participating in community events, signposting for parental support, sponsorship, fundraising and social advocacy. This is carried out through regular engagement with local groups, and the building of strong relationships with local community organisations, which also covers a church ethos.

j. Trade union facility time

During the year ended 31 August 2024, no employees of the Trust were relevant union officials.

Objectives and activities

a. Objects and aims

As a Charitable Trust, our aim is to advance education for the public benefit in the United Kingdom, in particular, but without prejudice to the generality of the foregoing, by establishing, maintaining, carrying on, managing and developing schools offering a broad and balanced curriculum.

The Trust is fully inclusive and in relation to each of the schools, recognises and supports the individual ethos, whether, or not designated Church of England.

In relation to Church schools, these are to be conducted in accordance with the principles, practices and tenets of the Church of England, both generally and in particular in relation to arranging for religious education and daily acts of worship (as required by the Master Funding Agreement) and in having regard to the advice of the Diocesan Board of Education.

Our mission: 'Achieving Excellence through Cultivating Character, Sharing Talents and Pursuing Innovation'

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TRUSTEES' REPORT (CONTINUED)
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2024

Objectives and activities (continued)

The Academies for Character and Excellence (ACE) is a self-improving organisation with a mission of collaborative partnerships to Achieve Excellence through Cultivating Character, Sharing Talents and Pursuing Innovation.

'Cultivating Character' is the focus on the whole child. We develop our children's character through our Character Education gateways of Citizenship, Leadership, Exploration, Expression and Flourishing.

'Sharing Talents' demonstrates our total commitment to collaboration. Children and staff will be given opportunities to fulfil their potential so that all schools within the Trust improve.

'Pursuing innovation' means we use the best research to inform our practice. We cannot expect our children to be great learners if we are not also passionate about learning and curriculum design.

The Trust's underpinning values of Uncompromising Excellence, Community, Equity, Collaboration and Integrity are firmly embedded.

The Trust aspires to be exceptional in all it does and therefore has focused strategy on strength of governance, financial stability, a strong school improvement offer, a curriculum for excellence, as well as ensuring that central services provide value for money. The intended outcome of these priorities is to ensure our children achieve the best possible life chances.

b. Objectives, strategies and activities

The Trust regularly reviews its key objectives and strategies for achieving its mission of Excellence through cultivating character, sharing talents and pursuing innovation. These objectives are set out in the Trust Strategy, with each school having a School Improvement Plan in which it sets out how it will achieve these objectives.

The vision for the Trust (2021-2024) of 'Our Ambition is to be an Exceptional Trust.' has been underpinned by strategic objectives set out as follows:

- Culture: Grow an exceptional team through a high challenge, high support organisation.
- School Performance: Successfully pursuing Excellence at all levels.
- Service: Develop our Trust as a Civic Organisation.
- Aligned organisation: Embedding resilience systems and achieving long-term sustainability.

School improvement is central to the workings of the Trust, both within the Trust and beyond. It is based on collaborative working and school-to-school support. The deployment of resources and shared expertise from across the Trust, together with access to a range of external expertise, results in a School Improvement Strategy which is proactive and bespoke.

As the Trust went through significant growth in 2023/24, the vision has been reviewed and developed as set out in 'Plans for Future Periods'.

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TRUSTEES' REPORT (CONTINUED)
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2024

Objectives and activities (continued)

Educational Support for Schools

The ACE Provision and Capacity Model is centred around a Core Excellence Team which delivers on five strands of support:

- **ACE Strategic Advisors (ASAs)**
The ASA is a role providing strategic advice to a limited number of schools across the year. Through this role they are able to broker improvement support from the Core Excellence Team.
- **ACE Expert Practitioners**
The Expert Practitioners have followed the Teaching and Learning strand of ACE Talent Management Programme. All practitioners are able to demonstrate and model outstanding ACE provision whilst at the same time have undergone coaching and mentoring training.
- **ACE Subject Lead Advisors (SLA)**
Subject Lead Advisors have all specialised in one or more curriculum areas. They have demonstrated a real understanding of curriculum planning, monitoring and evaluation, as well as specific subject pedagogy.
- **ACE Research and Development Teams**
These teams are commissioned through the Core Excellence Team. The focus of the work is determined by the specific needs of groups of schools working together in a particular area.
- **Core Aspect Teams**
Core Aspect Teams respond to specific needs of schools in areas not directly linked to curriculum and quality of provision for pupils. Examples of this include: Christian Distinctiveness; Safeguarding; Equity; Data; ECTs; and Early Years.

Core Aspect Team support can be requested by individual schools or through the ASA.

The Core Excellence Team has two further responsibilities. The first is to quality assure all aspects of school support and improvement. The second is to ensure capacity exists to formulate a Rapid Action Team should a school find themselves in sudden crisis.

The Executive Team and Trustees regularly track and review Trust Performance data with oversight supported by local committees.

c. Public benefit

The Trustees confirm they have complied with the duty in Section 17(5) of the Charities Act 2011 to have due regard to the Charity Commission's general guidance on public benefit in exercising their powers or duties. They have referred to this guidance when reviewing the Trust's aims and in planning its future activities.

The schools within the Trust do make their facilities available to the general public by way of lettings for various community groups and for use as polling stations at various times of the year. The local community are always invited to take part in and attend school events such as Christmas Fairs. The Trust aims to advance for public benefit, education in each school and provides educational services to all children in the local and surrounding areas. The Trust also supports children in other areas through its work as a National Support School.

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TRUSTEES' REPORT (CONTINUED)
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2024

Objectives and activities (continued)

Strategic Report

Achievements

The focus for the Trust in 2023/24 was to navigate a period of rapid growth, ensuring that:

- a. Business processes were fit for purpose to provide excellent services to schools;
- b. A governance model was agreed that supports growth; and
- c. Educational excellence continued on its upward trajectory.

An appointment of a Director of Operations to ensure that the Trust is able to provide excellent services to the schools. This has included a re-structure of the Estates team and an IT transformational project with the first phase being implemented.

The ACE curriculum was implemented in the new schools that joined and further developed in existing schools. This impact of this has been evidenced by OFSTED with Galampton Primary having achieved an Outstanding judgement in 2024.

The Trust Culture Deck was implemented at all levels ensuring that the Trust values of Equity, Integrity, Uncompromising Excellence, Community and Collaboration were embedded.

The new Governance Model was agreed and a Governance Professional appointment.

ACE pedagogy implemented developing collaboration, independence and creativity.

Trust project teams trialed approaches to journaling in mathematics.

The pre-school curriculum was written aligning it to 'A Curriculum for Excellence'.

The new and innovative role of the Flourishing Communities Ambassador was appointed with a focus on flourishing of children, families and staff with persistent absence reducing from 16.2% to 13.5%. To further develop a Trust community, cross-Trust events were held such as the ACE Olympics.

A Small Schools Champion was appointed to support the growth in Trust small schools.

Academic Performance

OFSTED

School	OFSTED Grade on joining the Trust	OFSTED since joining the Trust
Shaldon Primary School Started the Trust in 2016	Outstanding 2014	Outstanding 2024
St Gabriel's C of E Primary School Started the Trust in 2016	Good 2012	Good 2019

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Strategic Report (continued)

Achievements (continued)

Collaton St Mary C of E Primary School Joined the Trust in 2017	Good 2014	Good 2022
Galmpton C of E Primary School Joined the Trust in 2017	Good 2017	Outstanding 2024
Totnes St John's C of E Primary School Joined the Trust in 2018	Inadequate 2017	Good 2023
Brixham C of E Primary School Joined the Trust in 2020	Requires Improvement 2019	Good 2023
Torre C of E Academy Joined the Trust in April 2022	Good 2022	Inspection window Jul 2025
Berry Pomeroy Parochial C of E Primary School Joined the Trust in October 2022	Good 2017	Inspection window Oct 2024
Newtown Primary School Joined the Trust in October 2023	Requires Improvement 2021	Inspection window Sept 2025
Trinity C of E Primary and Nursery School Joined the Trust in December 2023	Requires Improvement 2022	Inspection window Nov 2025
Castle Cary Primary School Joined the Trust in December 2023	Requires Improvement 2021	Inspection window Dec 2025
Buckland St Mary C of E Primary Joined the Trust in January 2024	Requires Improvement 2021	Inspection window Jan 2026
Hatch Beauchamp C of E Primary Joined the Trust in January 2024	Requires Improvement 2022	Inspection window Jan 2026
Holy Trinity C of E Primary Joined the Trust in January 2024	Good 2023	Inspection window Sept 2026
Stockland C of E Primary Joined the Trust in January 2024	Requires Improvement 2020	Good with Outstanding Behaviour and Attitudes 2024
Winsham C of E Primary Joined the Trust in January 2024	Good 2023	Inspection window Sept 2026
Ashill Primary Joined the Trust in January 2024	Outstanding 2013	Good with Outstanding Behaviour and Attitudes 2024

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TRUSTEES' REPORT (CONTINUED)
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2024

Strategic Report (continued)

Achievements (continued)

SIAMS

Collaton St.Mary received a Good Judgement in 2024.

Trust Wide Attendance 23/24

	All Pupils	Pupil Premium	SEND	EHCP	EAL
Attendance	94.9%	93.0%	93.7%	90.4%	5.7%
Persistent Absence	13.8%	27.1%	22.3%	41.4%	14.5%

Figures reflect the combined full year outcome for years 1 to 6 in all schools that were in ACE at the end of the school year.

2023/24 Trust Data Outcomes

As 7 schools joined us in mid 2023/4, **these outcomes are not included in the data below.**

The following schools' data is amalgamated below.

- Brixham C of E Primary School
- Berry Pomeroy C of E Primary School
- Collaton St.Mary C of E Primary School
- Galmpton C of E Primary School
- Newtown Primary School
- St Gabriel's C of E Primary School
- Shaldon Primary School
- Torre C of E Primary School
- Totnes St.John's C of E Primary School
- Trinity C of E Primary School (in a management partnership from 1st January 2023, joining in December 2023).

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TRUSTEES' REPORT (CONTINUED)
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2024

Strategic Report (continued)

Achievements (continued)

EYFS GLD		Pass Target			Phonics		Pass Target		
(all/dis)		All	Dis	Not Dis	(all/dis)		All	Dis	Not Dis
		ARE+	ARE+	ARE+			ARE+	ARE+	ARE+
National (2023)		67.2%	51%	71%	National (2023)		79%	67%	83%
ACE (267/49)		76%	51%	82%	ACE (288/62)		86%	79%	88%

Year 2	Reading						Writing						Maths					
	All		Dis		Not Dis		All		Dis		Not Dis		All		Dis		Not Dis	
(all/dis)	ARE+	GDS	ARE+	GDS	ARE+	GDS	ARE+	GDS	ARE+	GDS	ARE+	GDS	ARE+	GDS	ARE+	GDS	ARE+	GDS
National (2023)	68%	19%	54%	9%	73%	22%	60%	8%	44%	3%	65%	10%	70%	16%	56%	8%	75%	19%
ACE (295/60)	79%	26%	62%	13%	83%	29%	72%	15%	48%	3%	78%	18%	81%	21%	60%	15%	86%	23%

Schools Year 6	Combined						Reading						Writing						Maths					
	All		Dis		Not Dis		All		Dis		Not Dis		All		Dis		Not Dis		All		Dis		Not Dis	
(all/dis)	ARE+	GDS	ARE+	GDS	ARE+	GDS	ARE+	GDS	ARE+	GDS	ARE+	GDS	ARE+	GDS	ARE+	GDS	ARE+	GDS	ARE+	GDS	ARE+	GDS		
National (2023)	59%	8%	44%	3%	66%	10%	73%	29%	60%	17%	78%	34%	71%	13%	58%	7%	77%	16%	73%	24%	59%	13%	79%	29%
ACE (230/70)	74%	12%	64%	6%	77%	14%	78%	33%	71%	24%	81%	38%	78%	18%	69%	7%	82%	23%	77%	23%	69%	9%	81%	29%

Other notable achievements across the Trust:

Significant growth from 9 to 17 schools.

A TCaF to support the building of capacity in the Central team.

The Trust has continued to work across DfE funded projects to deliver school to school support and improve outcomes for children across the South West. Trust Leaders have also been commissioned to support other Trusts and Schools in the South West.

Successful OFSTED outcomes including an Outstanding OFSTED.

All data outcomes significantly above national outcomes.

Going concern

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

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TRUSTEES' REPORT (CONTINUED)
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Strategic Report (continued)

Financial review

The majority of the Academy Trust's income is obtained from the DfE via the ESFA 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 2024 and the associated expenditures are shown as restricted funds in the Statement of Financial Activities.

The Trust also receives grants for fixed assets from the DfE which 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 economic life of the associated assets, as defined in the Trust accounting policies.

Grants are also received from Devon County Council, Torbay Council and Somerset County Council for Individually assigned resources to support students who are eligible for either SEN support funding or have an Education and Health Care Plan with associated funding allocation. In accordance with the Charities Statement of Recommended Practice (SORP 2005), such grants are shown in the Statement of Financial Activities as restricted income.

During the year ended 31 August 2024, the Academy Trust received total revenue income of £19,515,481 (2023: £10,255,462) and expenditure totalling £18,649,841 (2023: £10,310,232) excluding the transfer on academies joining the trust and pension costs. The excess of income over expenditure for the year excluding transfers on academies joining the trust, restricted fixed asset funds and pension reserves was £865,640 (2023: £248,770). During a year of continued growth, nine schools transferred into the Trust, and a total of £593,768 conversion income was received.

For two CIF projects income has been received but the corresponding expenditure has not been incurred in full due to the projects not reaching completion at the year end.

At 31 August 2024, the unrestricted Trust reserves (excluding fixed asset funds and pension reserve) was £1,941,617 (2023: £1,180,707).

The net book value of tangible fixed assets at the 31 August 2024 was £11,091,930 (2023: £6,271,245).

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TRUSTEES' REPORT (CONTINUED)
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2024

Strategic Report (continued)

Financial Key Performance Indicators

The main financial performance indicator is the level of un-restricted reserves as a percentage of total income adjusted for non-underlying items such as conversion income.

A summary of key KPIs that are subject to scrutiny by the trust is outlined below:

KPI	Benchmark	2023/24	2022/23
Operating Surplus/ (deficit)	3%	2.6%	-3.0%
Total Staff Cost Ratio (as a % of total income)	75%	75.6%	76.7%
Teaching Staff Cost Ratio (as a % of pupil driven income)	45%	45.9%	45.8%
Non Staff Cost Ratio (as a % of total income)	25%	25.8%	28.4%
Unrestricted Reserves (as % of total income)	5%	10.6%	12.1%
Cash Reserves % (Total Income)	8%	14.4%	16.8%

Reserves policy

The Trust has a cumulative 5% Reserves strategy based against Total Funds. The Directors review the reserve level of the Trust throughout the year taking into account the monthly financial performance, future plans of the Trust and key risks identified during risk register reviews and 3 year budgets.

At 31 August 2024, the Trust un-restricted reserves (excluding fixed asset funds and pension reserve) was £1,941,617 (2023: £1,180,707). This level of reserves represents 10.6% of adjusted total income for the Trust and is in excess of the Trust minimum target of 5%.

Investment policy

All funds surplus to immediate requirements may be invested in accordance with the Trusts investment policy.

The Directors have determined that the appropriate level of free cash reserves should not fall below 8% of total income. This is to provide sufficient working capital to cover delays in spend and receipt of funding and to provide headroom to deal with unexpected operational requirements. Cash reserves at the 31 August 2024 were 14.4% of adjusted total income.

Principal risks and uncertainties

The Board of Trustees has reviewed the major risks to which the Trust is exposed together with the operating, financial and compliance controls that have been implemented to mitigate those risks.

The principal risks and uncertainties facing the Trust are as follows:

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TRUSTEES' REPORT (CONTINUED)
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2024

Financial

The Trust has considerable reliance on continued Government funding through the ESFA. In the last year 92.0% of the Trust's incoming resources (excluding funds transferred on conversion) were ultimately Government funded and whilst this level is expected to continue, there is no assurance that Government policy or practice will remain the same or that public funding will continue at the same levels or on the same terms.

Failures in governance and/or management

The risk in this area arises from potential failure to effectively manage the Trust's finances, internal controls, compliance with regulations and legislation, statutory returns, etc. The Trustees continue to review and ensure that appropriate measures are in place to mitigate these risks.

Reputational

The continuing success of the Trust is dependent on continuing to attract applicants in sufficient numbers by maintaining the highest educational standards. To mitigate this risk Trustees, ensure that pupil success and achievement are closely monitored and reviewed.

Safeguarding and child protection

The Trustees continue to ensure that the highest standards are maintained in the areas of selection and monitoring of staff, the operation of child protection policies and procedures, health & safety and discipline.

Staffing

The success of the Trust is reliant upon the quality of its staff and so the Trustees monitor and review policies and procedures to ensure continued development and training of staff, as well as ensuring there is clear succession planning.

Fraud and mismanagement of funds

The Accounting Officer and Chief Finance Officer are responsible for ensuring financial systems and records are compliant with the handbook and mitigate the risk of fraud and mismanagement of funds. As part of a range of measures all finance staff receive training to keep them up to date with financial practice requirements and develop their skills and understanding. Performance in this area is monitored and held to account by the appointed external and internal auditors and internally via the Finance, Audit and Risk Committee and the Strategic Board.

The Trust has continued to strengthen its risk management process throughout the year by improving the process and ensuring staff awareness. A risk register has been adopted by the Strategic Board and is reviewed and updated on a regular basis by the Trust Finance, Audit and Risk Committee and the Trust Leadership Team. The FARC reports back to the Strategic Board on the Risk Register.

The Trustees have assessed the major risks to which the Trust is exposed, in particular those relating to its finances, teaching, facilities and other operational areas. The Trustees have implemented a number of systems to assess and minimise those risks, including internal controls described elsewhere. Where significant financial risk still remains, they have ensured they have adequate insurance cover. At the year end, the Academy Trust had no significant liabilities arising from trade creditors or debtors that would have a significant effect on liquidity.

The Board of Trustees recognises that the defined benefit pension scheme deficit (Local Government Pension Scheme), which is set out in Note 29 to the financial statements, represents a significant potential liability.

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TRUSTEES' REPORT (CONTINUED)
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2024

However, as the Trustees consider that the Trust is able to meet its known annual contribution commitments for the foreseeable future, this risk from this liability is minimised.

Effective Estates Management

The Trustees continue to ensure excellent standards are maintained in relation to estates based compliance, health and safety and maintenance. Failure to deliver a comprehensive estates strategy could lead to various adverse outcomes including injuries, health issues, financial penalties and school closures.

To mitigate health and safety and compliance risk the Trustees have appointed a designated member of the Trust Board to oversee the successful delivery of the annual compliance program and to ensure appropriate policies and procedures are in place and reviewed annually. This work is supported by an annual internal and external audit program that provides crucial independent evaluation of performance.

To ensure Trust estates are well maintained and fit for purpose the Trustees oversee the progress of delivery of the Board approved estates repairs and maintenance strategy. Oversight is achieved through reporting and communication aligned to the annual Board reporting cycle. Mechanisms are in place to ensure that Trustees are updated on material events (e.g. RAAC reviews) in the interim between formal Board meetings.

Fundraising

The Trust does not use any external fundraiser but each school does have active fundraising capability via its Parent Teacher and Friends Associations etc.

Plans for future periods

The Trust vision of 'Our Ambition is to be an Exceptional Trust' was written as part of a two year plan ready for implementation in 2024/25.

Educational Excellence

ACE pedagogy delivers consistently high expectations across schools, securing cultural capital with highly effective assessment procedures.

People Flourishing

The Trust is a promoter of health and wellbeing.
Pupils love to come to school and are immersed in a healthy food culture.
Staff groups at all levels are empowered to make a significant contribution to the Trust.

Knowledge Creation

ACE staff are all knowledge creators in their own right; and principles of research methodology are applied to ACE projects; with strong partnerships formed with external partners.

Community Thriving

Schools enable people and communities to connect with each other, establishing positive networks.

Operational Excellence

A highly effective and coherent team ensure that schools are offered a bespoke programme of operational support.

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TRUSTEES' REPORT (CONTINUED)
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2024

Plans for future periods (continued)

Sustainability Impact

The ACE community is passionate about its desire to effect positive climate change with children as courageous advocates for environmental changes.

ACE supports ethical business through its procurement practices.

Funds held as custodian on behalf of others

The Trust and its Trustees do not act as the Custodian Trustees of any other Charity.

Disclosure of information to auditors

Insofar as the Trustees are aware:

There is no relevant audit information of which the charitable company's auditors are unaware, and that 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 auditors are aware of that information.

Auditors

The auditors, Griffin, have indicated their willingness to continue in office. The designated Trustees will propose a motion reappointing the auditors at a meeting of the Trustees.

The Trustees' report, incorporating a strategic report, was approved by order of the Board of Trustees, as the company directors, on 12th December 2024 and signed on its behalf by:



R Willoughby
Chair of Trustees

THE ACADEMIES FOR CHARACTER AND EXCELLENCE
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GOVERNANCE STATEMENT

Scope of responsibility

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

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

The Board of Trustees has delegated the day-to-day responsibility to C Weyman, 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 Academies for Character and Excellence and the Secretary of State for Education. They are also responsible for reporting to the Board of Trustees any material weaknesses or breakdowns in internal control.

Governance

The information on governance included here supplements that described in the Trustees' report and in the Statement of Trustees' responsibilities. The Board of Trustees has formally met 5 times during the year.

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

Trustee	Meetings attended	Out of a possible
J Gater	5	5
F Sabet	5	5
R Willoughby, Chair of Trustees	5	5
P Mantell	4	5
M Haskell	4	5
J Coe (resigned 31/12/2023)	2	2
G Hobbs	3	5
P Bailey (appointed 01/12/2023)	4	4

The Board of Trustees (Strategic Board) is the accountable body for the MAT. The Board of Trustees have three core functions:.

1. Strategic Leadership;
2. Accountability and Assurance;
3. Strategic Engagement.

Trustees operate in the interests of the children across the Trust. The role of the local governing bodies is as follows:

- Ensuring clarity of vision, ethos and strategic direction;
- Holding the Headteacher to account for the educational performance of the school, its pupils and the performance management of staff;
- Parental and community engagement; and
- Ensuring the sports premium and pupil premium money is well spent. This will be done through a regular cycle of meetings which will include reports and data sent to them.

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GOVERNANCE STATEMENT (CONTINUED)

Governance (continued)

Performance of the board:

The Strategic Board has high level expertise in legal/HR, finance, business and education. Directors are at one in their passion and ambition for the pupils of the Trust as demonstrated by the outcomes achieved. They ensure clarity of vision, ethos and strategic direction; hold executive leaders to account for the performance of the Trust; and oversee the financial performance of the organisation, making sure that money is well spent.

Quality of Data

The board uses the following data:

- High level data dashboards to analyse performance in HR, Safeguarding, Health and Safety, Estates and Premises Management; school performance as well as benchmarking the Trust performance;
- CEO reports;
- Portfolio reports;
- Headteacher reports and minutes of Local Committee meetings.

The data presented to the board is analysed and discussed at board meetings and committee meetings. The data reported is 'top line' with potential questions then relayed to the Local Committees for a more in-depth analysis at a local level.

The board has continued to review the effectiveness of the seven portfolios in relation to the impact they have at both Trust level and local committee level, specifically the four key areas of Safeguarding, Curriculum and Standards, Ethos and Distinctiveness and Community Partnerships. These continue to be embedded within the governance structure at a local level and there is a clear distinct link with the portfolio director and the portfolio governor.

Conflicts of interest

The Trust mitigates the risks associated with conflicts of interest by maintaining an up to date and complete register of interests. All ACE Board members are subject to pecuniary reviews and are required to disclose details of Directorships and other relevant interests outside of the Trust that may give rise to a conflict of interest. The register of business interests is publicly available on the Trust website (ACE Board) and the relevant school website (School Board). Board meeting agendas are circulated prior to meetings and Board members are requested to disclose any conflicts of interest at the start of each meeting at a school and ACE Trust level.

Disclosure conflicts are considered prior to commencement of the meeting and appropriate action is approved which may include removal of the Director for part of the meeting and/or involvement in any on-going work in this area. Conflicts are documented and registers are updated accordingly to ensure updates are made promptly as required.

The FARC is chaired by a Director and is also attended by the CEO (also Accounting Officer), two other Board Directors and the Chief Finance Officer. There is an open invitation for the Chair of the Strategic Board to attend.

The Committee meets at least three times each year to consider matters arising from its terms of reference, or matters placed on the agenda at the request of the Strategic Board or of the Chair or any member of the Committee.

The Committee will also act as the Audit Committee on an annual basis to consider the Annual Trust Accounts.

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GOVERNANCE STATEMENT (CONTINUED)

Governance (continued)

In addition to the FARC, the Trust also ensures that all other important areas are scrutinised appropriately through Directors holding a portfolio in Estates; People; Community Partnerships; Safeguarding; Curriculum and Standards; and Church school distinctiveness.

Attendance during the year at meetings was as follows:

Finance, Audit and Risk Committee 2023 - 2024

Trustee	Meetings attended	Out of a possible
M Haskell (Chair)	7	8
P Bailey	6	6
G Hobbs	4	8
J Coe (Resigned 31/12/23)	2	2
R Willoughby (Chair of Trustees)	7	7

Changes to the Governance Structure

Due to the requirement of the Academy Trust Handbook for Boards of Trustees to ensure its decisions about levels of executive pay (including salary and any other benefits) follow a robust evidence-based process, the Board has discharged its responsibilities to a new Remuneration Committee. This committee, established in February 2024, has been introduced to ensure the approach to pay and benefits is transparent, proportionate and justifiable.

Attendance during the year at meetings was as follows:

Remuneration Committee Commenced February 2024

Trustee	Meetings attended	Out of a possible
G Hobbs (Chair)	2	2
M Haskell	2	2
F Sabet	2	2
R Willoughby (Chair of Trustees)	1	2

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GOVERNANCE STATEMENT (CONTINUED)

Review of value for money

As Accounting Officer, the CEO has responsibility for ensuring that the 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 achieved in return for the taxpayer resources received.

The Trust during this financial year has undertaken a full review of all its operations and has established School performance targets within Education and Finance.

Levels of staff expenditure are monitored against GAG Revenues and the framework for establishing computerised ordering and authorisation has been put in place. Greater use of software systems to enhance the financial knowledge base across all schools has now also been instigated.

The Accounting Officer considers how the 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 appropriate. The Accounting Officer for the Trust has delivered improved value for money during the year by:

- Robust financial governance and budget management.
- Value for money purchasing.
- Reviewing controls and managing risk.
- Considering allocation/targeting/use of resources.
- Not allocating time/resources to areas where few improvements can be achieved.
- Making comparisons with similar Academies using data provided by the ESFA and the Government.
- Challenging proposals and examining their effectiveness and efficiency.
- Deploying staff effectively.
- Reviewing quality of curriculum provision and quality of teaching.
- Reviewing quality of children's learning to enable children to achieve nationally expected progress.
- Outlining procedures for accepting best value quotes, noting that this is not necessarily the cheapest quote.

During the financial year ended 31 August 2024 the Trust consistently delivered value for money through its procurement process. The Trust assesses value for money on criteria based on quality and price. The weighting between these criteria is dependent on the goods or services being procured.

Specific examples include the Trust wide investment in new software and various educational subscriptions. Each of these procurements have benefited from the growing size of the Trust and delivered high quality goods and services at competitive prices due to economies of scale. New policy management software will streamline processes enabling the Trust ensure compliance whilst delivering an improved service to Trust schools at a lower cost base. Trust wide investment in a streamlined range of educational subscriptions provides enhanced consistency, opportunities for collaboration and will support delivery of improved outcomes for pupils.

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 on-going process designed to identify and prioritise the risks to the achievement of Trust policies, aims and objectives, to evaluate the likelihood of those risks being realised and the impact should they be realised, and to manage them efficiently, effectively and economically. The system of internal control has been in place in The Academies for Character and Excellence for the year 1 September 2023 to 31 August 2024 and up to the date of approval of the annual report and financial statements.

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GOVERNANCE STATEMENT (CONTINUED)

Capacity to handle risk

The Board of Trustees has reviewed the key risks to which the 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 Trust's significant risks that has been in place for the year 1 September 2023 to 31 August 2024 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 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 FARC 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
- Identification and management of risks

The Board of Trustees has decided to buy-in an internal audit service from Thompson Jenner

The internal auditor's role includes giving providing advice on financial and other matters and performing a range of checks on the Academy's financial systems. In particular, the checks carried out in the current period included:

- Core purchase processes and procedures (including fraud & regularity and contracts & procurement)
- Income
- Charge cards
- Staff expenses
- Fixed assets
- Management accounts
- Payroll process
- ATH Musts
- Budgets: Planning, Control and Review
- Bank reconciliation and month-end controls
- Business interests, including related party procedures
- Policies

On a semi-annual basis, the internal auditor reports to the Board of Trustees through the FARC on the operation of the systems of control and on the discharge of the Board of Trustees financial responsibilities and annually prepares a short annual summary report to the committee outlining the areas reviewed, key findings, recommendations and conclusions to help the committee consider actions and assess year on year progress.

The internal auditor has delivered their schedule of work as planned and no material control issues arose as a result of their work.

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GOVERNANCE STATEMENT (CONTINUED)

Review of effectiveness

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

- the financial management and governance self-assessment process;
- the work of the internal auditor;
- on discharge of the Board of Trustees financial decisions to help the committee consider actions and assess year on year progress;
- the work of the executive managers within the Trust who have responsibility for the development and maintenance of the internal control framework.
- the work of the external auditors;

The Accounting Officer has been advised of the implications of the result of their review of the system of internal control by the finance committee and a plan to address weaknesses and ensure continuous improvement of the system is in place.

The Accounting Officer has been advised of the implications of the result of their review of the system of internal control by the finance committee and a plan to address weaknesses and ensure continuous improvement of the system is in place.

Conclusion

Based on the advice of the audit and risk committee and the accounting officer, the board of trustees is of the opinion that the academy trust has an adequate and effective framework for governance, risk management and control.

Approved by order of the members of the Board of Trustees on *12th December 24* and signed on their behalf by:


R Willoughby
Chair of Trustees


C Weyman
Accounting Officer

THE ACADEMIES FOR CHARACTER AND EXCELLENCE
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STATEMENT OF REGULARITY, PROPRIETY AND COMPLIANCE

As Accounting Officer of The Academies for Character and Excellence I have considered my responsibility to notify the Board of Trustees and the Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA) of material irregularity, impropriety and non-compliance with terms and conditions of all funding, including for estates safety and management, under the funding agreement in place between the 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 2023, including responsibilities for estates safety and management.

I confirm that I and the Board of Trustees are able to identify any material irregular or improper use of all funds by the Trust, or material non-compliance with the terms and conditions of funding under the Academy's funding agreement and the Academy Trust Handbook 2023.

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 the ESFA.



C Weyman
Accounting Officer

Date: 12/12/24

THE ACADEMIES FOR CHARACTER AND EXCELLENCE
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STATEMENT OF TRUSTEES' RESPONSIBILITIES
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2024

The Trustees (who are also the directors of the charitable company 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 and 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 Group and the charitable company and of their incoming resources and application of resources, including their 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 of the Charities SORP 2019 and the Academies Accounts Direction 2023 to 2024;
- make judgments and accounting estimates that are reasonable and prudent;
- state whether applicable UK 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 group will continue in business.

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

The Trustees are responsible for ensuring that in their conduct and operation the Group and the charitable company apply financial and other controls, which conform to 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 group's website. Legislation in the United Kingdom governing the preparation and dissemination of financial statements may differ from legislation in other jurisdictions.

Approved by order of the members of the Board of Trustees on 12/12/24 and signed on its behalf by:



R Willoughby
Chair of Trustees

THE ACADEMIES FOR CHARACTER AND EXCELLENCE
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**INDEPENDENT AUDITORS' REPORT ON THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS TO THE MEMBERS OF THE
ACADEMIES FOR CHARACTER AND EXCELLENCE**

Opinion

We have audited the financial statements of The Academies for Character and Excellence (the 'parent Academy') and its subsidiaries (the 'Group') for the year ended 31 August 2024 which comprise the Consolidated statement of financial activities, the Consolidated balance sheet, the Academy balance sheet, the Consolidated statement of cash flows and the related notes, including a summary of significant accounting policies. The financial reporting framework that has been applied in their preparation is applicable law, United Kingdom Accounting Standards (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice), including Financial Reporting Standard 102 'The Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland', the Charities SORP 2019 and the Academies Accounts Direction 2023 to 2024 issued by the Education and Skills Funding Agency.

In our opinion the financial statements:

give a true and fair view of the state of the Group's and of the parent Academy's affairs as at 31 August 2024 and of the Group's incoming resources and application of resources, including its income and expenditure for the year then ended;

have been properly prepared in accordance with United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice; and have been prepared in accordance with the requirements of the Companies Act 2006, the Charities SORP 2019 and the Academies Accounts Direction 2023 to 2024 issued by the Education and Skills Funding Agency.

Basis for opinion

We conducted our audit in accordance with International Standards on Auditing (UK) (ISAs (UK)) and applicable law. Our responsibilities under those standards are further described in the Auditors' responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements section of our report. We are independent of the Group in accordance with the ethical requirements that are relevant to our audit of the financial statements in the United Kingdom, including the Financial Reporting Council'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 Group's or the parent Academy'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.

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**INDEPENDENT AUDITORS' REPORT ON THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS TO THE MEMBERS OF THE
ACADEMIES FOR CHARACTER AND EXCELLENCE (CONTINUED)**

Other information

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

We have nothing to report in this regard.

Opinion 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 including the Strategic report for the financial year for which the financial statements are prepared is consistent with the financial statements.
The Trustees' report and the Strategic report have been prepared in accordance with applicable legal requirements.

Matters on which we are required to report by exception

In the light of our knowledge and understanding of the Group and the parent Academy 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:

the parent Academy has not kept adequate accounting records, or returns adequate for our audit have not been received from branches not visited by us; or
the parent Academy 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.

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**INDEPENDENT AUDITORS' REPORT ON THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS TO THE MEMBERS OF THE
ACADEMIES FOR CHARACTER AND EXCELLENCE (CONTINUED)**

Responsibilities of Trustees

As explained more fully in the Statement of Trustees' responsibilities, the Trustees (who are also the directors of the Academy 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 Group's and the parent Academy'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 Group or the parent Academy or to cease operations, or have no realistic alternative but to do so.

Auditors' 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 Auditors' 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 audit procedures have reviewed for evidence of management override, any ongoing legal cases, completeness of related party transactions, as well as ongoing consideration of fraud and irregularities during the whole audit process.

Because of the inherent limitations of an audit, there is a risk that we will not detect all irregularities, including those leading to a material misstatement in the financial statements or non-compliance with regulation. This risk increases the more that compliance with a law or regulation is removed from the events and transactions reflected in the financial statements, as we will be less likely to become aware of instances of non-compliance. The risk is also greater regarding irregularities occurring due to fraud rather than error, as fraud involves intentional concealment, forgery, collusion, omission or misrepresentation.

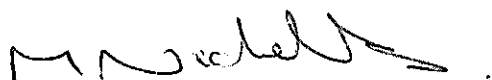
A further description of our responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements is located on the Financial Reporting Council's website at: www.frc.org.uk/auditorsresponsibilities. This description forms part of our Auditors' report.

THE ACADEMIES FOR CHARACTER AND EXCELLENCE
(A company limited by guarantee)

**INDEPENDENT AUDITORS' REPORT ON THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS TO THE MEMBERS OF THE
ACADEMIES FOR CHARACTER AND EXCELLENCE (CONTINUED)**

Use of our report

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



Misty Nickells FCA (Senior statutory auditor)
for and on behalf of
Griffin

Statutory Auditor
Courtenay House
Pynes Hill
Exeter
EX2 5AZ

Date: 19/12/14

THE ACADEMIES FOR CHARACTER AND EXCELLENCE
(A company limited by guarantee)

**INDEPENDENT REPORTING ACCOUNTANT'S ASSURANCE REPORT ON REGULARITY TO THE
ACADEMIES FOR CHARACTER AND EXCELLENCE AND THE EDUCATION AND SKILLS FUNDING
AGENCY**

In accordance with the terms of our engagement letter dated 13 May 2020 and further to the requirements of the Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA) as included in the Academies Accounts Direction 2023 to 2024, we have carried out an engagement to obtain limited assurance about whether the expenditure disbursed and income received by The Academies for Character and Excellence during the year 1 September 2023 to 31 August 2024 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 The Academies for Character and Excellence and ESFA in accordance with the terms of our engagement letter. Our work has been undertaken so that we might state to The Academies for Character and Excellence and 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 The Academies for Character and Excellence and ESFA, for our work, for this report, or for the conclusion we have formed.

Respective responsibilities of The Academies for Character and Excellence's Accounting Officer and the Reporting Accountant

The accounting officer is responsible, under the requirements of The Academies for Character and Excellence's funding agreement with the Secretary of State for Education dated 1 November 2024 and the Academy Trust Handbook, extant from 1 September 2023, 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 2023 to 2024. 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 year 1 September 2023 to 31 August 2024 have not been applied to purposes intended by Parliament or that the financial transactions do not conform to the authorities which govern them.

Approach

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

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

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

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

The work undertaken to draw our conclusion includes:

- Review of governance procedures
- Evaluation and testing of the system of internal controls, such as authorisation and value for money procedures
- Substantive testing on relevant transactions

THE ACADEMIES FOR CHARACTER AND EXCELLENCE
(A company limited by guarantee)

INDEPENDENT REPORTING ACCOUNTANT'S ASSURANCE REPORT ON REGULARITY TO THE
ACADEMIES FOR CHARACTER AND EXCELLENCE AND THE EDUCATION & SKILLS FUNDING
AGENCY (CONTINUED)

Conclusion

In the course of our work, nothing has come to our attention which suggest in all material respects the expenditure disbursed and income received during the year 1 September 2023 to 31 August 2024 has not been applied to purposes intended by Parliament and the financial transactions do not conform to the authorities which govern them.



Misty Nickells FCA (Senior statutory auditor)

Griffin

Chartered Accountants

Statutory Auditor

Courtenay House

Pynes Hill

Exeter

Date: 19/12/24

THE ACADEMIES FOR CHARACTER AND EXCELLENCE
(A company limited by guarantee)

**CONSOLIDATED STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES (INCORPORATING INCOME AND EXPENDITURE ACCOUNT)
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2024**

	Note	Unrestricted funds 2024 £	Restricted funds 2024 £	Restricted fixed asset funds 2024 £	Total funds 2024 £	Total funds 2023 £
Income from:						
Donations and capital grants:	4					
Other donations and capital grants		5,341	614,026	921,995	1,541,362	455,303
Transfer of existing academies joining the Trust		431,831	(500,000)	377,929	309,760	-
Transfer from local authority on conversion		161,937	(8,000)	3,602,004	3,755,941	166,415
Other trading activities	6	683,903	89,585	-	773,488	579,928
Investments	7	10,123	213,000	-	223,123	287
Charitable activities	5	385,582	17,218,921	-	17,604,503	9,378,476
Total income		1,678,717	17,627,532	4,901,928	24,208,177	10,580,409
Expenditure on:						
Raising funds		244,728	44,843	-	289,571	359,775
Charitable activities	10	673,079	17,487,191	357,968	18,518,238	10,397,667
Other expenditure	9	-	-	-	-	1,256,651
Total expenditure		917,807	17,532,034	357,968	18,807,809	12,014,093
Net income/(expenditure)		760,910	95,498	4,543,960	5,400,368	(1,433,684)
Transfers between funds	20	-	(181,313)	181,313	-	-
Net movement in funds before other recognised gains/(losses)		760,910	(85,815)	4,725,273	5,400,368	(1,433,684)
Other recognised gains/(losses):						
Actuarial gains on defined benefit pension schemes	30	-	554,000	-	554,000	1,228,000
Net movement in funds		760,910	468,185	4,725,273	5,954,368	(205,684)

THE ACADEMIES FOR CHARACTER AND EXCELLENCE
(A company limited by guarantee)

CONSOLIDATED STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES (INCORPORATING INCOME AND EXPENDITURE ACCOUNT) (CONTINUED)
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2024

Note	Unrestricted funds 2024 £	Restricted funds 2024 £	Restricted fixed asset funds 2024 £	Total funds 2024 £	<i>Total funds 2023 £</i>
Reconciliation of funds:					
Total funds brought forward	1,180,707	(459,000)	6,441,197	7,162,904	7,368,588
Net movement in funds	760,910	468,185	4,725,273	5,954,368	(205,684)
Total funds carried forward	1,941,617	9,185	11,166,470	13,117,272	7,162,904

The Consolidated statement of financial activities includes all gains and losses recognised in the year.

The notes on pages 42 to 80 form part of these financial statements.

THE ACADEMIES FOR CHARACTER AND EXCELLENCE
(A company limited by guarantee)
REGISTERED NUMBER: 10098444

CONSOLIDATED BALANCE SHEET
AS AT 31 AUGUST 2024

	Note	2024 £	2023 £
Fixed assets			
Tangible assets	16	11,091,930	6,271,245
		<u>11,091,930</u>	<u>6,271,245</u>
Current assets			
Debtors	17	1,690,556	328,502
Investments	18	504,092	-
Cash at bank and in hand		2,139,040	1,845,416
		<u>4,333,688</u>	<u>2,173,918</u>
Creditors: amounts falling due within one year	19	(2,308,346)	(823,259)
		<u>2,025,342</u>	<u>1,350,659</u>
Net current assets		<u>2,025,342</u>	<u>1,350,659</u>
Total assets less current liabilities		<u>13,117,272</u>	<u>7,621,904</u>
Net assets excluding pension asset / liability		<u>13,117,272</u>	<u>7,621,904</u>
Defined benefit pension scheme asset / liability	30	-	(459,000)
Total net assets		<u><u>13,117,272</u></u>	<u><u>7,162,904</u></u>
Funds of the Academy			
Restricted funds:			
Fixed asset funds	20	11,166,470	6,441,197
Restricted income funds	20	9,185	-
		<u>11,175,655</u>	<u>6,441,197</u>
Restricted funds excluding pension asset	20	11,175,655	6,441,197
Pension reserve	20	-	(459,000)
		<u>11,175,655</u>	<u>5,982,197</u>
Total restricted funds	20	<u>11,175,655</u>	<u>5,982,197</u>
Unrestricted income funds	20	<u>1,941,617</u>	<u>1,180,707</u>
Total funds		<u><u>13,117,272</u></u>	<u><u>7,162,904</u></u>

THE ACADEMIES FOR CHARACTER AND EXCELLENCE
(A company limited by guarantee)
REGISTERED NUMBER: 10098444

CONSOLIDATED BALANCE SHEET (CONTINUED)
AS AT 31 AUGUST 2024

The financial statements on pages 35 to 81 were approved by the Trustees, and authorised for issue on
12th December 2024 and are signed on their behalf, by:



R Willoughby
(Chair of Trustees)

The notes on pages 42 to 81 form part of these financial statements.

THE ACADEMIES FOR CHARACTER AND EXCELLENCE
(A company limited by guarantee)
REGISTERED NUMBER: 10098444

ACADEMY BALANCE SHEET
AS AT 31 AUGUST 2024

	Note	2024 £	2023 £
Fixed assets			
Tangible assets	16	11,091,930	6,271,245
		<u>11,091,930</u>	<u>6,271,245</u>
Current assets			
Debtors	17	1,749,931	575,915
Investments	18	504,092	-
Cash at bank and in hand		2,014,853	1,631,437
		<u>4,268,876</u>	<u>2,207,352</u>
Creditors: amounts falling due within one year	19	(2,301,826)	(817,037)
		<u>1,967,050</u>	<u>1,390,315</u>
Net current assets		<u>1,967,050</u>	<u>1,390,315</u>
Total assets less current liabilities		<u>13,058,980</u>	<u>7,661,560</u>
Net assets excluding pension asset / liability		<u>13,058,980</u>	<u>7,661,560</u>
Defined benefit pension scheme asset / liability	30	-	(459,000)
Total net assets		<u><u>13,058,980</u></u>	<u><u>7,202,560</u></u>
Funds of the Academy			
Restricted funds:			
Fixed asset funds	20	11,166,470	6,441,197
Restricted income funds	20	9,185	-
Restricted funds excluding pension asset / liability	20	<u>11,175,655</u>	<u>6,441,197</u>
Pension reserve	20	-	(459,000)
Total restricted funds	20	<u>11,175,655</u>	<u>5,982,197</u>
Unrestricted income funds	20	<u>1,883,325</u>	<u>1,220,363</u>
Total funds		<u><u>13,058,980</u></u>	<u><u>7,202,560</u></u>

THE ACADEMIES FOR CHARACTER AND EXCELLENCE
(A company limited by guarantee)
REGISTERED NUMBER: 10098444

ACADEMY BALANCE SHEET (CONTINUED)
AS AT 31 AUGUST 2024

The financial statements on pages 35 to 81 were approved by the Trustees, and authorised for issue on
12 December 2024 and are signed on their behalf, by:



R Willoughby
(Chair of Trustees)

The notes on pages 42 to 81 form part of these financial statements.

THE ACADEMIES FOR CHARACTER AND EXCELLENCE
(A company limited by guarantee)

CONSOLIDATED STATEMENT OF CASH FLOWS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2024

	Note	2024 £	2023 £
Cash flows from operating activities			
Net cash provided by operating activities	22	1,247,902	438,749
Cash flows from investing activities	24	(1,138,148)	(233,062)
Cash flows from financing activities	23	687,962	185,415
Change in cash and cash equivalents in the year		797,716	391,102
Cash and cash equivalents at the beginning of the year		1,845,416	1,454,314
Cash and cash equivalents at the end of the year	25, 26	2,643,132	1,845,416

The notes on pages 42 to 80 form part of these financial statements

THE ACADEMIES FOR CHARACTER AND EXCELLENCE
(A company limited by guarantee)

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2024

1. General information

The Academies for Character and Excellence is a company limited by guarantee, incorporated in England and Wales. The registered office is Totnes St Johns C of E Primary School, Pathfields, Totnes, TQ9 5TZ.

2. Accounting policies

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

2.1 Basis of preparation of financial statements

The financial statements of the Group, which is a public benefit entity under FRS 102, have been prepared under the historic 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 2023 to 2024 issued by ESFA, the Charities Act 2011 and the Companies Act 2006.

A wholly owned subsidiary company, ACE Enhanced Services Limited (AES), was incorporated on 26 January 2017 with the intention that this company would operate pre-schools on the Academy Trust sites.

The Academies for Character and Excellence meets the definition of a public benefit entity under FRS 102.

The Consolidated statement of financial activities (SOFA) and Consolidated balance sheet consolidate the financial statements of the Academy and its subsidiary undertaking. The results of the subsidiary are consolidated on a line by line basis.

The Academy has taken advantage of the exemption allowed under section 408 of the Companies Act 2006 and has not presented its own Statement of financial activities in these financial statements.

2.2 Going concern

The Board of Trustees has a reasonable expectation that the Trust has adequate resources to continue to operate for the foreseeable future. The Trustees have considered a number of factors in arriving at this conclusion. The Trust had a strong reserves position at the 31 August 2024 of £1,950,802 with £2,643,132 held of cash at this date. The Budget Forecast Return (BFR) submitted to the Education and Skills Funding Agency for the 2024/25 financial year forecasted a small revenue deficit of £63,000. This will leave the Trust in a strong position and able to continue to operate within the reserves policy.

THE ACADEMIES FOR CHARACTER AND EXCELLENCE
(A company limited by guarantee)

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2024

2. Accounting policies (continued)

2.3 Income

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

Grants

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

General Annual Grant is recognised in full in the Consolidated statement of financial activities in the year for which it is receivable and any abatement in respect of the year is deducted from income and recognised as a liability.

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

Sponsorship income

Sponsorship income provided to the Group which amounts to a donation is recognised in the Consolidated statement of financial activities in the year in which it is receivable (where there are no performance-related conditions) where receipt is probable and it can be measured reliably.

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 year it is receivable and to the extent the Group has provided the goods or services.

Transfer on conversion

Where assets and liabilities are received by the Group on conversion to an academy, the transferred assets are measured at fair value and recognised in the Balance sheet at the point when the risks and rewards of ownership pass to the Group. An equal amount of income is recognised as a transfer on conversion within 'Income from Donations and Capital Grants' to the net assets received.

Transfer of existing academies into the Group

Where assets and liabilities are received on the transfer of an existing academy into the Group, the transferred assets are measured at fair value and recognised in the Balance sheet at the point when the risks and rewards of ownership pass to the Group. An equal amount of income is recognised for the transfer of an existing academy into the Group within expenditure to the net liabilities acquired.

THE ACADEMIES FOR CHARACTER AND EXCELLENCE
(A company limited by guarantee)

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2024

2. Accounting policies (continued)

2.4 Expenditure

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

Expenditure on raising funds

This includes all expenditure incurred by the Group to raise funds for its charitable purposes and includes costs of all fundraising activities events and non-charitable trading.

Charitable activities

These are costs incurred on the Group's educational operations, including support costs and costs relating to the governance of the Group apportioned to charitable activities.

All resources expended are inclusive of irrecoverable VAT.

2.5 Interest receivable

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

2.6 Taxation

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

THE ACADEMIES FOR CHARACTER AND EXCELLENCE
(A company limited by guarantee)

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2024

2. Accounting policies (continued)

2.7 Tangible fixed assets

Assets costing £1,000 or more are capitalised as tangible fixed assets and are carried at cost, net of depreciation and any provision for impairment.

Where tangible fixed assets have been acquired with the aid of specific grants, either from the government or from the private sector, they are included in the Balance sheet at cost and depreciated over their expected useful economic 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 Consolidated 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 Consolidated statement of financial activities. Where tangible fixed assets have been acquired with unrestricted funds, depreciation on such assets is charged to the unrestricted fund.

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

Depreciation is provided on the following bases:

Freehold property	- Buildings 50 years / Land 125 years
Long-term leasehold property	- Buildings 50 years / Land 125 years
Furniture and equipment	- 15% straight line
Computer equipment	- 33% straight line
Motor vehicles	- 25% reducing balance

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 Consolidated statement of financial activities.

Where the Academy Trust has been granted use of the school buildings from the Diocese under Supplemental Agreements, the Academies Accounts Direction prescribes that under this agreement the risk and rewards of ownership remain with the Diocese.

The Academy Trust's occupation for the period is recognisable as a notional donation (since it pays no actual rent) and a notional rental expense for its use of the premises. The value of the donation is the amount that the Academy Trust would otherwise have to pay to secure the premises for its operations, based on the rateable value of the buildings.

2.8 Debtors

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

2.9 Cash at bank and in hand

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

THE ACADEMIES FOR CHARACTER AND EXCELLENCE
(A company limited by guarantee)

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2024

2. Accounting policies (continued)

2.10 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 Group 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.

2.11 Financial instruments

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

Financial assets - trade and other debtors are basic financial instruments and are debt instruments measured at amortised cost as detailed in note 17. Prepayments are not financial instruments. Amounts due to the Academy's wholly owned subsidiary are held at face value less any impairment.

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 as detailed in note 19. 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. Amounts due to the Academy's wholly owned subsidiary are held at face value less any impairment.

2.12 Operating leases

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

THE ACADEMIES FOR CHARACTER AND EXCELLENCE
(A company limited by guarantee)

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2024

2. Accounting policies (continued)

2.13 Pensions

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

The LGPS is a funded multi-employer scheme and the assets are held separately from those of the Group 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 Consolidated 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.

2.14 Conversion to an academy trust

The conversion from a state maintained school to a Trust involved the transfer of identifiable assets and liabilities and the operation of the school for £NIL consideration. The substance of the transfer is that of a gift and it has been accounted for on that basis as set out below.

The assets and liabilities transferred on conversion from Newtown Primary School, Trinity CofE Primary and Nursery School and Castle Cary Community Primary School to the Trust have been valued at their fair value. The fair value has been derived based on that of equivalent items. The amounts have been recognised under the appropriate Balance sheet categories, with a corresponding amount recognised in Income from Donations and Capital Grants in the Consolidated statement of financial activities and analysed under unrestricted funds, restricted general funds and restricted fixed asset funds.

Further details of the transaction are set out in note 27.

THE ACADEMIES FOR CHARACTER AND EXCELLENCE
(A company limited by guarantee)

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2024

2. Accounting policies (continued)

2.15 Fund accounting

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

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

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

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

3. Critical accounting estimates and areas of judgment

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

The present value of the Local Government Pension Scheme defined benefit liability depends on a number of factors that are determined on an actuarial basis using a variety of assumptions. The assumptions used in determining the net cost or income for pensions include the discount rate. Any changes in these assumptions, which are disclosed in note 30, 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 2022 has been used by the actuary in valuing the pensions liability at 31 August 2024. 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.

Critical areas of judgment:

The academy trust obtains use of fixed assets as a lessee. The classification of such leases as operating or finance leases requires the Academy Trust to determine, based on an evaluation of the terms and conditions of the arrangements, whether it retains or acquires the significant risks and rewards of ownership of these assets and accordingly whether the lease requires an asset and liability to be recognised in the Balance Sheet.

Depreciation is estimated over the useful economic life of an asset in order to write off the value of it in line with its useful life.

As at 31 August 2024 the actuarial valuation for the Trust includes a surplus totalling £65,000. This surplus has not been recognised within the financial statements. The right to a refund would occur in the form of a credit payable to the Trust, for example on exiting the pension fund. Given there are no circumstances to suggest an exit from the fund and the determination of any credit is outside the control of the Trust, there is no basis to recognise any surplus.

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4. Income from donations and capital grants

	Unrestricted funds 2024 £	Restricted funds 2024 £	Restricted fixed asset funds 2024 £	Total funds 2024 £	<i>Total funds 2023 £</i>
Donations	5,341	614,026	-	619,367	296,771
Capital Grants	-	-	921,995	921,995	158,532
Transfer from local authority on conversion	161,937	(8,000)	3,602,004	3,755,941	166,415
Transfer of existing academies into the Trust	431,831	(500,000)	377,929	309,760	-
	<u>599,109</u>	<u>106,026</u>	<u>4,901,928</u>	<u>5,607,063</u>	<u>621,718</u>
<i>Total 2023</i>	<u>187,762</u>	<u>275,424</u>	<u>158,532</u>	<u>621,718</u>	

Included in donations is £516,667 (2023: £250,000) of donated facilities. The Trust is grateful to the Diocese of Exeter for the use of its land and buildings. The estimated value of these services is recognised within incoming resources as a donation and an equivalent charge included within rent costs.

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**NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
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5. Funding for the Academy's charitable activities

	Unrestricted funds 2024 £	Restricted funds 2024 £	Total funds 2024 £	<i>Total funds 2023 £</i>
Education				
DfE/ESFA grants				
General annual grant	-	12,694,829	12,694,829	7,056,671
Other DfE/ESFA grants				
Trust Capacity Funding	-	719,898	719,898	-
Mainstream Schools' Additional Grant	-	443,430	443,430	-
Pupil Premium	-	910,535	910,535	582,463
UIFSM	-	332,229	332,229	206,095
PE and sports premium	-	231,818	231,818	-
Supplementary grant	-	-	-	213,118
Teachers' Pay Additional Grant	-	215,305	215,305	-
Others	-	368,372	368,372	471,531
	-	15,916,416	15,916,416	8,529,878
Other Government grants				
Other government grants	-	545,125	545,125	225,481
High needs	-	757,380	757,380	419,536
	-	1,302,505	1,302,505	645,017
Other income from the Academy's education	385,582	-	385,582	203,581
	385,582	17,218,921	17,604,503	9,378,476
	385,582	17,218,921	17,604,503	9,378,476
<i>Total 2023</i>	203,581	9,174,895	9,378,476	

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NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2024

6. Income from other trading activities

	Unrestricted funds 2024 £	Restricted funds 2024 £	Total funds 2024 £	<i>Total funds 2023 £</i>
Lettings	23,657	-	23,657	4,464
Other trading income	3,493	-	3,493	2,195
Consultancy	-	89,585	89,585	155,796
Fees received	314,077	-	314,077	135,288
Income from ancillary trading activities	342,676	-	342,676	282,185
	<u>683,903</u>	<u>89,585</u>	<u>773,488</u>	<u>579,928</u>
<i>Total 2023</i>	<u>424,132</u>	<u>155,796</u>	<u>579,928</u>	

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**NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
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7. Investment income

	Unrestricted funds 2024 £	Restricted funds 2024 £	Total funds 2024 £	<i>Total funds 2023 £</i>
Bank interest	10,123	-	10,123	287
Pension income	-	213,000	213,000	-
	<u>10,123</u>	<u>213,000</u>	<u>223,123</u>	<u>287</u>
<i>Total 2023</i>	<u>287</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>287</u>	

8. Expenditure

	Staff Costs 2024 £	Premises 2024 £	Other 2024 £	Total 2024 £	<i>Total 2023 £</i>
Expenditure on fundraising trading activities:					
Direct costs	266,619	-	22,952	289,571	359,775
Education:					
Direct costs	11,307,849	164,490	1,059,946	12,532,285	6,745,715
Allocated support costs	2,321,848	1,493,123	1,957,982	5,772,953	3,651,952
Other expenditure	-	-	-	-	1,256,651
	<u>13,896,316</u>	<u>1,657,613</u>	<u>3,040,880</u>	<u>18,594,809</u>	<u>12,014,093</u>
<i>Total 2023</i>	<u>7,897,491</u>	<u>1,008,571</u>	<u>3,108,031</u>	<u>12,014,093</u>	

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NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2024

9. Other expenditure

	Restricted funds 2024 £	Total funds 2024 £	<i>Total funds 2023 £</i>
Land and Building impairment charge	-	-	1,256,651
<i>Total 2023</i>	<u>1,256,651</u>	<u>1,256,651</u>	

10. Analysis of expenditure by activities

	Activities undertaken directly 2024 £	Support costs 2024 £	Total funds 2024 £	<i>Total funds 2023 £</i>
Education	12,532,285	5,772,953	18,305,238	10,397,667
<i>Total 2023</i>	<u>6,745,715</u>	<u>3,651,952</u>	<u>10,397,667</u>	

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NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2024

10. Analysis of expenditure by activities (continued)

Analysis of direct costs

	Education 2024 £	Total funds 2024 £	<i>Total funds 2023 £</i>
Staff costs	11,007,314	11,007,314	5,983,205
Depreciation	293,927	293,927	195,798
Educational supplies	435,432	435,432	193,988
Staff development	59,248	59,248	110,220
Other costs	240,811	240,811	44,940
Supply teachers	300,535	300,535	123,656
Educational consultancy	174,063	174,063	68,819
Technology costs	20,955	20,955	25,089
	<u>12,532,285</u>	<u>12,532,285</u>	<u>6,745,715</u>
	<u>6,745,715</u>	<u>6,745,715</u>	
<i>Total 2023</i>			

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**NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2024**

10. Analysis of expenditure by activities (continued)

Analysis of support costs

	Education 2024 £	Total funds 2024 £	<i>Total funds 2023 £</i>
Pension finance costs	(213,000)	(213,000)	51,000
Staff costs	2,321,848	2,321,848	1,497,350
Depreciation	64,041	64,041	57,412
Recruitment and other staff costs	96,602	96,602	48,647
Maintenance of premises and equipment	335,939	335,939	210,511
Cleaning	207,487	207,487	149,896
Rent and rates	575,751	575,751	282,995
Heat and light	338,107	338,107	221,371
Insurance	112,383	112,383	50,506
Security and transport	25,727	25,727	18,893
Catering	586,609	586,609	329,022
Technology costs	626,522	626,522	305,497
Office overheads	319,801	319,801	174,644
Legal and professional	333,218	333,218	246,875
Governance costs	41,918	41,918	7,333
	<u>5,772,953</u>	<u>5,772,953</u>	<u>3,651,952</u>
<i>Total 2023</i>	<u>3,651,952</u>	<u>3,651,952</u>	

11. Net income/(expenditure)

Net income/(expenditure) for the year includes:

	2024 £	<i>2023 £</i>
Operating lease rentals	17,701	17,637
Depreciation of tangible fixed assets	303,484	253,211
Fees paid to auditors for:		
- audit	18,590	11,165
- other services	4,560	4,340
	<u>18,590</u>	<u>11,165</u>
	<u>4,560</u>	<u>4,340</u>

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NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2024

12. Staff

a. Staff costs and employee benefits

Staff costs during the year were as follows:

	Group 2024 £	<i>Group 2023 £</i>
Wages and salaries	10,447,910	5,854,592
Social security costs	913,661	500,520
Pension costs	2,228,339	1,393,308
	13,589,910	7,748,420
Staff restructuring costs	5,871	25,415
Agency staff costs	300,535	123,656
	13,896,316	7,897,491

Staff restructuring costs comprise:

	Group 2024 £	<i>Group 2023 £</i>
Redundancy payments	765	12,080
Severance payments	5,106	13,335
	5,871	25,415

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**NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2024**

12. Staff (continued)

b. Special staff severance payments

Included in staff restructuring costs is a single special severance payment totalling £2,723 (2023: £6,218).

c. Staff numbers

The average number of persons employed by the Group and the Academy during the year was as follows:

	Group 2024 No.	<i>Group 2023 No.</i>	Academy 2024 No.	<i>Academy 2023 No.</i>
Teachers	132	74	132	74
Administration and support	303	188	290	170
Management	8	8	8	8
	<u>443</u>	<u>270</u>	<u>430</u>	<u>252</u>

d. Higher paid staff

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

	Group 2024 No.	<i>Group 2023 No.</i>
In the band £60,001 - £70,000	3	4
In the band £70,001 - £80,000	3	-
In the band £90,001 - £100,000	1	-
In the band £100,001 - £110,000	-	1
In the band £120,001 - £130,000	1	-
	<u>1</u>	<u>-</u>

e. Key management personnel

The key management personnel of the Academy comprise the Trustees and the Senior Management Team as listed on page 1. The total amount of employee benefits (including employer pension contributions and employer national insurance contributions) received by key management personnel for their services to the Academy was £402,100 (2023: £239,258). The significant increase this year is due to the appointment of a Deputy CEO/Excellence Director on 1 November 2023.

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NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2024

13. Central services

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

All HR services
 Full payroll and pension's service
 Full estates condition and management services
 ICT infrastructure and support via Computeam
 Governance support
 Procurement including key contract management including subscriptions, ICT (e.g. MIS), grounds maintenance
 Full finance service including purchasing, banking and financial performance reporting
 Estates, compliance and health and safety support
 Educational support (Excellence Director, ASA and Flourishing Communities Ambassador)
 Safeguarding and Inclusion support
 Marketing & promotional support via management of the SLA in this area

The Group charges for these services on the following basis:

The Central recharge is based on GAG income ratios. In 2024, this represented 6.5% (2023: 6.5%) of General Annual Grant income and direct charges for labour and non-labour costs.

The actual amounts charged during the year were as follows:

	2024 £	2023 £
Shaldon Primary School	141,685	141,685
St Gabriel's C of E Primary School	141,644	141,644
Galmpton C of E Primary School	144,315	144,315
Collaton St Mary C of E Primary School	144,576	144,576
Totnes St John's C of E Primary School	103,022	103,022
Brixham C of E Primary School	143,930	143,930
Torre C of E Primary School	206,248	206,248
Berry Pomeroy Parochial C of E Primary School	63,203	63,203
Castle Cary Community Primary School	96,356	-
Newtown Primary School	94,437	-
Trinity C of E Primary and Nursery School	158,835	-
Ashill Community Primary School	40,481	-
Buckland St Mary C of E Primary School	47,237	-
Hatch Beauchamp C of E Primary School	38,837	-
Holy Trinity C of E Primary School	131,373	-
Stockland C of E Primary School	50,905	-
Winsham Primary School	39,117	-
Total	1,786,201	1,088,623

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NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
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14. Trustees' remuneration and expenses

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

	2024	2023
	£	£
C Weyman, CEO (resigned as Trustee 25 November 2022)	Remuneration	25,000 - 30,000
	Pension contributions paid	5,000 - 10,000

During the year ended 31 August 2024, expenses totalling £437 were reimbursed or paid directly to 2 Trustees (2023 - £1,458 to 4 Trustees). The nature of the expenses reimbursed was for mileage claims.

15. Trustees' and Officers' insurance

In accordance with normal commercial practice, the Group has purchased insurance to protect Trustees and officers from claims arising from negligent acts, errors or omissions occurring whilst on Academy business. The insurance provides cover up to £5,000,000 on any one claim and this cover is provided by Zurich. The cost for the year ended 31 August 2024 was £32,748, however this was 'All Risk Insurance' and hence it isn't possible to quantify the Trustees' and Officers' indemnity element from the overall cost of the insurance.

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**NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2024**

16. Tangible fixed assets

Group and Academy

	Freehold property £	Long-term leasehold property £	Furniture and equipment £	Computer equipment £	Motor vehicles £	Total £
Cost or valuation						
At 1 September 2023	5,848,196	2,313,795	347,445	326,996	20,990	8,857,422
Additions	103,746	959,509	35,329	450,280	27,785	1,576,649
Acquired on conversion	-	3,602,004	-	-	-	3,602,004
At 31 August 2024	<u>5,951,942</u>	<u>6,875,308</u>	<u>382,774</u>	<u>777,276</u>	<u>48,775</u>	<u>14,036,075</u>
Depreciation						
At 1 September 2023	1,814,743	275,987	231,594	250,934	12,919	2,586,177
Charge for the year	107,548	92,781	48,601	97,939	11,099	357,968
At 31 August 2024	<u>1,922,291</u>	<u>368,768</u>	<u>280,195</u>	<u>348,873</u>	<u>24,018</u>	<u>2,944,145</u>
Net book value						
At 31 August 2024	<u><u>4,029,651</u></u>	<u><u>6,506,540</u></u>	<u><u>102,579</u></u>	<u><u>428,403</u></u>	<u><u>24,757</u></u>	<u><u>11,091,930</u></u>
At 31 August 2023	<u><u>4,033,453</u></u>	<u><u>2,037,808</u></u>	<u><u>115,851</u></u>	<u><u>76,062</u></u>	<u><u>8,071</u></u>	<u><u>6,271,245</u></u>

17. Debtors

	Group 2024 £	Group 2023 £	Academy 2024 £	Academy 2023 £
Due within one year				
Trade debtors	18,902	19,544	17,934	18,912
Amounts owed by group undertakings	-	-	62,518	249,440
Prepayments and accrued income	1,416,886	238,643	1,414,711	237,248
Tax recoverable	254,768	70,315	254,768	70,315
	<u><u>1,690,556</u></u>	<u><u>328,502</u></u>	<u><u>1,749,931</u></u>	<u><u>575,915</u></u>

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**NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2024**

18. Current asset investments

	Group 2024 £	<i>Group 2023 £</i>	Academy 2024 £	<i>Academy 2023 £</i>
Unlisted investments	504,092	-	504,092	-

19. Creditors: Amounts falling due within one year

	Group 2024 £	<i>Group 2023 £</i>	Academy 2024 £	<i>Academy 2023 £</i>
Trade creditors	681,794	254,817	680,697	253,617
Other taxation and social security	235,380	122,549	232,897	120,470
Other creditors	697,532	145,662	696,292	144,339
Accruals and deferred income	693,640	300,231	691,940	298,611
	2,308,346	823,259	2,301,826	817,037

	Group 2024 £	<i>Group 2023 £</i>	Academy 2024 £	<i>Academy 2023 £</i>
Deferred income				
Deferred income at 1 September 2023	134,263	109,120	134,263	109,120
Resources deferred during the year	224,200	134,263	224,200	134,263
Amounts released from previous periods	(134,263)	(109,120)	(134,263)	(109,120)
	224,200	134,263	224,200	134,263

At the balance sheet date the academy trust was holding funds of £224,200 received in advance for UIFSM.

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**NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2024**

20. Statement of funds

	Balance at 1 September 2023 £	Income £	Expenditure £	Transfers in/out £	Gains/ (Losses) £	Balance at 31 August 2024 £
Unrestricted funds						
General funds	1,180,707	1,678,717	(917,807)	-	-	1,941,617
Restricted general funds						
General Annual Grant	-	12,694,829	(12,513,516)	(181,313)	-	-
High Needs	-	757,380	(757,380)	-	-	-
Diocese Land and Building Rent	-	516,667	(516,667)	-	-	-
Pupil Premium	-	910,535	(910,535)	-	-	-
UIFSM	-	332,229	(332,229)	-	-	-
Other DfE/ESFA Grants	-	368,372	(368,372)	-	-	-
TCAF Grant	-	719,898	(719,898)	-	-	-
Other LA Grants	-	545,125	(545,125)	-	-	-
Other Restricted Income	-	186,944	(177,759)	-	-	9,185
Mainstream Schools Additional Grant	-	443,430	(443,430)	-	-	-
Teachers' Pay Additional Grant	-	215,305	(215,305)	-	-	-
PE and Sports Premium	-	231,818	(231,818)	-	-	-
Pension reserve	(459,000)	(295,000)	200,000	-	554,000	-
	(459,000)	17,627,532	(17,532,034)	(181,313)	554,000	9,185

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**NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2024**

20. Statement of funds (continued)

	Balance at 1 September 2023 £	Income £	Expenditure £	Transfers in/out £	Gains/ (Losses) £	Balance at 31 August 2024 £
Fixed assets transferred on conversion	4,295,849	3,602,004	(163,876)	-	-	7,733,977
Fixed assets purchased from GAG	296,706	-	(25,850)	98,437	-	369,293
DfE/ESFA Capital Grants	1,760,021	987,288	(108,528)	82,876	-	2,721,657
Other restricted funds	46,008	-	(2,729)	-	-	43,279
Fixed assets transferred on an existing academy joining the trust	42,613	312,636	(56,985)	-	-	298,264
	<u>6,441,197</u>	<u>4,901,928</u>	<u>(357,968)</u>	<u>181,313</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>11,166,470</u>
Total Restricted funds	<u>5,982,197</u>	<u>22,529,460</u>	<u>(17,890,002)</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>554,000</u>	<u>11,175,655</u>
Total funds	<u><u>7,162,904</u></u>	<u><u>24,208,177</u></u>	<u><u>(18,807,809)</u></u>	<u><u>-</u></u>	<u><u>554,000</u></u>	<u><u>13,117,272</u></u>

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

General Annual Grant - Income from the ESFA which is to be used for the normal running costs of the Academy Trust, including education and support costs.

High Needs - Funding received by the Local Authority to fund further support for students with additional needs.

Diocese land and building rent - The MAT's occupation of property owned by the Diocese of Exeter for the period is recognisable as a notional donation and a notional rental expense.

Pupil Premium - This represents funding received from the ESFA for children that qualify for free school meals to enable the Academy Trust to address the current underlying inequalities between those children

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NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
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20. Statement of funds (continued)

and their wealthier peers.

UIFSM - Funding received to enable all pupils in reception, year 1 and year 2 to be offered a free school meal.

Other DfE/ESFA grants - Other forms of income with specific restrictions on its spending, such as recovery premium and national tutoring income.

TCAF Grant - This represents funding from the DfE which is to be used to improve the trusts resource management and capacity to grow.

Mainstream School Additional Grant - Grant funding received from the ESFA to assist with rising cost pressures for all academies.

Teachers' Pay Additional Grant - Funding received from the ESFA which is provided to support schools and local authorities with the cost of the increase in teachers' pay and employer contributions to the teachers' pension scheme.

PE and Sports Premium - This represents funding received from the ESFA and must be used to fund improvements to the provision of PE and sport, for the benefit of primary-aged pupils, so that they develop healthy lifestyles.

Other LA grants - This represents other revenue grants from the LA.

Other restricted income - This represents other restricted income sources including donations and consultancy income

Pension reserve - This represents the Academy Trust's share of the assets and liabilities in the Local Government Pension Scheme. As with most pension schemes this is currently in deficit due to an excess of scheme liabilities over scheme assets which was inherited on conversion to an Academy Trust.

Fixed assets transferred on conversion - This represents the buildings and equipment donated to the trust from the Local Authority on conversion to an Academy Trust.

Fixed assets purchased from GAG - This represents fixed assets which were purchased from GAG and other restricted funding.

DfE/ESFA Capital Grants - This represents fixed assets which were purchased from other DfE/ESFA funding, e.g CIF and DFC.

Other restricted funds - This represents other restricted income and expenditure.

Under the funding agreement with the Secretary of State, the Academy was not subject to a limit on the amount of GAG it could carry forward at 31 August 2024.

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NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2024

20. Statement of funds (continued)

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

	<i>Balance at 1 September 2022 £</i>	<i>Income £</i>	<i>Expenditure £</i>	<i>Transfers in/out £</i>	<i>Gains/ (Losses) £</i>	<i>Balance at 31 August 2023 £</i>
Unrestricted funds						
General funds	950,829	815,762	(585,884)	-	-	1,180,707
Restricted general funds						
General Annual Grant	78,796	7,056,671	(6,958,042)	(177,425)	-	-
High Needs	-	419,536	(419,536)	-	-	-
Diocese Land and Building Rent	-	250,000	(250,000)	-	-	-
Pupil Premium	-	582,463	(582,463)	-	-	-
UIFSM	-	206,095	(206,095)	-	-	-
Supplementary Grant	-	213,118	(213,118)	-	-	-
Other DfE/ESFA Grants	-	471,531	(471,531)	-	-	-
TCAF Grant	215,773	-	(215,773)	-	-	-
Other LA Grants	-	225,481	(225,481)	-	-	-
Other Restricted Income	-	200,220	(182,309)	(17,911)	-	-
Pension reserve	(1,474,000)	(19,000)	(194,000)	-	1,228,000	(459,000)
	<u>(1,179,431)</u>	<u>9,606,115</u>	<u>(9,918,348)</u>	<u>(195,336)</u>	<u>1,228,000</u>	<u>(459,000)</u>

THE ACADEMIES FOR CHARACTER AND EXCELLENCE
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NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2024

20. Statement of funds (continued)

	<i>Balance at 1 September 2022 £</i>	<i>Income £</i>	<i>Expenditure £</i>	<i>Transfers in/out £</i>	<i>Gains/ (Losses) £</i>	<i>Balance at 31 August 2023 £</i>
Fixed assets transferred on conversion	5,665,530	-	(1,369,681)	-	-	4,295,849
Fixed assets purchased from GAG	132,439	-	(13,158)	177,425	-	296,706
DfE/ESFA Capital Grants	1,709,189	128,532	(77,700)	-	-	1,760,021
Other restricted funds	35,368	30,000	(37,271)	17,911	-	46,008
Fixed assets transferred on an existing academy joining the trust	54,664	-	(12,051)	-	-	42,613
	<u>7,597,190</u>	<u>158,532</u>	<u>(1,509,861)</u>	<u>195,336</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>6,441,197</u>
Total Restricted funds	<u>6,417,759</u>	<u>9,764,647</u>	<u>(11,428,209)</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>1,228,000</u>	<u>5,982,197</u>
Total funds	<u><u>7,368,588</u></u>	<u><u>10,580,409</u></u>	<u><u>(12,014,093)</u></u>	<u><u>-</u></u>	<u><u>1,228,000</u></u>	<u><u>7,162,904</u></u>

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NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2024

20. Statement of funds (continued)

Total funds analysis by academy

Fund balances at 31 August 2024 were allocated as follows:

	2024	2023
	£	£
St Gabriel's Church of England Primary School	3,750	-
Trinity Church of England Primary and Nursery School	5,435	-
The Academies for Character and Excellence	1,941,617	1,180,707
	<hr/>	<hr/>
Total before fixed asset funds and pension reserve	1,950,802	1,180,707
Restricted fixed asset fund	11,166,470	6,441,197
Pension reserve	-	(459,000)
	<hr/>	<hr/>
Total	13,117,272	7,162,904
	<hr/> <hr/>	<hr/> <hr/>

THE ACADEMIES FOR CHARACTER AND EXCELLENCE
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**NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2024**

20. Statement of funds (continued)

Total cost analysis by academy

Expenditure incurred by each academy during the year was as follows:

	Teaching and educational support staff costs £	Other support staff costs £	Educational supplies £	Other costs excluding depreciation £	Total 2024 £	<i>Total 2023 £</i>
Shaldon Primary School	704,090	58,684	22,417	256,783	1,041,974	955,900
St Gabriel's Church of England Primary School	652,179	219,604	20,676	261,859	1,154,318	1,048,151
Galmpton Church of England Primary School	845,969	111,241	13,631	217,505	1,188,346	1,026,921
Collaton St Mary Church of England Primary School	782,793	127,837	26,635	283,173	1,220,438	1,094,413
Totnes St Johns Brixham Church of England Primary School	797,350	127,937	44,005	218,856	1,188,148	1,080,408
Torre Church of England Primary School	788,164	134,198	23,722	226,705	1,172,789	1,091,124
Berry Pomeroy Parochial Church of England Primary School	1,204,942	175,277	51,481	260,585	1,692,285	1,718,053
Castle Cary Community Primary School	357,404	30,978	29,065	127,500	544,947	436,763
Newtown Primary School	667,312	83,526	27,912	135,485	914,235	-
Trinity CofE Primary and Nursery School	488,362	83,145	12,204	147,495	731,206	-
	1,237,619	145,526	56,833	266,084	1,706,062	-

THE ACADEMIES FOR CHARACTER AND EXCELLENCE
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20. Statement of funds (continued)

	Teaching and educational support staff costs £	Other support staff costs £	Educational supplies £	Other costs excluding depreciation £	Total 2024 £	Total 2023 £
Ashill Community Primary School	184,291	12,732	13,726	62,982	273,731	-
Buckland St Mary CofE Primary School	238,511	25,008	11,673	67,697	342,889	-
Hatch Beauchamp CofE Primary School	105,845	13,536	11,152	70,939	201,472	-
Holy Trinity CofE Primary School	953,749	213,067	39,174	236,025	1,442,015	-
Stockland CofE Primary School	241,975	10,649	5,313	74,811	332,748	-
Winsham Primary School	184,603	16,341	10,176	47,053	258,173	-
Central services	834,775	978,480	15,641	1,415,169	3,244,065	1,861,499
Total	11,269,933	2,567,766	435,436	4,376,706	18,649,841	10,313,232

21. Analysis of net assets between funds

Analysis of net assets between funds - current period

	Unrestricted funds 2024 £	Restricted funds 2024 £	Restricted fixed asset funds 2024 £	Total funds 2024 £
Tangible fixed assets	-	-	11,091,930	11,091,930
Current assets	4,249,963	9,185	74,540	4,333,688
Creditors due within one year	(2,308,346)	-	-	(2,308,346)
Total	1,941,617	9,185	11,166,470	13,117,272

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**NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
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21. Analysis of net assets between funds (continued)

Analysis of net assets between funds - prior period

	<i>Unrestricted funds 2023 £</i>	<i>Restricted funds 2023 £</i>	<i>Restricted fixed asset funds 2023 £</i>	<i>Total funds 2023 £</i>
Tangible fixed assets	-	-	6,271,245	6,271,245
Current assets	2,003,966	-	169,952	2,173,918
Creditors due within one year	(823,259)	-	-	(823,259)
Provisions for liabilities and charges	-	(459,000)	-	(459,000)
Total	<u>1,180,707</u>	<u>(459,000)</u>	<u>6,441,197</u>	<u>7,162,904</u>

22. Reconciliation of net income/(expenditure) to net cash flow from operating activities

	2024 £	2023 £
Net income/(expenditure) for the period (as per Statement of financial activities)	<u>5,400,368</u>	<u>(1,433,684)</u>
Adjustments for:		
Schools joining the trust	(3,755,941)	(166,415)
Schools transferred into the Trust	(309,760)	-
Depreciation	357,968	253,211
Capital grants from DfE and other capital income	(921,995)	(158,532)
Interest receivable	(10,123)	(287)
Defined benefit pension scheme cost less contributions payable	(200,000)	143,000
Defined benefit pension scheme finance cost	(213,000)	51,000
(Increase)/decrease in debtors	(621,005)	478,239
Increase in creditors	1,521,390	15,566
Impairment charge	-	1,256,651
Net cash provided by operating activities	<u>1,247,902</u>	<u>438,749</u>

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**NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2024**

23. Cash transferred on conversion to an academy trust

	Group 2024 £	<i>Group 2023 £</i>
Cash on conversion	161,936	185,415
Cash received from schools transferred in	526,026	-
Net cash provided by financing activities	687,962	185,415

24. Cash flows from investing activities

	Group 2024 £	<i>Group 2023 £</i>
Dividends, interest and rents from investments	10,123	287
Purchase of tangible fixed assets	(1,264,013)	(983,300)
Capital grants from DfE Group	115,742	749,951
Net cash used in investing activities	(1,138,148)	(233,062)

25. Analysis of cash and cash equivalents

	Group 2024 £	<i>Group 2023 £</i>
Cash in hand and at bank	2,643,132	1,845,416
Total cash and cash equivalents	2,643,132	1,845,416

26. Analysis of changes in net debt

	At 1 September 2023 £	Cash flows £	At 31 August 2024 £
Cash at bank and in hand	1,845,416	293,624	2,139,040
Liquid investments	-	504,092	504,092
	1,845,416	797,716	2,643,132

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NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
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27. Conversion to an Academy Trust

On 1 December 2023 Castle Cary Community Primary School converted to Academy Trust status under the Academies Act 2010 and all the operations and assets and liabilities were transferred to The Academies for Character and Excellence from Somerset County Council for £NIL consideration.

The transfer has been accounted for as a combination that is in substance a gift. The assets and liabilities transferred were valued at their fair value and recognised in the Consolidated balance sheet under the appropriate heading with a corresponding net amount recognised as a net gain in the Consolidated Statement of Financial Activities as Income from Donations and Capital Grants - transfer from local authority on conversion.

The following table sets out the fair values of the identifiable assets and liabilities transferred and an analysis of their recognition in the Consolidated Statement of Financial Activities.

	Restricted fixed asset funds £	Total funds £
Tangible fixed assets		
Leasehold land and buildings	1,882,000	1,882,000
Net assets	<u>1,882,000</u>	<u>1,882,000</u>

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NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
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27. Conversion to an Academy Trust (continued)

On 1 October 2023 Newtown Primary School converted to academy trust status under the Academies Act 2010 and all the operations and assets and liabilities were transferred to The Academies for Character and Excellence from Devon County Council for £NIL consideration.

The transfer has been accounted for as a combination that is in substance a gift. The assets and liabilities transferred were valued at their fair value and recognised in the Consolidated balance sheet under the appropriate heading with a corresponding net amount recognised as a net gain in the Consolidated statement of financial activities as Income from Donations and Capital Grants - transfer from local authority on conversion.

The following table sets out the fair values of the identifiable assets and liabilities transferred and an analysis of their recognition in the Consolidated statement of financial activities.

	Unrestricted funds £	Restricted funds £	Restricted fixed asset funds £	Total funds £
Tangible fixed assets				
Leasehold land and buildings	-	-	1,720,004	1,720,004
Current assets				
Cash - representing budget surplus on LA funds	112,412	-	-	112,412
Non-current liabilities				
LGPS pension surplus/(deficit)	-	(11,000)	-	(11,000)
Net assets/(liabilities)	<u>112,412</u>	<u>(11,000)</u>	<u>1,720,004</u>	<u>1,821,416</u>

THE ACADEMIES FOR CHARACTER AND EXCELLENCE
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**NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
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27. Conversion to an Academy Trust (continued)

On 1 December 2023 Trinity CofE Primary and Nursery School converted to academy trust status under the Academies Act 2010 and all the operations and assets and liabilities were transferred to The Academies for Character and Excellence from Devon County Council for £NIL consideration.

The transfer has been accounted for as a combination that is in substance a gift. The assets and liabilities transferred were valued at their fair value and recognised in the Consolidated balance sheet under the appropriate heading with a corresponding net amount recognised as a net gain in the Consolidated statement of financial activities as Income from Donations and Capital Grants - transfer from local authority on conversion.

The following table sets out the fair values of the identifiable assets and liabilities transferred and an analysis of their recognition in the Consolidated statement of financial activities.

	Unrestricted funds	Restricted funds	Total funds
	£	£	£
Current assets			
Cash - representing budget surplus on LA funds	37,202	-	37,202
Non-current liabilities			
LGPS pension surplus/(deficit)	-	3,000	3,000
Net assets	37,202	3,000	40,202

28. Contingent assets

The actuary has valued the LGPS pension position as an overall asset of £65,000 at 31 August 2024. However, this asset has not been recognised on the balance sheet of the academy trust. Instead the year end position has been capped at £Nil. Academy trusts are pooled within their respective Local Government Pension Schemes and a refund from the scheme is considered unlikely. Therefore, as the academy trust will not gain any future economic benefits as a result of the asset position, it is not considered appropriate to recognise this as an asset on the balance sheet.

29. Capital commitments

	Group 2024	<i>Group 2023</i>	Academy 2024	<i>Academy 2023</i>
	£	£	£	£
Contracted for but not provided in these financial statements	74,439	-	74,439	-

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NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
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30. Pension commitments

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 Devon County Council and Somerset County Council. Both are multi-employer defined benefit schemes.

The latest actuarial valuation of the TPS related to the period ended 31 March 2020 and of the LGPS 31 March 2022.

Contributions amounting to £681,580 were payable to the schemes at 31 August 2024 (2023 - £144,263) and are included within creditors.

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 full-time teachers in academies. All teachers have the option to opt-out of the TPS following enrolment.

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

Valuation of the Teachers' 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 ensure scheme costs are recognised and managed appropriately and the review specifies the level of future contributions.

Actuarial scheme valuations are dependent on assumptions about the value of future costs, design of benefits and many other factors. The latest actuarial valuation of the TPS was carried out as at 31 March 2020. The valuation report was published by the Department for Education on 27 October 2023, with the SCAPE rate, set by HMT, applying a notional investment return based on 1.7% above the rate of CPI. The key elements of the valuation outcome are:

- Employer contribution rates set at 28.68% of pensionable pay (including a 0.08% administration levy). This is an increase of 5% in employer contributions and the cost control result is such that no change in member benefits is needed.
- Total scheme liabilities (pensions currently in payment and the estimated cost of future benefits) for service to the effective date of £262,000 million and notional assets (estimated future contributions together with the notional investments held at the valuation date) of £222,200 million, giving a notional past service deficit of £39,800 million.

The result of this valuation will be implemented from 1 April 2024. The next valuation result is due to be implemented from 1 April 2028.

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30. Pension commitments (continued)

The employer's pension costs paid to TPS in the year amounted to £1,370,055 (2023 - £692,679).

A copy of the valuation report and supporting documentation is on the Teachers' Pensions website (<https://www.teacherspensions.co.uk/news/employers/2013/10/valuation-result.aspx>).

Under the definitions set out in FRS 102, the TPS is an unfunded multi-employer pension scheme. The Academy is unable to identify its share of the underlying assets and liabilities of the plan. Accordingly, the Academy has taken advantage of the exemption in FRS 102 and has accounted for its contributions to the scheme as if it were a defined contribution scheme. The Academy has set out above the information available on the scheme.

Local Government Pension Scheme

The LGPS is a funded defined benefit pension scheme, with the assets held in separate Trustee-administered funds. The total contribution made for the year ended 31 August 2024 was £1,318,000 (2023 - £702,000), of which employer's contributions totalled £1,046,000 (2023 - £551,000) and employees' contributions totalled £ 272,000 (2023 - £151,000). The agreed contribution rates for future years are 22.9 per cent for employers and 5.5 - 12.5 per cent for employees.

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

Principal actuarial assumptions

	2024	2023
	%	%
Rate of increase in salaries	3.75 - 3.80	3.90
Rate of increase for pensions in payment/inflation	2.75 - 2.80	2.90
Discount rate for scheme liabilities	5.05 - 5.10	5.30
Inflation assumption (CPI)	2.75 - 2.80	2.90

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

	2024	2023
	Years	Years
<i>Retiring today</i>		
Males	21.0 - 21.4	21.4
Females	22.7 - 23.0	22.6
<i>Retiring in 20 years</i>		
Males	22.3 - 22.7	22.7
Females	24.1 - 24.4	24.0

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30. Pension commitments (continued)

Sensitivity analysis

	2024	<i>2023</i>
	£000	<i>£000</i>
Discount rate +0.1%	(214)	<i>(117)</i>
Discount rate -0.1%	221	<i>121</i>
Mortality assumption - 1 year increase	297	<i>157</i>
Mortality assumption - 1 year decrease	(290)	<i>(153)</i>
CPI rate +0.1%	219	<i>119</i>
CPI rate -0.1%	(213)	<i>(116)</i>

Share of scheme assets

The Group's share of the assets in the scheme was:

	At 31	<i>At 31 August</i>
	August 2024	<i>2023</i>
	£	<i>£</i>
Equities	6,871,000	<i>2,965,000</i>
Gilts	140,000	<i>-</i>
Other bonds	2,268,000	<i>1,211,000</i>
Property and infrastructure	1,658,000	<i>977,000</i>
Cash	297,000	<i>74,000</i>
Target return portfolio and alternative assets	186,000	<i>337,000</i>
Other	3,000	<i>-</i>
Total market value of assets	11,423,000	<i>5,564,000</i>

The actual return on scheme assets was £924,000 (2023 - £181,000).

The amounts recognised in the Consolidated statement of financial activities are as follows:

	2024	<i>2023</i>
	£	<i>£</i>
Current service cost	(842,000)	<i>(710,000)</i>
Interest income	443,000	<i>214,000</i>
Interest cost	(230,000)	<i>(265,000)</i>
Administrative expenses	(4,000)	<i>(3,000)</i>
Total amount recognised in the Consolidated statement of financial activities	(633,000)	<i>(764,000)</i>

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30. Pension commitments (continued)

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

	2024 £	2023 £
At 1 September	6,023,000	6,095,000
Conversion of academy trusts	714,000	60,000
Transferred in on existing academies joining the trust	3,301,000	-
Current service cost	842,000	691,000
Interest cost	230,000	265,000
Employee contributions	272,000	151,000
Actuarial losses/(gains)	52,000	(1,261,000)
Benefits paid	(75,000)	22,000
	<u>11,359,000</u>	<u>6,023,000</u>
At 31 August	11,359,000	6,023,000

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

	2024 £	2023 £
At 1 September	5,564,000	4,621,000
Conversion of academy trusts	679,000	41,000
Transferred in on existing academies joining the trust	2,828,000	-
Interest income	443,000	214,000
Actuarial gains/(losses)	606,000	(33,000)
Employer contributions	1,046,000	551,000
Employee contributions	272,000	151,000
Benefits paid	(75,000)	22,000
Administration expenses	(4,000)	(3,000)
	<u>11,359,000</u>	<u>5,564,000</u>
At 31 August	11,359,000	5,564,000

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NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
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31. Operating lease commitments

At 31 August 2024 the Group and the Academy had commitments to make future minimum lease payments under non-cancellable operating leases as follows:

	Group 2024 £	<i>Group 2023 £</i>	Academy 2024 £	<i>Academy 2023 £</i>
Not later than 1 year	18,595	<i>14,791</i>	18,595	<i>14,791</i>
Later than 1 year and not later than 5 years	36,266	<i>22,796</i>	36,266	<i>22,796</i>
	54,861	<i>37,587</i>	54,861	<i>37,587</i>

32. 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.

33. Related party transactions

No related party transactions took place in the period of account, other than certain trustees' remuneration and expenses already disclosed in note 14.

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**NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
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34. Transfer of existing academies into the academy

On 1 January 2024 the following academies joined The Academies for Character and Excellence and all operations, assets and liabilities were transferred for £Nil consideration.

Ashill Community Primary School
Buckland St Mary C of E Primary School
Hatch Beauchamp C of E Primary School
Holy Trinity C of E Primary School
Stockland C of E Primary School
Winsham Primary School

The transfer has been accounted for as a combination that is in substance a gift. The assets and liabilities transferred were valued at their fair value and recognised in the Balance sheet under the appropriate headings with a corresponding net amount recognised as a net gain in the Statement of financial activities incorporating income and expenditure account as income on charitable activities - Transfer from academies joining the Trust. The following table sets out the fair values of the identifiable assets and liabilities transferred:

	Value reported by transferring trust £	Transfer in recognised £
Tangible fixed assets		
Long-term leasehold property	109,825	109,825
Furniture and equipment	7,130	7,130
Computer equipment	195,681	195,681
Current assets		
Debtors due after one year	121,998	121,998
Cash at bank and in hand	525,425	525,425
Liabilities		
Creditors due within one year	(150,299)	(150,299)
Pensions		
Pensions - pension scheme assets	2,397,000	2,397,000
Pensions - pension scheme liabilities	(2,897,000)	(2,897,000)
Net assets	<u>309,760</u>	<u>309,760</u>