

AVONREACH ACADEMY TRUST
(A Company Limited by Guarantee)

ANNUAL REPORT AND FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

FOR THE YEAR ENDED

31 AUGUST 2023

Company Limited by Guarantee
Registration Number: 07665364
(England & Wales)

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REFERENCE AND ADMINISTRATIVE DETAILS OF THE ACADEMY, TRUSTEES AND ADVISORS

Members	Simon Barry Natalie Breeze Michael Hodges Patricia Steel The Worcester Diocesan Academies Trust
Trustees	Andrew Longdon, (Chair) (Diocesan) Rob Phillips, (Vice Chair) Penelope Anstey (resigned 26 October 2023) Natalie Breeze (appointed 9 March 2023) Rachel Callaghan Ian Cumming Floriane Fidegnon (appointed 9 March 2023) Karen Rutter Mark Slater (resigned 12 February 2023) Bob Stanton (resigned 26 October 2023) Simon Taylor (appointed 9 March 2023, resigned 21 July 2023)
Chief Executive Officer	Clive Corbett (Accounting Officer, Resigned 09 June 2023) Phil Hanson (Accounting Officer, Appointed 10 June 2023)
Chief Finance Officer	Karen Bevan (Chief Financial and Operations Officer)
Educational Leadership Team	Clive Corbett (Resigned 09 June 2023) Phil Hanson Karen Bevan Sarah Bitcon Julia Dean Glenn Duggan-Seville Andrew Nockton
Principal and Registered Office	Station Road Persnore Worcestershire WR10 2BX
Company name	Avonreach Academy Trust
Company Registration Number	07665364
Independent Auditor	UHY Hacker Young (Birmingham) LLP 9-11 Vittoria Street Birmingham B1 3ND
Bankers	Lloyds Bank PO Box 1000 BX1 1LT
Solicitors	Browne Jacobson Victoria Square House Victoria Square Birmingham B2 4BU

TRUSTEES' REPORT FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2023

The Trustees present their annual report together with the financial statements and auditor's report of the charitable company for the year from 1 September 2022 to 31 August 2023. The Annual report serves the purposes of both a Trustees' report, and a Directors' report under company law.

The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the stated accounting policies and comply with the Memorandum and Articles of Association, the Companies Act 2006, the Financial Reporting and Accounts requirements issued by the Education and Skills Funding Agency, applicable laws and 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 United Kingdom and Republic of Ireland (FRS102).

The trust operates 4 schools in the Pershore area of Worcestershire:

- Inkberrow Primary School
- Norton Juxta Kempsey Primary School
- Orchard Primary School
- Pershore High School

The academies within the trust have a combined pupil capacity of 2,088 and a roll of 1,723 (2022:1,785) in the school census return dated 6 October 2023.

Structure, governance and management**Constitution**

Avonreach Academy Trust is a company limited by guarantee and an exempt charity. The charitable company's Memorandum and Articles of Association are the primary governing documents of the academy trust. The trustees of Avonreach Academy Trust are also the directors of the charitable company for the purposes of company law. The charitable company is known as Avonreach Academy Trust. Its articles were adopted in 2017. 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 above.

Members' Liability

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

Trustees' Indemnities

The trust has opted into the Department for Education's Risk Protection Arrangement. This is an alternative to commercial insurance where the UK government cover losses that arise. This scheme protects trustees and officers from claims arising from negligent acts, errors or omissions occurring whilst on academy business, and provides cover up to £10,000,000.

Method of recruitment and appointment or election of Trustees

The maximum number of trustees permitted under the trust's Articles of Association is twelve at any time. The Diocesan Board of Education is entitled to appoint up to three trustees, providing that the total number of trustees appointed does not exceed twenty five percent of the total number of trustees. Trustees may appoint up to two trustees. All other appointments to the board must be made by the members.

When vacancies arise, the governance professional forms a search group of existing officers and trustees to oversee the selection and appointment of new trustees. Trustees are recruited based on their specialist skills and empathy for trust's values and vision. To ensure that the board has the necessary skills to contribute fully to the development of the trust, the search group will consider the skills and experience of existing board members and seek to fill gaps. The group nominate new trustees to the members for appointment as required.

Trustees are appointed for a four-year period. Subject to remaining eligible, any trustee can be reappointed or re-elected.

TRUSTEES' REPORT FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2023**Policies and procedures adopted for the induction and training of Trustees**

Training is tailored specifically to the needs of the individual and the board. Trustees aim to ensure that the board maintains the relevant skill set and an annual skills audit is undertaken to determine training needs. Where necessary, training in charity, educational, legal, and financial matters is provided. To support the effectiveness of the board and to promote high standards, the trust subscribes to the National Governance Association, The Key, and Governor Hub. Trustees, local governors, and governance professionals are encouraged to undertake all relevant training on offer.

New trustees are encouraged to visit all schools within the trust and meet the headteacher, staff and students.

All trustees are provided with the information needed (including policies, minutes, budgets, etc.) to undertake their role via the secure governance portal.

Organisational structure

The board of trustees comprises those persons appointed under the Articles of Association. The board meets formally at least three times per year. The trust has arranged its business in such a way that responsibilities and lines of accountability are clearly identified in its Scheme of Delegation. The trustees are responsible for ensuring the delivery of high quality education in all schools within the trust, setting general policy, adopting an annual plan and budget, monitoring financial and operational performance, and making strategic decisions about the operation and management of the trust, including making senior staff appointments.

There are three main committees of the board that meet at regular intervals throughout the year. These are:

- Curriculum and Quality
- Finance, Audit and Risk
- HR and Wellbeing

These committees provide the opportunity for detailed discussion and policy development. Decisions reached at committee are reported to the board and, where necessary, interim decisions are reported to the full board for ratification. The trust's Curriculum and Quality committee ensure that the distinctive Christian ethos of Norton Juxta Kempsey Primary School is a focus for the LGB and receives regular reports.

A pay panel is also convened to consider pay recommendations following the performance review cycle. Other panels and working parties, with a particular focus, are convened as necessary.

Trustees are responsible for the strategic direction of the trust and have the ultimate decision-making authority. This is exercised through the strategic planning process, undertaken by the trust board, and through the setting of policy. It is managed through business planning, budget monitoring, performance management, the setting of standards, and the implementation of quality management processes. In addition to the approval of the annual budget, audited accounts, and statutory policies, trustees have reserved the power to approve the appointment of headteachers, senior leadership team members, chairs of Local Governing Boards (LGBs), and to approve expenditure over prescribed amounts.

LGBs are established in all trust schools. LGBs have delegated authority, through the Scheme of Delegation, for the oversight of curriculum delivery and budget management in each of the schools, although the trust board retains formal accountability for their operation and the strategic management and policies of the trust as a whole. LGBs meet six times per year.

Termly meetings between the chair of the trust board, the CEO and chairs of LGBs are also in place to facilitate effective two-way communication.

The LGBs are formally constituted with terms of reference and comprise appropriately qualified and experienced members. Their activities are reported and discussed at meetings of the trust board.

The day-to-day management of the trust is the responsibility of the Chief Executive Officer (CEO), who is also Accounting Officer. The day to day running of each of the academies is delegated to the individual headteachers and leadership teams at each school.

TRUSTEES' REPORT FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2023**Arrangements for Setting Pay and Remuneration of Key Management Personnel**

Arrangements for setting the pay and remuneration of the trust's key management personnel are approved by the trust board in line with its Executive Pay policy. The trust's teachers' pay policy is based on the nationally agreed pay scale as outlined in the School Teachers Pay and Conditions Document. The trust adheres to local government pay arrangements for support staff and follows the local government pay scales.

Trade Union facility time

Under the provisions of the Trade Union (Facility Time Publication Requirements) Regulations 2017, where an academy trust has more than 49 full time equivalent employees throughout any 7 months within the reporting period, it must publish information included in Schedule 2 of the Regulations.

The information to be published consists of table below:

Number of employees who were relevant Trade Union officials during the relevant period	Full-time equivalent employee number
	2
Percentage of time spent on facility time	-
Percentage of time	
0%	2
1% to 50%	-
51% to 99%	-
100%	"
Percentage of pay bill spent on facility time	
Total cost of facilities time	£Nil
Total pay bill	£8,683,552
Percentage of the total pay bill spent on facility time, calculated as: (total cost of facility time ÷ total pay bill) × 100	Nil%
Full time equivalent number	2
Percentage of time spent on facility time	Nil%
Paid Trade Union activities	
Time spent on paid Trade Union activities as a percentage of total paid facility time hours calculated as: (total hours spent on paid Trade Union activities by relevant union officials during the relevant period ÷ total paid facility time hours) × 100	Nil%

Related Parties and Other Connected Charities and Organisations

Owing to the nature of the trust's operations and its close working relationships with local public and private sector organisations, transactions may take place with organisations in which a trustee has an interest. All transactions with such organisations are conducted at arm's length and in accordance with the trust's financial regulations. Related party relationships are acknowledged at the trustees' meetings and through the pecuniary interest forms. Any financial transactions are disclosed in the notes to the accounts.

Pershore High School Trading Limited is wholly owned subsidiary of the academy trust.

Objectives and Activities**Objects and Aims**

The aim of the trust is to provide the highest possible standard of education and pastoral care for its children and young people. Maximising the life chances of pupils, regardless of their abilities, characteristics, and personal circumstances. It achieves this object principally through the operation of four schools in Worcestershire.

Avonreach Academy Trust aims to be the choice for parents who aspire to the best educational outcomes for their children from age 2 to 18.

TRUSTEES' REPORT FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2023**Objectives, Strategies and Activities**

The trust's objectives are set out in its Articles of Association. Its principal objects are:

- advance for the public benefit education in the United Kingdom
- promote for the benefit of the inhabitants of Pershore and the surrounding area the provision of facilities for recreation or other leisure time occupation

To meet these aims, the trust:

- 1 Set and achieve clear milestones of educational performance, safeguarding and personal development, by:
 - a ensuring that an appropriate level of curriculum is identified, planned and delivered;
 - b defining and implementing the required educational standards at all levels;
 - c ensuring robust safeguarding practices throughout the trust;
 - d promoting a culture of collaboration and cooperation across the trust.
- 2 Ensure high standards of leadership, governance, and stakeholder engagement by:
 - a appoint well qualified and experienced staff to leadership positions within the trust
 - b embedding the role of the trust board as 'Executive Leader' of the trust and provide support to schools through clear standards of governance
 - c promoting the health and wellbeing of all staff
- 3 Secure the future growth and sustainability of the trust:
 - a review the executive leadership team and central team structures and recruit well qualified staff to lead and expand the trust
 - b ensure robust and effective financial and risk management systems and procedures
 - c develop wider support services, including school improvement, estates management, and governance
 - d developing and implementing a marketing strategy
 - e implementing strategies for environmental sustainability

Public Benefit

In setting objectives and planning for activities, the trustees have given due consideration to general guidance published by the Charity Commission relating to public benefit, including the guidance 'Public benefit: running a charity (PB2) .

The primary purpose of the trust is the advancement of education through its schools. Both Orchard and Norton Juxta Kempsey primary schools operate an extended day, offering before and after school care for the children of working parents. Orchard Primary School also operates an onsite nursery.

In the interests of school welfare and improving life in the local community, the trust also provides facilities for recreational and other leisure time occupation for the community.

Strategic Report

In June 2023 the trust's executive leadership team changed following the retirement of the Executive Officer, Clive Corbett after many years of service to education. Clive was instrumental in the formation of the trust and the transition of the schools to a two-tier system. The contribution Clive made to the education of thousands of children and young people is immeasurable and trustees are grateful for his long and valued service. In April 2023 a new Chief Executive Officer, Phil Hanson, was appointed taking up his role in June 2023.

Achievements and Performance

Avonreach Academy Trust provides its children and young people with a rich and varied experience both within and beyond the curriculum. Our schools continue to provide a good quality of education and Inkberrow Primary continues to be an Ofsted Outstanding School.

Curriculum development continues to be a focus for all schools. Primary schools continue to collaborate to ensure they are delivering an engaging and lively curriculum and sharing good practice across the schools. Pershore High School continues to develop its curriculum incorporating Year 7 and ensuring progression for all students regardless of their point of entry (Year 7 or Year 8).

TRUSTEES' REPORT FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2023 (cont'd)

School Performance Data:

KS2 Expected Standard				
	Inkberrow	Norton	Orchard	National
Reading	95%	71%	70%	73%
Writing	86%	78%	77%	71%
Maths	86%	71%	67%	73%
Combined	86%	56%	53%	59%
GPS	91%	73%	60%	72%

KS2 Greater Depth (National Data not available)			
	Inkberrow	Norton	Orchard
Reading	55%	24%	17%
Writing	23%	7%	3%
Maths	50%	20%	7%
Combined	27%	5%	3%
GPS	55%	22%	20%

Key Stage 4

Recovery post-pandemic has impacted the performance of all secondary schools and in 2023 the grading system for GCSEs returned to pre-pandemic level of 2019.

Measure	School 2023	National
% 5+ English & Maths	42% *	45%
Entering EBacc	28%	39%
EBacc average point score	3.97	4.05
Attainment 8	45.05 *	46.2
Progress 8	-0.01	0
Pupils staying in employment after KS4	96%	94%

*These results are affected by an unusually high number of students who were unable to attend school or sit the normal range of KS4 qualifications due to significant health issues, the majority of whom were educated under Section 19 by the Local Authority.

A Level

Measure	School 2023	National
Average A Level Result	C+	n/a
Average Applied General Result	Distinction	n/a
% A Level Grades A*-C	65.30%	n/a
% of students completing their main study programme (2022)	97.80%	95.10%

Going Concern

After making appropriate enquiries, the board of trustees has a reasonable expectation that the 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.

Financial Review

Most of the trust's income comes from central government in the form of recurrent grants from Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA). These grants and the associated expenditure are shown as restricted funds in the consolidated Statement of Financial Activities.

Funding is based largely on pupil numbers with an Age Weighted Pupil Unit (AWPU) allocation in line with pupil numbers recorded in the annual October census. These funds form the 'General Annual Grant' (GAG) and cover the staffing and general running costs of the trust.

TRUSTEES' REPORT FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2023 (cont'd)**Financial Review (cont'd)**

The ESFA also provides additional grants that are earmarked for specific purposes, for example, Pupil Premium, which must be used to raise attainment for disadvantaged pupils. The trust also receives additional grants from the local authority; for example, SEND funding, where the trust fulfils responsibilities on behalf of the local authority in respect of its pupils with special educational needs.

During the period, the ESFA continued to provide grant funding to support the financial impact of increases to teachers' pay and pension fund contributions. Similarly, a mainstream supplementary allocation grant was provided to offer some protection from the economic downturn and increasing costs. Government funding continued to be made available to support the costs incurred by schools in the aftermath of the pandemic, for example, recovery premium and school led tutoring grants.

Other income received by the trust includes that from parents (for trips etc.) or other third parties, for example, donations. Other income may be 'restricted' or 'unrestricted' depending on whether it comes with conditions as to its use or whether it is available for spending at the discretion of the trustees. The primary income source for each school remains the GAG funding.

The trust receives grants from the ESFA for capital expenditure and building works. In accordance with the Charities Statement of Recommended Practice, (Charities SORP (FRS102)), and the Academies Accounts Direction, these grants are shown in the Statement of Financial Activities as restricted income in the fixed asset fund. The restricted fixed asset fund balance is reduced by annual depreciation charges over the expected useful life of the assets concerned.

During the year, the trust received additional devolved formula capital funding to support energy efficiency initiatives. In the main, this funding was used to install LED lighting and to replace single glazed windows. In addition, Norton Juxta Kempsey Primary School was awarded a Condition Improvement Fund (CIF) grant for the refurbishment of its roof.

As at 31 August 2023 fund balances were as follows:

Fund	Category	2023 £'000	2022 £'000
Unrestricted	Unrestricted General Funds	524	435
Total	General Unrestricted Funds	524	435
GAG	Restricted General Funds	176	48
Ukraine Fund	Restricted General Funds	92	-
School Fund	Restricted General Funds	67	-
Pupil Catering	Restricted General Funds	483	427
Total	General Restricted Funds	818	475
Net book value of Fixed Assets	Restricted Fixed Asset Fund	18,446	18,314
Share of LGPS	Restricted Pension Reserve	(1,517)	(2,980)
Total	All Funds	18,271	16,545
Unspent capital grants	Restricted Fixed Asset Funds	114	301
Total	Spendable Funds	114	301

During the year ended 31 August 2023, total expenditure of £11,554,000 (2022: £10,453,000) was funded by recurrent grant funding from the ESFA together with other incoming resources. The excess of income over expenditure for the period (excluding restricted fixed asset funds and transfers to restricted fixed asset funds) was £272,000 (2022: £65,000 deficit). At 31 August 2023 the net book value of fixed assets was £18,332,000 (2022: £18,314,000).

In common with all academies, and local authorities, the trust has an ongoing commitment to its share of the Local Government Pension Scheme (LGPS) deficit. Whilst this is not a conventional liability, it does need to be reflected in the accounts, although it does not need to be deducted from spendable funds. The trust meets its obligations in respect of LGPS by paying over pension contributions due as calculated by the scheme's actuaries. As at 31 August 2023 the LGPS showed a deficit of £1,517,000 (2022: £2,980,000).

The trust has an experienced Chief Financial and Operations Officer (CFOO). The Head of Finance is a qualified accountant. The Central Team provides budget setting, financial and risk management support to the trustees, local governors, headteachers, and other budget holders and finance administrators.

TRUSTEES' REPORT FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2023 (cont'd)**Financial Review (cont'd)**

The Central Team produce monthly management accounts for all schools. These include a year-to-date position and full year forecast for comparison to the approved budget. Consolidated reports are produced for the board and compared to the approved budget submitted to the ESFA.

Reforecasts are undertaken when required. The Finance, Audit and Risk committee receives the consolidated management accounts, balance sheet and cash flow forecast each month. The committee reviews and discusses the financial management information in detail at each meeting.

The Finance, Audit and Risk committee periodically receives and reviews longer term financial models to inform strategic decision making and budget approval.

Financial Risk Management Objectives and Policies

Trustees regularly assess the major risks to which the trust is exposed. The Finance, Audit and Risk committee reviews risk management arrangements, including a risk management strategy and a strategic risk register. The strategic risk register seeks to identify the likelihood of an event occurring, its impact, and any mitigating actions that might reduce or transfer the risk where appropriate.

The trust has introduced a comprehensive risk management process. Each school maintains its own register, reviewed by its LGB, significant risks are escalated, informing the trust's strategic risk register. Risks are categorised under the following headings: strategic, operational, compliance, financial, educational, wellbeing and safety, and reputational. This process provides trustees with a detailed understanding of risk within each school and offers the opportunity to spot wider trends and issues.

Trustees acknowledge that they have overall responsibility for ensuring that the trust has an effective and appropriate system of controls in place. The board is also responsible for keeping proper accounting records that comply with the Companies Act. The trustees also acknowledge responsibility for safeguarding the assets of the trust and for taking reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities.

The trust's system of internal control is based on a framework of regular management information and administrative procedures, including segregation of duties, monitoring of controls, training of staff and a system of delegations and accountability.

The trust's financial regulations provide instruction and guidance to trustees, chairs of LGBs, headteachers, and staff, and ensures that each school maintains and develops systems of financial control that conform to the requirements of both propriety and good financial management.

An internal audit function, provided by an external reviewer performing a range of checks on the trusts internal control systems and procedures, provides further assurance to the trustees.

Reserves Policy

Each year the trustees review forecasted income and resource requirements and approve an annual budget.

Trustees recognise the need to have sufficient reserves to protect future operations and its Reserves and Investment Policy embeds a culture of financial management that is open and transparent, ensuring that the trust's strategic aims are delivered.

The aim of trustees is to carry forward a prudent level of reserves to support the continuing operation of the trust whilst ensuring excessive funds are not accumulated. Cash balances of all academies are pooled into a central account with the accounting of reserves remaining at school level.

To protect against the uncertainties created by the current financial climate, the trust aims to hold a reserve of a minimum of three times its monthly operating costs.

Investment Policy

Due to the nature and timing of receipt of funding, the trust may at times hold cash balances surplus to its short-term requirements. Trustees are committed to ensuring that all funds under their control are managed in such a way to maximise return whilst minimising risk. As such the trust's investment policy aims to:

- achieve the best financial return available for cash reserves whilst ensuring the security of deposits takes precedence over revenue maximisation

TRUSTEES' REPORT FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2023 (cont'd)**Investment Policy (cont'd)**

- only invest funds surplus to operational need and ensuring all financial commitments are met and optimum cash flows are maintained
- exercise all investment decisions ethically, with care and skill, in the best interests of the trust

Principal Risks and Uncertainties

All major risks to which the trust is exposed are detailed in the risk register that is reviewed by Finance, Audit and Risk committee and the board. Robust policies and procedures are in place to mitigate and manage risk across the trust.

The principal risks of the trust have been identified as:

- **Financial** - the trust is reliant on the continued government funding through the ESFA. There is no assurance that the government policy or practice will remain the same. Moreover, it remains the fact that despite the National Funding Formula, the funding levels for secondary pupils in Worcestershire is less per pupil per year than in other areas within the West Midlands.

The management information and controls in place, manage, in as far as is possible, the impact of this risk.

Careful budget planning based on known information and assumptions for inflationary increases supports robust financial management.

The Board and LGBs review monthly financial information and respond to trends and challenge variances as appropriate.

The risk associated with the trust's share of the LPGS deficit is managed by following actuarial advice.

A material risk for the trust in relation to the defined pension scheme is mitigated by parliamentary guarantee.

- **Recruitment and retention** – over recent years, it has become increasingly difficult to recruit and retain teachers and support staff, especially at secondary level. The nationwide shortage of qualified teachers affects the trust's ability to attract and retain staff.

This risk is managed through:

Development of the trust's employee benefits and support schemes in order to be an employer of choice.

Encouraging its schools to be fully involved in the provision of Initial Teacher Training through local teaching schools and apprenticeship schemes.

- **Buildings and facilities** - the trust's estate is aging and ensuring that the estate under the control of the trust remains safe, secure, and compliant presents an ongoing risk. In addition, the risks associated to the use of reinforced autoclaved aerated concrete (RAAC) in school buildings across the country was identified in August 2023, requiring immediate investigation.

This risk is managed by:

Developing an estates strategy outlining the trust's short, medium and long-term ambitions for its sites and

facilities, including energy efficiency, sustainability and creating engaging environments for learning.

Use of Condition Improvement Funding (CIF), and Devolved Formula Capital, (DFC) funding. For example, Norton Juxta Kempsey Primary School was awarded CIF funding to replace its roof (completed October 2023). Bids for a new roof at Orchard Primary and updated heating systems at both Orchard Primary and Inkberrow Primary were unsuccessful. A revised bid for the roof at Orchard Primary School is being prepared.

A £22 million DfE funded rebuild, refurbishment and expansion project at Pershore High School to replace its aging buildings. Work is scheduled to commence in the autumn of 2024 with projected completion in 2027.

Use of DfE appointed consultants to establish the presence of RAAC in the estate. At the time of writing, it has been confirmed that Norton Juxta Kempsey Primary School is free of RAAC. The trust awaits reports from structural engineers in relation to its other schools. Whilst not yet formally confirmed, visual surveys conducted at Inkberrow Primary School, Orchard Primary School and Pershore High School suggest that the risk of RAAC is low.

Ensuring compliance with legislation to protect the health and safety of staff, pupils, and visitors across the trust.

TRUSTEES' REPORT FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2023 (cont'd)**Fundraising**

The trust will explore opportunities for fundraising and will set out its aims and demonstrate how these aims link to its values in an organisational plan. The plan will conform to the Charities SORP, and the guidance issued by the Charities Commission in relation to fundraising. During the accounting period, the trust did not operate a formal fundraising programme in conjunction with any commercial or professional fundraisers. Similarly, the trust does not subscribe to any voluntary fundraising schemes or standards and does not have any commercial third-party fundraising on its behalf requiring monitoring in relation to vulnerable people, unreasonably intrusive or persistent fundraising approaches, or undue pressure to donate.

Schools in the trust do benefit from occasional volunteer fundraising by associated parent/friends and similar groups. It is recognised that the opportunities for fundraising are limited by the current economic landscape.

The trust has not received any formal complaints in respect of its fundraising activities.

Plans for Future Periods

The appointment of a new CEO provides the opportunity for the trust to review its vision and strategy. Involving staff in the creation of a refreshed vision for the education of its children and young people. The trust will focus on its growth through further development of its central services, providing high quality support to its schools.

The trust will continue to build upon its reputation for delivery of high quality teaching and learning.

The trust will continue to work collaboratively with local schools through a period of uncertainty caused by the Pershore Area Review.

Over the next three years expand Pershore High School to a 10-form entry 11 to 18 secondary school. Ensuring that the learning environment is suitable for the delivery of high-quality education within buildings that are increasingly environmentally sustainable and carbon neutral in operation. Continue to explore funding streams to further enhance sporting facilities for pupil and wider community use.

Funds Held as Custodian Trustee on Behalf of Others

The trust does not hold any funds as custodian trustee on behalf of others.

Auditor

In so far as the trustees are aware:

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

The Trustees' report, incorporating a strategic report, was approved by order of the Board of Trustees, as the company directors, on 12 December 2023 and signed on its behalf by:



.....
Andrew Longdon
Chair of Trustees

GOVERNANCE STATEMENT FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2023**Scope of Responsibility**

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

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

The Board of Trustees has delegated the day to day responsibility to the Chief Executive Officer, as Accounting Officer, for ensuring financial controls conform with the requirements of both propriety and good financial management and in accordance with the requirements and responsibilities assigned to it in the funding agreement between Avonreach Academy Trust and the Secretary of State for Education. The Accounting Officer is 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 12 times during the year. Attendance during the year at meetings of the Board of Trustees was as follows:

Trustees	Meetings attended	Out of a possible
Andrew Longdon (Chair)	11	12
Rob Phillips (Vice Chair)	10	12
Penelope Anstey	2	12
Natalie Breeze (Appointed 9 March 2023)	7	8
Rachel Callaghan	11	12
Ian Cumming	9	12
Floriane Fidegnon (Appointed 9 March 2023)	6	8
Karen Rutter	10	12
Mark Slater (Resigned 16 February 2023)	3	3
Bob Stanton	11	12
Simon Taylor (Appointed 9 March 2023. Resigned 21 July 2023)	7	8

In line with the Handbook, the trust's governance structure ensures separation between tiers of governance. Members are not permitted to serve on LGBs and Local Governors are not permitted to serve as trustees.

During the year, the board has continued to focus on school improvement, the effective delivery of the curriculum, pupil outcomes and on the long-term financial sustainability of the trust. In the second half of the year the board undertook a recruitment process for the appointment of a new CEO and supported further appointments to enhance the services provided by the central team.

The board continues to operate the Circle Method of Governance. LGBs oversee school business at six full governing body meetings per year, each with a focus on either finance or curriculum. The scheme of delegation and terms of reference are reviewed at least annually. The board receives timely and quality assured performance data from the LGBs of individual schools. In addition, the executive leadership team provides a range of financial and operational management information to inform the board's decision making.

The board have commissioned an external review of governance in line with recommended best practice. The outcomes from this will be reviewed and appropriate actions taken during the 2023/24 academic year.

Conflicts of Interest

All trustees and local governors complete the register of business interests annually and are asked at each meeting to declare any changes or interests specific to the meeting agenda. This information allows the trust to identify any potential conflicts of interest and act accordingly. Members of the executive leadership team and headteachers of schools also complete the register of business interests annually.

GOVERNANCE STATEMENT FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2023**Finance Audit and Risk Committee**

The finance, audit and risk committee is a sub-committee of the main board of trustees. Its purpose is to ensure the financial robustness of the trust, to monitor financial performance against budget, to ensure financial propriety through the audit of the trust's systems and controls and advise on the management of risk. Attendance during the year at meetings was as follows:

Trustees	Meetings attended	Out of a possible
Ian Cumming (Chair)	3	3
Karen Rutter (Vice Chair)	3	3
Natalie Breeze (Appointed 25 May 2023)	1	1
Floriane Fidegnon (Appointed 25 May 2023)	1	1
Andy Longdon	3	3
Bob Stanton	3	
Simon Taylor (Appointed 25 May 2023. Resigned 21 July 2023)	1	3 1

Review of Value for Money

As accounting officer, the Chief Executive Officer 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, as well as estates safety and management, achieved in return for the taxpayer resources received.

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 academy trust has delivered improved value for money by:

Ensuring:

- ◊ resources are targeted at school improvement priorities as identified in individual school development plans
- high quality staff are recruited and retained
- procurement processes are in place to deliver best value and economies of scale
- ◊ additional capital funding has been utilised to improve energy efficiency in schools
- funds are directed appropriately to meet health and safety compliance
- large scale building and refurbishment projects are funded from external sources
- large value contracts meet public contracts regulations

The Purpose of the System of Internal Control

The system of internal control is designed to manage risk to a reasonable level rather than to eliminate all risk of failure to achieve policies, aims and objectives. It can therefore only provide reasonable and not absolute assurance of effectiveness. The system of internal control is based on an ongoing process designed to identify and prioritise the risks to the achievement of 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 Avonreach Academy Trust for the period 1 September 2022 to 31 August 2023 and up to the date of approval of the annual report and financial statements.

Capacity to Handle Risk

The board of trustees has reviewed the key risks to which the trust is exposed together with the operating, financial and compliance controls that have been implemented to mitigate those risks. The trust board is of the view that there is a formal ongoing process for identifying, evaluating, and managing the trust's significant risks, which has been in place for the period 1 September 2022 to 31 August 2023 and up to the date of approval of the annual report and financial statements. This process is regularly reviewed by the board of trustees.

GOVERNANCE STATEMENT FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2023**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 finance, audit and risk committee of reports which indicate financial performance against the forecasts and of major purchase plans, capital works and expenditure programmes
- setting targets to measure financial and other performance
- clearly defined purchasing (asset purchase or capital investment) guidelines
- identification and management of risks

The size of the trust is not considered to warrant a specific in-house internal scrutiny role. To maximise the effectiveness of the scrutiny performed, the trustees have chosen to work with a range of external professionals, including external audit firms and SRMAs, for the period 1 September 2022 to 31 August 2023.

The internal auditor's role includes giving advice on financial and other matters and performing a range of checks on the trust's financial and other systems. In the current period, reviews have included:

- Financial management and governance
- Self-generated income
- GDPR compliance

The reviewer reports to the board of trustees, through the finance, audit and risk committee on the operation of the systems of control and the discharge of the board of trustees' financial responsibilities. On an annual basis a summary report is presented to the committee outlining areas reviewed, key findings, recommendations, and conclusions to help the committee consider actions and assess year on year progress.

Review of Effectiveness

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

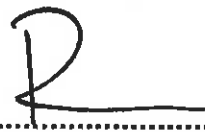
- the work of the internal reviewer;
- the work of the external auditors;
- feedback from the Chair of Finance, Audit and Risk committee.
- the work of the Chief Financial Officer who has responsibility for the development and maintenance of the internal control framework;
- the school resource management self-assessment tool;
- correspondence from the ESFA.

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

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



.....
Andrew Longdon - Chair of Trustees



.....
Phil Hanson - Chief Executive Officer


**STATEMENT ON REGULARITY, PROPRIETY AND COMPLIANCE FOR THE YEAR ENDED
31 AUGUST 2023**

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

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

I confirm that the following instances of material irregularity, impropriety or funding non-compliance discovered to date have been notified to the board of Trustees and ESFA. If any instances are identified after the date of this statement, these will be notified to the board of Trustees and ESFA:

- The trust has not had full oversight of financial transactions and ensured the assets are under the trustee's control. Bank accounts with a value of £64,443 were identified that were not recorded in the trust's financial records. This is in breach of section 1.40 of the Academy Trust Handbook 2022.


.....
Phil Hanson
Chief Executive Officer

12 December 2023

STATEMENT OF TRUSTEES' RESPONSIBILITIES FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2023

The trustees (who act as 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 Annual Accounts Direction issued 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 charitable company and of its incoming resources and application of resources, including its income and expenditure, for that period. In preparing these financial statements, the trustees are required to:

- select suitable accounting policies and then apply them consistently;
- observe the methods and principles in the Charities SORP 2019 and the Academies Accounts Direction 2022 to 2023;
- make judgments and estimates that are reasonable and prudent;
- state whether applicable UK Accounting Standards FRS102 have been followed, subject to any material departures disclosed and explained in the financial statements; and
- prepare the financial statements on the going concern basis unless it is inappropriate to presume that the academy will continue in business.

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

The trustees are responsible for ensuring that in its conduct and operation the charitable company applies financial and other controls, which conform with the requirements both of propriety and of good financial management. They are also responsible for ensuring grants received from the ESFA/DfE have been applied for the purposes intended.

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

Approved by order of the members of the board of trustees on 12 December 2023 and signed on its behalf by:



.....
Andrew Longdon - Chair of Trustees

INDEPENDENT AUDITOR'S REPORT TO THE MEMBERS OF AVONREACH ACADEMY TRUST FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2023**Opinion**

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

In our opinion the financial statements:

- give a true and fair view of the state of the Avonreach Academy Trust's affairs as at 31 August 2023 and of its incoming resources and application of resources, including 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 2022 to 2023

Basis for opinion

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

Conclusions relating to going concern

In auditing the financial statements, we have concluded that the trustees' use of the going concern basis of accounting in the preparation of the financial statement 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 Avonreach Academy Trust's ability to continue as a going concern for a period of at least twelve months from when the financial statements are authorised for issue.

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

Other information

The other information comprises the information included in the annual report other than the financial statements and our auditor's report thereon. The trustees are responsible for the other information contained within the financial statements. 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 there is a material misstatement in the financial statements or a material misstatement of the other information. If, based on the work we have performed, we conclude that there is a material misstatement of this other information, we are required to report that fact.

We have nothing to report in this regard.

INDEPENDENT AUDITOR'S REPORT TO THE MEMBERS OF AVONREACH ACADEMY TRUST FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2023 (cont'd)**Opinions on other matters prescribed by the Companies Act 2006**

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

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

Matters on which we are required to report by exception

In the light of the knowledge and understanding of the charitable company and its environment obtained in the course of the audit, we have not identified material misstatements in the trustees' report. We have nothing to report in respect of the following matters where the Companies Act 2006 requires us to report to you if, in our opinion:

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

Responsibilities of trustees

As explained more fully in the trustees' responsibilities statement set out on page 17, the trustees 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 Avonreach Academy Trust's ability to continue as a going concern, disclosing, as applicable, matters related to going concern and using the going concern basis of accounting unless the trustees either intend to liquidate the charitable company or to cease operations, or have no realistic alternative but to do so.

Auditor's responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements

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

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

Based on our understanding of the Avonreach Academy Trust and the industry in which it operates, we identified that the principal risks of non-compliance with laws and regulations related to the acts by the Avonreach Academy Trust, which were contrary to applicable laws and regulations including fraud, and we considered the extent to which non-compliance might have a material effect on the financial statements. We also considered those laws and regulations that have a direct impact on the preparation of the financial statements such as the Companies Act 2006, Charities SORP 2019 and Academies Accounts Direction 2022 to 2023. We evaluated management's incentives and opportunities for fraudulent manipulation of the financial statements (including the risk of override of controls), and determined that the principal risks were related to inflated revenue and the Avonreach Academy Trust's net income for the year.

INDEPENDENT AUDITOR'S REPORT TO THE MEMBERS OF AVONREACH ACADEMY TRUST FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2023 (cont'd)

Audit procedures performed included: review of the financial statement disclosures to underlying supporting documentation, review of correspondence with and reports to the regulators, including correspondence with the Education and Skills Funding Agency review of correspondence with legal advisors, enquiries of management and review of internal audit reports in so far as they related to the financial statements, and testing of journals and evaluating whether there was evidence of bias by the trustees that represented a risk of material misstatement due to fraud.

There are inherent limitations in the audit procedures described above and the further removed non-compliance with laws and regulations is from the events and transactions reflected in the financial statements, the less likely we would become aware of it. Also, the risk of not detecting a material misstatement due to fraud is higher than the risk of not detecting one resulting from error, as fraud may involve deliberate concealment by, for example, forgery or intentional misrepresentations, or through collusion.

As part of an audit in accordance with ISAs (UK), we exercise professional judgment and maintain professional scepticism throughout the audit. We also:

- Identify and assess the risks of material misstatement of the financial statements, whether due to fraud or error, design and perform audit procedures responsive to those risks, and obtain audit evidence that is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our opinion. The risk of not detecting a material misstatement resulting from fraud is higher than for one resulting from error, as fraud may involve collusion, forgery, intentional omissions, misrepresentations, or the override of internal control.
- Obtain an understanding of internal control relevant to the audit in order to design audit procedures that are appropriate in the circumstances, but not for the purpose of expressing an opinion on the effectiveness of the academy trust's internal control.
- Evaluate the appropriateness of accounting policies used and the reasonableness of accounting estimates and related disclosures made by the trustees.
- Conclude on the appropriateness of the trustees' use of the going concern basis of accounting and, based on the audit evidence obtained, whether a material uncertainty exists related to events or conditions that may cast significant doubt on the academy trust's ability to continue as a going concern. If we conclude that a material uncertainty exists, we are required to draw attention in our auditor's report to the related disclosures in the financial statements or, if such disclosures are inadequate, to modify our opinion. Our conclusions are based on the audit evidence obtained up to the date of our auditor's report. However, future events or conditions may cause the academy trust to cease to continue as a going concern.
- Evaluate the overall presentation, structure and content of the financial statements, including the disclosures, and whether the financial statements represent the underlying transactions and events in a manner that achieves fair presentation.

**INDEPENDENT AUDITOR'S REPORT TO THE MEMBERS OF AVONREACH ACADEMY TRUST
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2023 (cont'd)****Use of our report**

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



.....
Malcolm Winston
Senior Statutory Auditor
UHY Hacker Young (Birmingham) LLP, Statutory Auditor
9-11 Vittoria Street
Birmingham
B1 3ND

12 December 2023

INDEPENDENT REPORTING ACCOUNTANT'S AUDITOR'S ASSURANCE REPORT ON REGULARITY TO AVONREACH ACADEMY TRUST AND THE EDUCATION AND SKILLS FUNDING AGENCY FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2023

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

This report is made solely to the Avonreach Academy Trust and the ESFA in accordance with our engagement letter. Our review has been undertaken so that we might state to the trust board and the ESFA those matters we are required to state to it 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 Avonreach Academy Trust and the ESFA, for our work, for this report, or for the conclusion we have formed.

Respective responsibilities of Avonreach Academy Trust's accounting officer and the reporting accountant

The Accounting Officer is responsible, under the requirements of Avonreach Academy Trust funding agreement with the Secretary of State for Education dated 30 June 2011, varied by deed of variation dated 29 April 202 and the Academy Trust Handbook extant from 1 September 2022 for ensuring that expenditure disbursed and income received is applied for the purposes intended by Parliament and the financial transactions conform to the authorities which govern them.

Our responsibilities for this engagement are established in the United Kingdom by our profession's ethical guidance and are to obtain limited assurance and report in accordance with our engagement letter and the requirements of the Academies: Accounts Direction 2022 to 2023. We report to you whether, anything has come to our attention in carrying out our work which suggests that in all material respects, expenditure disbursed and income received during the period 1 September 2022 to 31 August 2023 have not been applied to purposes intended by Parliament and 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 Accountants issued by the ESFA. We performed a limited assurance engagement as defined in our engagement letter.

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

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

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

INDEPENDENT REPORTING ACCOUNTANT'S AUDITOR'S ASSURANCE REPORT ON REGULARITY TO AVONREACH ACADEMY TRUST AND THE EDUCATION AND SKILLS FUNDING AGENCY FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2023 (cont'd)

Approach (con't)

Summary of the work undertaken was as follows:

- Analytical review of the academy trust's general activities are within the academy trusts framework of authorities;
- Consideration of the evidence supporting the accounting officers statement on regularity, propriety and compliance;
- Review of the general control environment for the academy trust on financial statements and on regularity;
- Confirmation that a sample of expenditure has been appropriately authorised in accordance with the academy trust's delegated authorities;
- Formal representations obtained from the board of trustees and the accounting officer acknowledging the responsibilities including disclosing all non compliance with laws and regulations specific to the authorising framework;
- Confirmation that any extra contractual payments such as severance and compensation payments have been appropriately authorised;
- Review of credit card expenditure for any indication of personal use by staff, principal or trustees;
- Review of specific terms of grant funding within the funding agreement;
- Review of related party transactions for connections with the principal/finance manager or trustees;
- Review of income received in accordance with the activities permitted within the academy trust's charitable objectives.

Conclusion

In the course of our work, except for the matter listed below, nothing has come to our attention which suggests that in all material respects the expenditure disbursed and income received during the period 1 September 2022 to 31 August 2023 has not been applied to purposes intended by Parliament and the financial transactions do not conform to the authorities which govern them:

- The trust has not had full oversight of financial transactions and ensured the asset's are under the trustee's control. Bank accounts with a value of £64,443 were identified that were not recorded in the trust's financial records. This is in breach of section 1.40 of the Academy Trust Handbook 2022.

UHY Hacker Young (Birmingham) LLP

**Reporting Accountant
UHY Hacker Young (Birmingham) LLP
9-11 Vittoria Street
Birmingham
B1 3ND**

12 December 2023

STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2023
(including Income and Expenditure Account)

		Restricted			Total	Total
		Unrestricted	Restricted	Fixed	Total	Total
	Note	Funds	General	Asset	2023	2022
		£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
Income from:						
Donations and capital grants	3	7	36	114	157	148
Charitable activities:						
- Funding for the Academy Trust's educational operations	4	4	11,423	-	11,427	9,999
Other trading activities	5	242	-	-	242	243
Investment income	6	-	-	-	-	-
Total		253	11,459	114	11,826	10,390
Expenditure on:						
Raising funds	7	-	-	-	-	1
Charitable activities:						
- Academy Trust's educational operations	7 & 8	-	11,125	429	11,554	10,452
Total	7	-	11,125	429	11,554	10,453
Net income/(expenditure)		253	334	(315)	272	(63)
Transfers between funds	16	(164)	18	146	-	-
Other recognised gains and losses						
Actuarial gain on defined benefit pension schemes	27	-	1,454	-	1,454	4,250
Net movement in funds		89	1,806	(169)	1,726	4,187
Reconciliation of funds						
Total funds brought forward	27	435	(2,505)	18,615	16,545	12,358
Total funds carried forward	27	524	(699)	18,446	18,271	16,545

All of the academy trust's activities derive from acquisitions and continuing operations during the above two financial periods.

The notes on pages 27 to 46 form part of these financial statements.

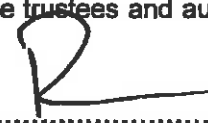
BALANCE SHEET AS AT 31 AUGUST 2023

	Note	2023 £'000	2022 £'000
Fixed assets			
Tangible assets	13	<u>18,332</u>	<u>18,313</u>
		<u>18,332</u>	<u>18,313</u>
Current assets			
Debtors	14	414	414
Cash at bank and in hand		<u>2,501</u>	<u>1,632</u>
		<u>2,915</u>	<u>2,046</u>
Current liabilities			
Creditors: Amounts falling due within one year	15	<u>(1,459)</u>	<u>(834)</u>
		<u>(1,459)</u>	<u>(834)</u>
Net current assets		1,456	1,212
Total assets less current liabilities		<u>19,788</u>	<u>19,525</u>
Defined benefit pension scheme liability	27	(1,517)	(2,980)
Total Net Assets		<u><u>18,271</u></u>	<u><u>16,545</u></u>
Funds of the Academy:			
Restricted funds			
- Fixed asset fund	16	18,446	18,615
- Restricted income fund	16	818	475
- Pension reserve	16	<u>(1,517)</u>	<u>(2,980)</u>
Total restricted funds		<u>17,747</u>	<u>16,110</u>
Unrestricted income fund	16	<u>524</u>	<u>435</u>
Total unrestricted funds		<u>524</u>	<u>435</u>
Total Funds	16	<u><u>18,271</u></u>	<u><u>16,545</u></u>

The financial statements on pages 24 to 47 were approved by the trustees and authorised for issue on 12 December 2023 and signed on their behalf by:



 Andrew Longdon - Chair of Trustees



 Phil Hanson - Executive Officer

STATEMENT OF CASH FLOWS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2023

	Notes	2023 £'000	2022 £'000
Cash flows from operating activities			
Net cash provided by operating activities	20	1,203	718
Cash flows from investing activities	21	(334)	(49)
Cash flows from financing activities	22	-	669
Change in cash and cash equivalents in the reporting period		<u>869</u>	<u>1,338</u>
Cash and cash equivalents at 1 September	23	1,632	963
Cash and cash equivalents at 31 August	23	<u>2,501</u>	<u>1,632</u>

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2023**1 Statement of Accounting Policies**

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

Basis of Preparation

The financial statements of the academy trust, which is a public benefit entity under FRS 102, have been prepared under the historical cost convention in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard Applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102), the Accounting and Reporting by Charities : Statement of Recommended Practice applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102) (Charities SORP (FRS 102)), the Academies Accounts Direction 2022 to 2023 issued by ESFA, the Charities Act 2011 and the Companies Act 2006.

Avonreach Academy Trust meets the definition of a public benefit entity under FRS 102.

Going Concern

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

Income

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

• Grants

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

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

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

• Legacies

The recognition of income from legacies is dependent on establishing entitlement, the probability of receipt and the ability to estimate with sufficient accuracy the amount receivable. Evidence of entitlement to a legacy exists when the academy trust has sufficient evidence that a gift has been left to them (through knowledge of the existence of a valid will and the death of the benefactor) and the executor is satisfied that the property in question will not be required to satisfy claims' in the estate. Receipt of a legacy must be recognised when it is probable that it will be received and the fair value of the amount receivable, which will generally be the expected cash amount to be distributed to the academy trust can be reliably measured.

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2023**• Donations**

Donations are recognised on a receivable basis where there is certainty of receipt and the amount can be reliably measured.

• Other income

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

• Donated goods, facilities and services

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

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

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 academy trust 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 academy trust's educational operations, including support costs and costs relating to the governance of the Academy Trust apportioned to charitable activities.

All resources expended are inclusive of irrecoverable VAT.

Interest receivable

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

Tangible Fixed Assets

Assets costing £500 or more are capitalised as tangible fixed assets and are carried at cost, net of depreciation and any provision for impairment.

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

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2023 (cont'd)

Depreciation Policy

Depreciation is provided on a straight line basis on the cost of tangible fixed assets, to write them down to their estimated residual values over their expected useful lives. The principal annual rates used for assets are:

Leasehold buildings	50 years
Furniture and fixtures	10 years
Computer equipment and software	3 years

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

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

Leased Assets

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

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.

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.

Liabilities

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

Financial Instruments

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

Financial assets - trade and other debtors are basic financial instruments and are debt instruments measured at amortised cost as detailed in note 14. Prepayments are not financial instruments.

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

Financial liabilities - trade creditors, accruals and other creditors are financial instrument, and are measured at amortised cost as detailed in note 15. Taxation and social security are not included in the financial instruments disclosure definition. Deferred income is not deemed to be a financial liability, as the cash settlement has already taken place and there is an obligation to deliver services rather than cash or another financial instrument.

Taxation

The academy trust is considered to pass the tests set out in Paragraph 1 Schedule 6 of the Finance Act 2010 and therefore it meets the definition of a charitable company for UK corporation tax purposes. Accordingly, the academy trust is potentially exempt from taxation in respect of income or capital gains received within categories covered by Chapter 3 Part 11 of the Corporation Tax Act 2010 or Section 256 of the Taxation of Chargeable Gains Act 1992, to the extent that such income or gains are applied exclusively to charitable purposes.

Pensions Benefits

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

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2023 (cont'd)**Pensions Benefits (cont'd)**

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

The LGPS is a multi funded employer scheme and the assets are held separately from those of the academy trust in separate trustee administered funds. Pension scheme assets are measured at fair value and liabilities are measured on an actuarial basis using the projected unit credit method and discounted at a rate equivalent to the current rate of return on a high quality corporate bond of equivalent term and currency to the liabilities. The actuarial valuations are obtained at least triennially and are updated at each balance sheet date. The amounts charged to net income / (expenditure) operating surplus are the current service costs and the costs of the scheme introductions, benefit changes, settlements and curtailments.

They are included as part of staff costs as incurred. Net interest on the net defined benefit liability/asset is also recognised in the Statement of Financial Activities and comprises the interest cost on the defined benefit obligation and interest income on the scheme assets, calculated by multiplying the fair value of the scheme assets at the beginning of the period by the rate used to discount the benefit obligations. The difference between the interest income on the scheme assets and the actual return on the scheme assets is recognised in other recognised gains and losses.

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

Fund Accounting

Unrestricted income funds represent those resources which may be used towards meeting any of the charitable objects of the academy trust at the discretion of the trustees. Restricted fixed asset funds are resources which are to be applied to specific capital purposes imposed by 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 Education and Skills Funding Agency/Department for Investment income, gains and losses are allocated to the appropriate fund.

Critical accounting estimates and areas of judgement

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

Critical accounting estimates and assumptions

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

The present value of the Local Government Pension Scheme defined benefit liability depends on a number of factors that are determined on an actuarial basis using a variety of assumptions. The assumptions used in determining the net cost (income) for pensions include the discount rate. Any changes in these assumptions, which are disclosed in note 27, 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 2023. Any differences between the figures derived from the roll forward approach and a full actuarial valuation would impact on the carrying amount of the pension liability.

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2023 (cont'd)**Critical areas of judgement**

The critical judgements that the Trustees have made in the process of applying the academy trust's accounting policies that have the most significant effect on the amounts recognised in the statutory financial statements are discussed below:

The critical areas of judgement are accounting for government grants, accounting for the write down of assets through depreciation and accounting for the pension liability. Government grants are accounted for as restricted funds. The pension liability is assessed by an independent actuarial valuation. Depreciation rates are based on the expected life of the asset.

In assessing whether there have been any indicators of impairment assets, the Trustees have considered both external and internal sources of information such as market conditions, counterparty credit ratings and experience of recoverability. There have been no indicators of impairments identified during the current financial year.

Agency Arrangements

The academy trust acts as an agent in distributing 16-19 bursary funds from the ESFA. Payments received from the ESFA and subsequent disbursements to students are excluded from the statement of financial activities as the trust does not have control over the charitable application of the funds. The trust can use up to 5% of the allocation towards its own administration costs and this is recognised in the statement of financial activities. The funds received and paid and any balances held are disclosed in note 29.

2 GENERAL ANNUAL GRANT (GAG)

Under the funding agreement with the Secretary of State the academy trust was not subject to a limit on the amount of GAG that it could carry forward at 31 August 2023 (See note 16).

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2023 (cont'd)

3 DONATIONS AND CAPITAL GRANTS

	Unrestricted Funds £'000	Restricted Funds £'000	Total 2023 £'000	Total 2022 £'000
Devolved formula capital grant	-	44	44	37
Additional capital allocation	-	86	86	-
CIF	-	64	64	-
Connect the classroom	-	51	51	84
S.106 Reimbursement	-	(131)	(131)	-
Donations	7	36	43	27
	<u>7</u>	<u>150</u>	<u>157</u>	<u>148</u>

The income from donations and capital grants was £157,000 (2022 : £148,000) of which £7,000 (2022 : £1,000) was unrestricted, £36,000 (2022 : £26,000) restricted and £114,000 (2022 : £121,000) restricted fixed assets.

4 FUNDING FOR THE ACADEMY TRUST'S EDUCATIONAL OPERATIONS

	Unrestricted Funds £'000	Restricted Funds £'000	Total 2023 £'000	Total 2022 £'000
DfE/ESFA grants				
General annual grant (GAG) (note 2)	-	8,233	8,233	7,538
Post 16-19 core grant funding	-	1,025	1,025	938
Other DfE/ESFA grants				
Pre 16 high needs	-	102	102	-
Rates relief grant	-	32	32	71
Pupil premium	-	349	349	284
PE and Sports grant	-	54	54	53
UIFSM grant	-	31	31	94
Teachers pay grant	-	-	-	138
Teachers pension grant	-	40	40	-
National tutoring programme	-	27	27	-
Mainstream school additional grant	-	101	101	-
Supplementary grant	-	247	247	-
16-19 bursary grant	-	-	-	13
Other DfE/ESFA grants	-	28	28	-
	<u>-</u>	<u>10,269</u>	<u>10,269</u>	<u>9,129</u>
Other Government grants				
Special educational needs grant	-	279	279	326
LA pupil premium	-	10	10	-
LA early years	-	72	72	71
Pupil growth grant	-	116	116	-
Ukraine Fund	-	92	92	-
Other LA grants	-	28	28	-
	<u>-</u>	<u>597</u>	<u>597</u>	<u>397</u>
COVID-19 DfE/ESFA additional funding				
Covid recovery premium	-	67	67	46
	<u>-</u>	<u>67</u>	<u>67</u>	<u>46</u>
Other income from the academy trust's educational operations				
Pupil catering	-	490	490	427
School Trips	4	-	4	-
	<u>4</u>	<u>490</u>	<u>494</u>	<u>427</u>
	<u>4</u>	<u>11,423</u>	<u>11,427</u>	<u>9,999</u>

The income from Funding for the academy trust's Educational Operations was £11,427,000 (2022 : £9,999,000) of which £4,000 (2022 : £Nil) was unrestricted and £11,423,000 (2022 : £9,999,000) restricted.

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2023 (cont'd)

5 OTHER TRADING ACTIVITIES	Unrestricted	Restricted	Total	Total
	Funds	Funds	2023	2022
	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
Hire of facilities	26	-	26	19
Club income	115	-	115	92
Music income	7	-	7	11
Trading recharges	-	-	-	30
Other Income	94	-	94	91
	<u>242</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>242</u>	<u>243</u>

The income from other trading activities was £242,000 (2022 : £243,000) of which £242,000 (2022 : £243,000) was unrestricted, £Nil (2022 : £Nil) restricted.

6 INVESTMENT INCOME	Unrestricted	Restricted	Total	Total
	Funds	Funds	2023	2022
	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
Bank interest received	-	-	-	-
	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>

The income from the academy trusts's investment income was unrestricted.

7 EXPENDITURE	Non Pay Expenditure			Total	Total
	Staff Costs	Premises	Other Costs	2023	2022
	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
Expenditure on raising funds					
- Direct costs	-	-	-	-	1
- Allocated support costs	-	-	-	-	-
	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>1</u>
Academy's educational operations					
- Direct costs	7,578	-	744	8,322	6,823
- Allocated support costs	1,105	1,223	904	3,232	3,629
	<u>8,683</u>	<u>1,223</u>	<u>1,648</u>	<u>11,554</u>	<u>10,452</u>
	<u>8,683</u>	<u>1,223</u>	<u>1,648</u>	<u>11,554</u>	<u>10,453</u>

The expenditure was £11,554,000 (2022 : £10,453,000) of which £Nil (2022 : £1,000) was unrestricted, £11,135,000 (2022 : £10,009,000) restricted and £419,000 (2022 : £443,000) restricted fixed assets.

	Total	Total
	2023	2022
	£'000	£'000
Net (income)/expenditure for the year includes:		
Operating lease rentals	44	40
Depreciation	429	443
Fees payable to auditor for:		
- audit	16	13
- other services	2	6
	<u>2</u>	<u>6</u>

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2023 (cont'd)

8 CHARITABLE ACTIVITIES	Total 2023 £'000	Total 2022 £'000
Direct costs - educational operations	8,322	6,823
Support costs - educational operations	3,232	3,629
	<u>11,554</u>	<u>10,452</u>
Analysis of Support Costs		
Support staff costs	1,105	1,691
Depreciation	429	443
Insurance	52	60
Technology	99	92
Premises maintenance	167	179
Other premises costs	103	86
Cleaning and caretaking	211	201
Rates	50	45
Energy	198	136
Security	7	1
Transport	91	62
Catering	395	340
Legal and professional - other	111	89
Governance	11	22
Other support costs	203	182
	<u>3,232</u>	<u>3,629</u>
9 STAFF COSTS	Total 2023 £'000	Total 2022 £'000
a Staff costs during the year were:		
Wages and salaries	6,471	5,744
Social security costs	637	528
Pension costs	1,559	1,577
	<u>8,667</u>	<u>7,849</u>
Agency staff costs	-	-
Apprenticeship Levy	-	-
Staff restructuring costs	16	-
	<u>8,683</u>	<u>7,849</u>
Staff restructuring costs comprise:		
Redundancy payments	16	-
Severance payments	-	-
Other restructuring costs	-	-
	<u>16</u>	<u>-</u>

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2023 (cont'd)

9 STAFF COSTS (cont'd)**b Staff severance contractual payments**

The academy trust paid £15,960 (2022: £Nil) severance payments in the year, disclosed in the following bands:

	2023	2022
0 - £25,000	1	-
£25,001 - £50,000	-	-
£50,001 - £100,000	-	-
£100,001 - £150,000	-	-
	<u>1</u>	<u>-</u>

c Special staff severance non contractual payments

Included in staff restructuring costs are special severance payments totalling £Nil (2022 : £Nil).

d Staff numbers

The average number of persons (including senior management team) employed by the academy during the period ended 31 August 2023 expressed as whole persons was as follows:

	Total 2023 £'000	Total 2022 £'000
Charitable Activities	No	No
Teachers	103	98
Administration and support - including Teaching Assistants	135	102
Management	6	6
	<u>244</u>	<u>206</u>

e Higher paid staff

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

	2023 No	2022 No
£60,001 - £70,000	6	5
£70,001 - £80,000	2	1
£80,000 - £90,000	1	-
£90,000 - £100,000	-	1
£100,000 - £105,000	1	-
	<u>1</u>	<u>-</u>

f Key management personnel

The key management of the academy trust comprise the trustees and the senior management team as listed on page 3. The total amount of employee benefits (including employer pension contributions and employer national insurance contributions) received by key management personnel for their services to the academy trust was £643,636 (2022 : £484,413).

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2023 (cont'd)

10 CENTRAL SERVICES

Avonreach Academy Trust has provided the following central services to Orchard Primary School, Inkberrow Primary School, Norton Juxta Kempsey Primary School and Pershore High School:

- financial services;
- legal services;
- procurement;
- human resources support;
- IT support;
- educational support services.

The academy trust charges for these services 4.75% (2022: 3.25%) top slice of income.

The actual amounts charged during the year were as follows:

	2023	2022
	£'000	£'000
Orchard Primary School	42	32
Inkberrow Primary School	38	31
Norton Juxta Kempsey Primary School	40	30
Pershore High School	320	232
	<u>440</u>	<u>325</u>

11 RELATED PARTY TRANSACTIONS - TRUSTEES' REMUNERATION AND EXPENSES

One or more trustees has been paid remuneration or has received other benefits from an employment with the academy trust. The Chief Executive Officer received remuneration in respect of their contract of services as CEO and not in respect of his services as a trustee. Other trustees did not receive any payments, other than expenses, from the academy trust in respect of their role as trustees. The value of trustees' remuneration and other remuneration was as follows:

	2023	2022
Clive Corbett (Chief Executive Officer, Resigned 9 June 2023)		
Remuneration	£20,000 - £25,000	£90,000 - £100,000
Employers pension contribution	£Nil	£Nil
Phil Hanson (Chief Executive Officer, Appointed 10 June 2023)		
Remuneration	£30,000 - £35,000 £5,000 - £10,000	£Nil £Nil
Employers pension contribution		

During the year ended 31 August 2023 £76 (2022: £Nil) was reimbursed to the trustees in respect of travel and subsistence expenses.

Other related party transactions involving the trustees are set out in note 28.

12 TRUSTEES' AND OFFICERS' INSURANCE

In accordance with normal commercial practice the academy 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 £3,000,000 on any one claim. The cost of this insurance is included in the total insurance cost of the ESFA's RPA scheme.

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2023 (cont'd)

13 TANGIBLE FIXED ASSETS

	Leasehold Land & Buildings £'000	Assets Under Construction £'000	Furniture & Fixtures £'000	Computer Equipment £'000	Total £'000
Cost					
At 1 September 2022	21,341	-	82	461	21,884
Additions	52	272	71	53	448
Disposals	-	-	-	-	-
At 31 August 2023	<u>21,393</u>	<u>272</u>	<u>153</u>	<u>514</u>	<u>22,332</u>
Depreciation					
At 1 September 2022	3,130	-	35	406	3,571
Charged in year	370	-	15	44	429
Disposals	-	-	-	-	-
At 31 August 2023	<u>3,500</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>50</u>	<u>450</u>	<u>4,000</u>
Net book value					
At 31 August 2023	<u>17,893</u>	<u>272</u>	<u>103</u>	<u>64</u>	<u>18,332</u>
At 31 August 2022	<u>18,211</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>47</u>	<u>55</u>	<u>18,313</u>

Included in long term leasehold property is land at valuation of £2,910,700 (2022: £2,910,700) which has not been depreciated.

The freehold of the properties are owned by both the local authority, where the trust lease the sites on a 125 year lease for nil rental, and the diocese, where the trust lease the site on a 2 year lease for nil rental.

In accordance with the SORP the assets have been recognised in the academy trust's accounts, representing the 'right to use' the property.

14 DEBTORS

	2023 £'000	2022 £'000
Trade debtors	4	8
VAT recoverable	69	22
Other debtors	-	8
Prepayments and accrued income	341	376
	<u>414</u>	<u>414</u>

15 CREDITORS:AMOUNTS FALLING DUE WITHIN ONE YEAR

	2023 £'000	2022 £'000
Trade creditors	787	353
Taxation and social security	166	269
Other creditors	285	-
Accruals	143	146
Deferred income	78	66
	<u>1,459</u>	<u>834</u>
Deferred income		
	2023	2022
	£'000	£'000
Deferred income at 1 September	66	-
Resources deferred in the year	78	66
Amounts released from previous years	(66)	-
Deferred income at 31 August	<u>78</u>	<u>66</u>

At the balance sheet date the academy was holding funds received in advance for 2023/24 for universal infant free school meals £51,000 (2022: £41,000), rates relief £Nil (2022: £Nil), SEN £27,000 (2022: £25,000) and for sundry items of £Nil (2022: £Nil).

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2023 (cont'd)

16 FUNDS

The income funds of the academy comprise the following balances of grants to be applied for specific purposes:

	Balance at 1 September 2022 £'000	Incoming Resources £'000	Resources Expended £'000	Gains, Losses & Transfers £'000	Balance at 31 August 2023 £'000
General annual grant (GAG) (note i)	48	8,233	(8,090)	(15)	176
Post 16-19 core grant funding	-	1,025	(1,025)	-	-
Rates relief grant (note ii)	-	32	(32)	-	-
Pupil premium grant (note iii)	-	349	(349)	-	-
PE and Sports grant (note iv)	-	54	(54)	-	-
UIFSM grant (note v)	-	31	(31)	-	-
Teachers pay grant (note vi)	-	-	-	-	-
Teachers pension grant (note vi)	-	40	(40)	-	-
Supplementary grant (note vii)	-	247	(247)	-	-
Mainstream schools additional grant (note vii)	-	101	(101)	-	-
National tutoring programme grant (note ix)	-	27	(27)	-	-
Covid recovery premium grant (note x)	-	67	(67)	-	-
Special educational needs grant (note xi)	-	279	(279)	-	-
Local Authority pupil premium (note xii)	-	10	(10)	-	-
Local Authority early years grant (note xiii)	-	72	(72)	-	-
Local Authority Ukraine fund (note xiv)	-	92	-	-	92
Other ESFA grants (note xv)	-	130	(130)	-	-
Other Local Authority grants (note xvi)	-	144	(144)	-	-
School Fund (note xvii)	-	36	(2)	33	67
Pupil catering (note xviii)	427	490	(434)	-	483
	475	11,459	(11,134)	18	818
Restricted fixed asset funds					
Fixed assets donation (LA) (note xix)	18,314	(127)	(414)	131	17,904
DFE/ESFA capital grants (note xx)	109	115	(9)	-	215
Devolved formula capital (note xxi)	142	126	(4)	-	264
Capital expenditure from GAG (note xxii)	-	-	-	13	13
Capital expenditure from unrestricted funds (50	-	(2)	2	50
Total restricted fixed asset funds	18,615	114	(429)	146	18,446
Restricted pension scheme liability					
Pension reserve (note xxiv)	(2,980)	-	9	1,454	(1,517)
	(2,980)	-	9	1,454	(1,517)
Total restricted funds	16,110	11,573	(11,554)	1,618	17,747
Unrestricted funds					
Unrestricted funds	435	253	-	(164)	524
Total unrestricted funds	435	253	-	(164)	524
Total funds	16,545	11,826	(11,554)	1,454	18,271

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2023 (cont'd)**16 FUNDS (cont'd)****Notes (cont'd)**

- i) General Annual Grant must be used for the normal running costs of the School. Under the funding agreement with the Secretary of State, the academy trust was not subject to a limit on the amount of GAG that it would carry forward at 31 August 2023. (see note 2)
- ii) Income from the Rates Relief grant, directly offsets the rates charges by the local borough council.
- iii) Pupil Premium grant has been used to support children from low income families placed at the school.
- iv) Income offsets spend on various educational activities and resources relating directly to PE and sports.
- v) UIFSM grant is utilised directly to offset school catering costs
- vi) Grants received from the ESFA used to support teaching pay and pension increases.
- vii) Supplementary grant is utilised to provide support for the costs of the Health and Social Care Levy and wider costs.
- viii) Mainstream schools additional grant from the ESFA has been used to support general cost pressures.
- ix) The National Tutoring Programme grant provides funding to spend on targeted academic support, delivered by trained and experienced tutors and mentors.
- x) Catch up premium is spent predominantly on Teaching resources and ICT equipment/Licences to support those children for who the grant was intended.
- xi) Special needs grant has been used to support enhanced learning for children with special educational needs.
- xii) Pupil premium grant has been used to support children placed at the Academy from the local authority areas and FSM pupils.
- xiii) The Early Careers Framework funding is designed to help early career teachers (ECTs) succeed at the start of their teaching careers.
- xiv) Local Authority Grant to support the education of Ukrainian pupils displaced from conflict.
- xv) Other ESFA funding to support the operational activities of the academy trust.
- xvi) Other grants are grants received from the local authority for special educational needs.
- xvii) Income generated by the school from donations and fundraising and to be used on school objectives
- xviii) Income generated by the school from the provision of schools meals.
- xix) Land and buildings were gifted to the academy trust upon conversion from Worcestershire County Council.
- xx) Devolved formula capital is used for capital expenditure including maintaining the estate safety of the academy trust.
- xxi) Other ESFA capital income used for capital expenditure on the academy trust.
- xxii) The gross transfer from the restricted general fund to the restricted fixed asset fund of £13,000 (2022 : £Nil) represents the total capital expenditure from GAG during the year.
- xxiii) The gross transfer from the unrestricted general fund to the restricted fixed asset fund of £2,000 (2022 : £Nil) represents the total capital expenditure from unrestricted funds during the year.
- xxiv) The pension reserve represents the deficit on the Local Government Pension Scheme (see note 27).

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2023 (cont'd)

16 FUNDS (cont'd)

	Balance at 1 September 2021 £'000	Incoming Resources £'000	Resources Expended £'000	Gains, Losses & Transfers £'000	Balance at 31 August 2022 £'000
General annual grant (GAG) (note i)	158	7,538	(7,648)	-	48
Post 16-19 core grant funding	-	938	(938)	-	-
Rates relief grant (note ii)	-	71	(71)	-	-
Pupil premium grant (note iii)	-	284	(284)	-	-
PE and Sports grant (note iv)	-	53	(53)	-	-
UIFSM grant (note v)	-	94	(94)	-	-
Teachers pay grant (note vi)	-	138	(138)	-	-
Teachers pension grant (note vi)	-	-	-	-	-
16-19 bursary grant	-	13	(13)	-	-
ESFA COVID-19 recovery premium (note vii)	-	46	(46)	-	-
Special educational needs grant (note viii)	-	326	(326)	-	-
Local Authority early years grant (note ix)	-	71	(71)	-	-
Pupil catering	-	427	-	-	427
Donations	-	26	(26)	-	-
	158	10,025	(9,708)	-	475
Restricted fixed asset funds					
Fixed assets donation (LA) (note x)	18,587	-	(443)	170	18,314
Fixed assets donation (ESFA) (note xi)	196	83	-	(170)	109
Devolved formula capital (note xii)	104	38	-	-	142
DFE/ESFA capital grants (note xiii)	-	-	-	-	-
Capital expenditure from GAG (note xiv)	-	-	-	-	-
Capital expenditure from unrestricted funds	50	-	-	-	50
	18,937	121	(443)	-	18,615
Restricted pension scheme liability					
Pension reserve (note xv)	(6,929)	-	(301)	4,250	(2,980)
	(6,929)	-	(301)	4,250	(2,980)
Total restricted funds	12,166	10,146	(10,452)	4,250	16,110
Unrestricted funds					
Unrestricted funds	192	244	(1)	-	435
LA prior year surplus	-	-	-	-	-
Total unrestricted funds	192	244	(1)	-	435
Total funds	12,358	10,390	(10,453)	4,250	16,545

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2023 (cont'd)

16 FUNDS (cont'd)

TOTAL FUNDS ANALYSIS BY ACADEMY

Fund balances at 31 August 2023 were allocated as follows:

	Total 2023 £'000	Total 2022 £'000
Central Services	68	42
Orchard Primary School	340	241
Inkberrow Primary School	38	33
Norton Juxta Kempsey Primary School	(2)	9
Pershore High School	898	585
Total before fixed assets and pension reserve	<u>1,342</u>	<u>910</u>
Restricted fixed assets fund	18,446	18,615
Pension reserve	(1,517)	(2,980)
	<u>16,929</u>	<u>15,635</u>
Total	<u><u>18,271</u></u>	<u><u>16,545</u></u>

Deficit recovery of Norton Juxta Kempsey Primary School will be managed by;

- The development of school level plans using integrated curriculum and financial planning tools to align curriculum delivery with the financial resources available;
- Senior leadership led financial review.

TOTAL COST ANALYSIS BY ACADEMY

Expenditure incurred by each academy during the year was as

Academies	Teaching & Educational	Other		Other	Total 2023 £'000	Total 2022 £'000
	Support Staff Costs £'000	Support Staff £'000	Educational Supplies £'000	Costs (exc Depn) £'000		
Central Services	28	240	3	136	407	592
Orchard Primary School	753	54	50	186	1,043	919
Inkberrow Primary School	643	77	104	128	952	840
Norton Juxta Kempsey Primary School	839	51	77	126	1,093	913
Pershore High School	5,315	683	510	1,122	7,630	6,748
Academy Trust	<u>7,578</u>	<u>1,105</u>	<u>744</u>	<u>1,698</u>	<u>11,125</u>	<u>10,012</u>

17 ANALYSIS OF NET ASSETS BETWEEN FUNDS

Fund balances at 31 August 2023 are represented by:

	Unrestricted Funds £'000	Pension Restricted Funds £'000	General Restricted Funds £'000	Fixed Assets	Total £'000
				Restricted Funds £'000	
Tangible fixed assets	-	-	-	18,332	18,332
Current assets	524	-	2,277	114	2,915
Current liabilities	-	-	(1,459)	-	(1,459)
Pension scheme liability	-	(1,517)	-	-	(1,517)
	<u>524</u>	<u>(1,517)</u>	<u>818</u>	<u>18,446</u>	<u>18,271</u>

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2023 (cont'd)

Fund balances at 31 August 2022 are represented by:

	Unrestricted Funds £'000	Pension Restricted Funds £'000	General Restricted Funds £'000	Fixed Assets Restricted Funds £'000	Total £'000
Tangible fixed assets	-	-	-	18,313	18,313
Current assets	435	-	1,309	302	2,046
Current liabilities	-	-	(834)	-	(834)
Pension scheme liability	-	(2,980)	-	-	(2,980)
	<u>435</u>	<u>(2,980)</u>	<u>475</u>	<u>18,615</u>	<u>16,545</u>

18 CAPITAL COMMITMENTS

	2023 £'000	2022 £'000
Contracted for, but not provided in the financial statements	434	-
Authorised by trustees, but not yet contracted	-	-

19 COMMITMENTS UNDER OPERATING LEASES**Operating leases**

At 31 August 2023 the total of the academy trust's future minimum lease payments under non-cancellable operating leases which expire:

	2023 £'000	2022 £'000
Amounts due within one year	37	44
Amounts due between two and five years	41	44
Amounts due after five years	-	-
	<u>78</u>	<u>88</u>

20 RECONCILIATION OF NET INCOME/(DEFICIT) TO NET CASH FLOW FROM OPERATING ACTIVITIES

	2023 £'000	2022 £'000
Net income/(deficit) for the reporting period (as per the statement of financial activities)	272	(63)
Adjusted for:		
Depreciation (note 13)	429	443
Capital grants from DfE and other capital income	(114)	(121)
Defined benefit pension scheme cost less contributions payable (note 27)	(132)	181
Defined benefit pension scheme finance cost (note 27)	123	120
Decrease in debtors	-	33
Increase in creditors	625	125
Net cash provided by operating activities	<u>1,203</u>	<u>718</u>

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2023 (cont'd)

21 CASH FLOWS FROM INVESTING ACTIVITIES		2023	2022
		£'000	£'000
Interest received		-	-
Purchase of tangible fixed assets		(448)	(170)
Capital grants from DfE/ESFA		114	121
Receipts from sale of tangible fixed assets		-	-
Net cash used in investing activities		(334)	(49)
22 CASH FLOWS FROM FINANCING ACTIVITIES		2023	2022
		£'000	£'000
Repayments of borrowing		-	-
Cash inflows from new borrowing		-	-
Net cash provided by financing activities		-	-
23 ANALYSIS OF CASH AND CASH EQUIVALENTS		At 31 Aug	At 31 Aug
		2023	2022
		£'000	£'000
Cash in hand and at bank		2,501	1,632
Total cash and cash equivalents		2,501	1,632
24 ANALYSIS OF CHANGES IN NET DEBT	At 31 Aug	Cash	At 31 Aug
	2022	Flows	2023
	£'000	£'000	£'000
Cash at bank	1,632	869	2,501
Overdraft	-	-	-
	1,632	869	2,501
25 CONTINGENT LIABILITIES			
During the period of the Funding Agreement, in the event of the sale or disposal by other means of any asset for which a Government capital grant was received, the academy is required either to re-invest the proceeds or to repay to the Secretary of State for Education the same proportion of the proceeds of the sale or disposal as equates with the proportion of the original cost met by the Secretary of State.			
Upon termination of the Funding Agreement, whether as a result of the Secretary of State or the academy serving notice, the academy shall repay to the Secretary of State sums determined by reference to:			
a)	the value at that time of the academy's site and premises and other assets held for the purpose of the academy; and		
b)	the extent to which expenditure incurred in providing those assets was met by payments by the Secretary of State under the Funding Agreement.		
26 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.			

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2023 (cont'd)**27 PENSION AND SIMILAR OBLIGATIONS**

The academy trust's employees belong to two principal pension schemes: the Teachers' Pension Scheme England and Wales (TPS) for academic and related staff and the Local Government Pension Scheme (LGPS) for non-teaching staff which is managed by Worcestershire County Council Pension Fund. Both are defined multi employer benefit schemes.

The total pension cost to the academy trust during the year ended 31 August 2023 was £1,559,000 (2022 : £1,577,000) of which £1,028,000 (2022 : £805,000) relates to the TPS and £531,000 (2022 : £772,000) relates to LGPS.

The pension costs are assessed in accordance with the advice of independent qualified actuaries. The latest actuarial valuation of the TPS related to the period ended 31 March 2020 and of the LGPS to the period ended 31 March 2022.

Contributions amounting to £166,995 were payable to the schemes at 31 August 2023 (2022: £152,259) and are included within other creditors.

Teachers' Pension Scheme**Introduction**

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

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

Valuation of the Teachers' Pension Scheme

The Government Actuary, using normal actuarial principles, conducts a formal actuarial review of the TPS in accordance with the Public Service Pensions (Valuations and Employer Cost Cap) Directions 2014 published by HM Treasury every 4 years. The aim of the review is to specify the level of future contributions. Actuarial scheme valuations are dependent on assumptions about the value of future costs, design of benefits and many other factors. The 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 30 October 2023. The key elements of the valuation and subsequent consultation are:

- employer contribution rates set at 28.68% of pensionable pay (including a 0.08% administration levy)
- total scheme liabilities (pensions currently in payment and the estimated cost of future benefits) for service to the effective date of £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 SCAPE discount rate, set by HMT, is used to determine the notional investment return. The current SCAPE rate is 1.7% above the rate of CPI and is based on the Office for Budget Responsibility's forecast for long-term GDP growth.

The next valuation result is due to be implemented from 1 April 2027.

The employers pension costs paid to TPS in the period amounted to £1,028,000 (2022 : £805,000).

A copy of the valuation report and supporting documentation is on the [Teachers' Pensions website](#).

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

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2023 (cont'd)

27 PENSION AND SIMILAR OBLIGATIONS(cont'd)

Local Government Pension Scheme

The LGPS is a funded defined benefit scheme, with the assets held in a separate trustee administered funds. The total contributions made for the year ended 31 August 2023 was £644,000 (2022: £554,000) of which employers contributions totalled £540,000 (2022: £471,000) and employees contributions totalled £104,000 (2022: £83,000). The agreed employers contributions for future years are 19.5% (2022:19.5%). The agreed contributions for employees are between 5.5% and 8.5% (2022: 5.5% and 8.5%) 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 liabilities would be met by the Department for Education. The guarantee came into force on 18 July 2013 and on 21 July 2022, the Department for Education reaffirmed its commitment to the guarantee, with a parliamentary minute published on GOV.UK

Principal Actuarial Assumptions

The major assumptions used by the actuary were:

	At 31 August 2023	At 31 August 2022
	% per annum	% per annum
Discount rate	5.4%	4.3%
Salary increases	4.3%	4.4%
Pension increase	2.9%	3.0%
Inflation assumption (CPI)	2.8%	2.9%

Sensitivity analysis for the principal assumptions used to measure the scheme liabilities were as follows:

	At 31 August 2023	At 31 August 2022
	Approx £'000	Approx £'000
Discount rate reduced by 0.1% per annum	(120)	(160)
Assumed pension increased by 0.1% per annum	120	159
Assumed salary growth increased by 0.1% per annum	19	162

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

	2023	2022
	years	years
Longevity at age 65 retiring today		
- Men	21.5	22.6
- Women	23.8	25.0
Longevity at age 65 retiring in 20 years		
- Men	22.8	24.1
- Women	25.6	27.0

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

	Fair value at 31 Aug 2023	Fair value at 31 Aug 2022
	£'000	£'000
Equity instruments	3,971	3,641
Corporate bonds	125	134
Property	445	412
Cash	49	89
Other	836	684
Total market value of assets	5,426	4,960

The actual return on scheme assets was a deficit of £189,000 (2022:£109,000 deficit)

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2023 (cont'd)

27 PENSION AND SIMILAR OBLIGATIONS (cont'd)

Local Government Pension Scheme (cont'd)

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

	2023	2022
	£'000	£'000
Current service cost	408	652
Interest income	(228)	(83)
Interest cost	344	197
Administration expenses	7	6
Total amount recognised in the SoFA	531	772

Changes in deficit during the period:

	2023	2022
	£'000	£'000
At 1 September	2,980	6,929
Employer service cost (net of employee contributions)	408	652
Employer contributions	(540)	(471)
Expected return on scheme assets	(228)	(83)
Interest cost	344	197
Actuarial gains	(1,454)	(4,250)
Administration expenses	7	6
At 31 August	1,517	2,980

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

	2023	2022
	£'000	£'000
At 1 September	7,940	11,577
Current service cost	408	652
Interest cost	344	197
Contributions by scheme participants	104	83
Benefits paid	18	(127)
Actuarial gains	(1,871)	(4,442)
At 31 August	6,943	7,940

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

	2023	2022
	£'000	£'000
At 1 September	4,960	4,648
Interest income	228	83
Actuarial losses	(417)	(192)
Contributions by employer	540	471
Contributions by scheme participants	104	83
Benefits paid	18	(127)
Administration expenses	(7)	(6)
At 31 August	5,426	4,960

The estimated value of employer contributions for the year ended 31 August 2024 is £541,000 (2023: £173,000).

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2023 (cont'd)**28 RELATED PARTY TRANSACTIONS**

Owing to the nature of the academy trust's operations and the composition of the board of trustees being drawn from local public and private sector organisations, it is inevitable that transactions will take place with organisations in which a member of the board of trustees may have an interest. All transactions involving such organisations are conducted at arm's length and in accordance with the requirements of the Academy Trust Handbook, including notifying the ESFA of all transactions made on or after 1 April 2019 and obtaining their approval where required, and with the academy trust's financial regulations and normal procurement procedures relating to connected and related party transactions. During the year ended 31 August 2023 there were no such transactions.

In entering into the transactions the trust has complied with the requirements of the Academy Trust Handbook 2022.

No related party transactions took place in the period of account, other than certain trustee's remuneration and expenses already disclosed in note 11.

29 AGENCY ARRANGEMENTS

The academy trust distributes 16-19 bursary funds to students as an agent for the ESFA. In the accounting period ending 31 August 2023 the trust received £25,712 (2022: £12,880) and disbursed £49,795 (2022: £6,169) from the fund. An amount of £19,416 (2022: £43,499) is included in other creditors relating to the undistributed funds that is repayable to the ESFA.

30 EVENTS AFTER THE END OF THE REPORTING PERIOD

There are no material adjusting or non adjusting events arising after the balance sheet date.

