

Company Registration Number: 07617529 (England & Wales)

CREATIVE EDUCATION TRUST
(A COMPANY LIMITED BY GUARANTEE)

ANNUAL REPORT AND FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2024



**CREATIVE EDUCATION TRUST
(A COMPANY LIMITED BY GUARANTEE)**

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CREATIVE EDUCATION TRUST
(A COMPANY LIMITED BY GUARANTEE)

REFERENCE AND ADMINISTRATIVE DETAILS

Members	Creative Education Charitable Trust, Principal Sponsor David Anderson William Richardson
Sponsor Trustees	Abbie Rumbold MA, Chair Lucy Becque, BA, Chair of People and Remuneration Nicholas Bull BSc, FCA, Chair of Finance Simon Figgis LLB, FCA, Chair of Audit and Risk Marc Jordan BA, MA, MBA, FSA, Chief Executive Diana Gerald BA, Chair of Safeguarding Merlin Joseph, Director Emily McDonald MA, MEng, MICE, Chair of Estates and Property Dr William Richardson BA, D.Phil, Vice Chair, Chair of Education Standards (resigned 30 December 2023) Frances Soul, M.Phil, Director, Chair of Education Standards Owen Carter, BA, Director (appointed 1 January 2024) Creative Education Charitable Trust, Principal Sponsor
Company registered number	07617529
Company name	Creative Education Trust
Principal and registered office	67-68 Long Acre London WC2E 9JD
Company secretary	Catherine Hughes
Ex Officio Trustee	Marc Jordan
Senior management team	Marc Jordan, Chief Executive Toni Bailey, Director of SEND Luke Bowers, Director of Performance (resigned 15 July 2024) Louis Donald, Director of Safeguarding & Personal Development Dr Jason Howard, Director of Quality Assurance Catherine Hughes, Director of Finance Nicole McCartney, Director of Education Ash Mudaliar, Director of IT Victoria Tricarico, Director of Human Resources Jon Ward, Director of Estates & Facilities Gwayne Webb, Director of Teaching and Learning Ben Driver, Interim Director of Performance (appointed 1 August 2024)
Independent auditors	Bishop Fleming LLP Chartered Accountants Statutory Auditors 10 Temple Back Bristol BS1 6FL

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

Solicitors	Veale Wasbrough Vizards Narrow Quay House Narrow Quay Bristol BS1 4QA
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**CHAIR'S REPORT
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2024**

Chair's Report

Creative Education Trust has deliberately chosen to work with challenging schools in challenged communities across the United Kingdom. Nationally, the world of schools has not returned to the pre-Covid status quo, but communities such as ours continue to be disproportionately impacted by the aftereffects of the pandemic and the subsequent cost of living crisis. Attendance, behaviour, and student mental health issues continue to loom large in our work.

It is pleasing, therefore, to be able to report that against this background we made significant improvements in attendance and behaviour through the year. These in turn contributed to continuing improvements in the quality of education that we offer to our children. Across the Trust our attainment and progress measures continued an upward trend, reflecting the skills and professional dedication of our staff, supported by the introduction of our new teaching and learning framework for excellence.

The support traditionally given by social services and other public agencies to families under pressure and to schools responsible for their children continues to dwindle. The burden of social and therapeutic care that falls on schools has greatly increased, though they lack some of the skills and the funding to serve all the new demands that are placed on them.

We are grateful to our staff for the willingness they show to help tackle issues of safeguarding, mental health and SEND. In 2023/24 we continued to increase the Trust's capacity in these areas with further developments within our safeguarding and SEND teams. We continued the roll-out of our SEND strategy and launched our new safeguarding strategy. Much work was done in the year on plans to introduce community hubs at our schools to provide support for our neediest families.

Like many other school groups, we have inherited a very mixed estate, with some buildings well past their useful life. Nationally, capital funding is inadequate to the task of maintaining older building stock and adapting it to contemporary teaching. We continue to invest sensibly in our school buildings with energy consumption reduction as one of our priorities in addition to safety and the provision of bright, pleasant learning spaces. It is questionable, however, whether 'make do and mend' is a sensible use of resources. Investment for the longer term is an urgent priority across the national schools' estate. Young people deserve no less.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank all who work for Creative Education Trust for their very hard work under difficult conditions, and their commitment to delivering our new strategic plan 2024-2030. Their dedication to our schools, to Creative Education Trust, but above all to our children never ceases to impress, as does the positive impact of this work on young lives.



Abbie Rumbold

Chair

Date: 4 December 2024

**CREATIVE EDUCATION TRUST
(A COMPANY LIMITED BY GUARANTEE)**

**TRUSTEES' REPORT
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2024**

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

Creative Education Trust (the "Trust") operates eleven secondary academies and six primary academies across the East and West Midlands and the East coast of England. The Trust had pupils on roll of 14,384 in the October 2023 school census (October 2022 – 14,461 pupils).

STRUCTURE, GOVERNANCE AND MANAGEMENT

Constitution

The 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 Trust. The Trustees of Creative Education Trust are also the directors of the Charitable Company for the purposes of company law.

Details of the Trustees who served throughout the year, and to the date the accounts are approved are included in the Reference and Administration Details on page 1.

Members' Liability

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

Trustees' Indemnities

The Trust participates in the Department for Education's Risk Protection Arrangement; a mechanism similar to commercial insurance, through which the cost of risks that arise are covered by government funds. The Risk Protection Arrangement provides protection for Trustees and officers from claims arising from negligent acts, errors or omissions occurring whilst on Trust business. The insurance provides cover up to £10,000,000 on any one claim and in any one Membership year.

Method of recruitment and appointment of Trustees

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

- up to 10 Sponsor Trustees who are appointed by the Principal Sponsor; Creative Education Charitable Trust.
- a minimum of 2 Parent Trustees if the Trust does not make provision for each academy to have 2 Parents on the Academy Council.
- the Chief Executive Officer who is treated for all purposes as being an ex officio Trustee.
- any Staff Trustees appointed by the Members, provided that the number of staff Trustees that are employees of the charitable company (including the Chief Executive Officer) does not exceed one third of the total number of Trustees.
- any additional directors appointed by the Secretary of State in the circumstances set out in the Trust's Articles of Association.
- up to 3 co-opted Trustees appointed by the other Trustees set out above.

The number of Trustees shall not be less than three, but (unless otherwise determined by ordinary resolution) shall not be subject to any maximum.

Trustees are appointed for a four-year period, except that this time limit does not apply to the Chief Executive Officer or the Principal Sponsor. Subject to remaining eligible to be a particular type of Trustee, any Trustee can be re-appointed or re-elected.

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

When appointing new Trustees, the Board gives consideration to the skills and experience mix of existing Trustees in order to ensure that the Board has the necessary skills to contribute fully to the Trust's development and to ensure a suitably experienced Chair for each Board Committee.

Policies and Procedures adopted for the Induction and Training of Trustees

Each Trustee is inducted when appointed. This induction includes a meeting with the Executive Team, visits to a selection of the Trust Academies and provision of relevant documentation. They continue to receive appropriate training throughout their appointment, including briefings by specialists throughout the year. The Trust ensures that Trustees are fully briefed and that they participate in setting the strategic plan for the Trust.

Organisational Structure

The Board of Trustees normally meets four times per year (twice in the Autumn Term, once in the Spring Term and once in the Summer Term). It also meets once per year for a two-day strategy meeting. The Board establishes an overall framework for the governance of the Trust and determines membership, terms of reference and procedures of its Committees and other groups. It receives reports including policies from its Committees for ratification. It monitors the activities of the Committees through the minutes of their meetings and through reports from the Committee Chair, presented at each full Board meeting. The Board may from time to time establish Working Groups to perform specific tasks over a limited timescale.

The Board delegates some of its powers via the Scheme of Delegation to local Academy Councils, each of which functions as a sub-committee of the Board. Academy Councils, which comprise community stakeholders as well as representatives of staff and the parent body, provide local intelligence to the Board and exercise oversight of designated areas of accountability on its behalf.

The following decisions are reserved to the Board of Trustees: to consider any proposals for changes to the status or constitution of the Trust and its committee structure, to appoint or remove the Chair and/or Vice Chair, to appoint the Chief Executive Officer, to approve whether to acquire new schools, to approve the annual budget and 3-year plan and to set the Trust's reserves policy.

The Board of Trustees approves a Scheme of Delegation annually and this is published on the Trust's website.

The Trust has six established committees, each of which met between three and five times in the year. The remit of each Committee is as follows:

- Audit and Risk Committee; this Committee is responsible for compliance with reporting and regulatory requirements, receiving reports from the internal auditor and external audit, and the oversight of risk management.
- Education Standards Committee; this Committee monitors, evaluates and reviews Trust policy, practice, and performance in relation to curriculum planning, communications, target setting and assessment, examinations, Ofsted activity, the EdTech strategy, and all pastoral issues. This includes monitoring the progress and performance of all key groups.
- Estates and Property Committee; holds responsibility for the non-executive strategic consideration of the property of the Trust, its academies, and associated undertakings. That strategic oversight includes recommendations and reports to the Board on acquisition, disposal, development, and management strategies. The Committee also has responsibility to oversee the health and safety systems and controls relating to the property of the Trust and its academies.
- Finance Committee; this Committee is responsible for monitoring, evaluating, and reviewing policy and performance in relation to financial management, in addition to reviewing the annual budget and 3-year plan, recommending its approval to the Board and recommending to the Trust's reserves policy.

**CREATIVE EDUCATION TRUST
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**TRUSTEES' REPORT (CONTINUED)
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2024**

- People and Remuneration Committee; this Committee is responsible for monitoring a clear and fair process for the review of all aspects of remuneration and organisational culture. This includes setting the remuneration of the Chief Executive Officer and reviewing proposals for any pay increases for Head Office and senior staff including Principals and Head Teachers.
- Safeguarding Committee; this Committee monitors, evaluates and reviews Safeguarding oversight, compliance, and practice within Trust schools.

The Board of Trustees have appointed a Chief Executive Officer (who is also the Trust's Accounting Officer) and an Executive team (see "Senior Management Team" in the Reference and Administrative Details pages to these accounts) to support the management and development of the Trust's 17 academies.

In addition, the Trustees have devolved responsibility for day-to-day management of each academy to a Principal/ Headteacher and their Senior Leadership Team (SLT). Operational oversight, accountability and support to each academy and its leadership team are provided through the Trust's Academy Improvement Boards (AIB), which meet regularly with academy leaders to review progress against improvement plans and annual targets. The Academy Improvement Boards are a tool of management; however, the Trust is also working towards ensuring each AIB has at least one member of the relevant Academy Council in attendance to ensure good communication and consistency.

Overall executive leadership of the Trust is provided by the Chief Executive Officer and the Trust's Senior Management Team. The Chief Executive's Group (comprising CEO, and Directors of Finance, Education, Estates, HR and IT) meets regularly to deal with strategic decision making. Day-to-day operational decision making is devolved to the Executive Operations Group, chaired by the Director of Finance.

Arrangements for setting pay and remuneration of key management personnel

The Trust's "Key management personnel" are its Trustees, and those to whom the Trustees have delegated significant authority or responsibility in the day-to-day running of the Trust. This includes the Chief Executive Officer, and the Senior Management Team (as set out on page 1).

No Trustees are remunerated for their services as Trustees. Trustees may claim for expenses incurred in performing their roles, for example travel to visit the Trust's academies. The Chief Executive Officer only receives remuneration in respect of services he provides undertaking his role as Chief Executive Officer.

Oversight of pay and remuneration across the Trust is performed by the People and Remuneration Committee. The People and Remuneration Committee is chaired by a Trustee who is a current Chief People Officer for a large building society. All pay and remuneration is set within the parameters with the Trust's pay policies. The Committee considers and decides, having previously sought the views of the wider Board, the remuneration package and terms of service for the Chief Executive Officer. Executive pay is considered in relation to the performance of the organisation, and of individuals' performance against their objectives and in their broader contribution and in any changes to job role. Salary benchmarking of roles takes place across the sector, where comparable data is available, for example within annual accounts.

Trustees are satisfied that adequate processes are in place to ensure that remuneration proposals are rigorously scrutinised before these are approved.

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

Trade union facility time

Relevant Union Officials

Number of employees who were relevant union officials during the relevant period	Full-time equivalent employee number
8	7.8

Percentage of time spent on facility time

Percentage of time	Number of employees
0%	3
1-50%	5
51-99%	-
100%	-

Percentage of pay bill spent on facility time

Total cost of facility time	£25,282
Total pay bill	£78,633,324
Percentage of the total pay bill spent on facility time	0.032%

Paid trade union activities

Time spent on paid trade union activities as a percentage of total paid facility time hours	0.00%
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Related Parties and other Connected Charities and Organisations

The Trust's Principal Sponsor is Creative Education Charitable Trust; a registered charity and a company limited by guarantee. Creative Education Charitable Trust is one of the Trust's three Members and under the Trust's Articles of Association is responsible for appointing up to five other Members. As Principal sponsor, Creative Education Charitable Trust is also a Trustee of the Trust and is responsible for appointment of the Sponsor Trustees (see Method of recruitment and appointment or election of Trustees on page 4).

Engagement with employees (including disabled persons)

The Trust operates as a collaborative network, fostering staff involvement at every level and promoting close cooperation between our schools. Groups of staff across our academies meet regularly to exchange knowledge and best practice. Our individual academies also hold regular meetings and briefings with their staff. New employees are fully inducted, and teachers take part in training before the start of and during the school year.

Our second National Conference was held in July 2024. The theme 'Emerging to Excel' was chosen to recognise where we as an organisation have come from, including our unique experiences and challenges, and where we now are, with new and exciting horizons in view. All of our schools have elements of best practice within the field of Teaching and Learning, and our National Conference 2024 was an opportunity to celebrate and showcase this work. The conference also brought together the nation's leading experts on the leadership of Teaching and Learning to provoke discussions, improve upon our work and move further towards our goal of equity in education.

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

At the National Conference, we also launched our new Centre for Professional Learning and Development, ElevatEd. This is a simply structured portal accessible to all staff across the Trust which contains resources and collaborative opportunities to support our employees' careers aspirations and professional growth.

Formal engagement with employee representatives takes place at national, regional, and local level through consultation and negotiation with seven recognised trade unions. Our well-established recognition agreement sets out the areas that will be considered at national level, including terms and conditions of employment; operational matters affecting the deployment, security and prospects of staff and staff training and development. There is a substantial policy framework in place including our Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion (EDI) Policy. We ensure that training, career development, and promotion opportunities are available to all employees. Applications for employment from all candidates, including disabled people, are given full and fair consideration. When employees become disabled, every effort is made to meet their needs so that their employment may continue successfully.

To ensure we remain responsive to staff needs and concerns, we conduct engagement and pulse surveys periodically, which allow us to gather feedback on various aspects of the workplace experience. We also conduct exit questionnaires for all staff leaving the Trust, enabling us to address any recurring themes and continuously improve the working environment.

We have recently developed a 12-month Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) plan, which focuses on improving our diversity data so that we more fully understand the diversity profile of the Trust's staff, so that we may target any positive action if required.

OBJECTIVES AND ACTIVITIES

Objects and Aims

The principal object of Creative Education Trust is to advance education in the United Kingdom for the public benefit, in particular but without prejudice to the generality of the foregoing, by establishing, maintaining, carrying on, managing and developing schools offering a broad and balanced curriculum.

The Trust's mission is to improve standards of education, knowledge and skills for children and young people, equipping them to be successful adults in the competitive, globalised world of the future. We hope to achieve these aims within our academies, as well as to share best practice within the sector.

The Trust seeks to deliver its mission through exciting innovations in curriculum and teaching and learning, which drive educational improvement and develop students with modern, employable skills in the Trust's primary and secondary academies across England. The Trust believes that creativity is the ability to recognise or to make new connections between things. Connecting knowledge is at the heart of an effective education and is what will make young people employable in the world of tomorrow.

Objectives, Strategies and Activities

In the year to 31 August 2024 the principal activity of the Trust was the continuing operation and improvement of educational standards in its existing portfolio of primary and secondary schools in the East and West Midlands and on the East Coast through the implementation of the goals set out in our five-year Strategic Plan to 2030. This work was not without its challenges given that Creative Education Trust has chosen to work with sponsored academies with all that it implies in terms of prior condition and on-going fragility.

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

The number of schools within Creative Education Trust during the year was seventeen, between them educating around 14,400 children and young people, employing over 1,700 staff and with revenue income of £115 million. Creative Education Trust secondary schools were Abbeyfield School, Northampton; Ash Green School, Bedworth; The Bulwell Academy, Nottingham; Caister Academy, Great Yarmouth; Ellis Guilford School, Nottingham; The Hart School, Rugeley; Lynn Grove Academy, Great Yarmouth; Milton Keynes Academy; Thistley Hough Academy, Stoke-on-Trent; Weavers Academy, Wellingborough; The Wrenn School, Wellingborough. The Trust's primary schools were Harpfield Primary Academy, Stoke-on-Trent; Queen Eleanor Primary Academy, Northampton; Three Peaks Primary Academy, Tamworth; Woodlands Primary Academy Great Yarmouth; and Wroughton Infants and Junior Academies, Great Yarmouth.

Last year's report noted that the Trust's Strategic Plan 2019-2023 was coming to the end of its life, and that work had commenced on an updated and refreshed Strategic Plan covering the period through to 2030. Many of the goals set out in the earlier plan had been achieved. Challenges such as the global pandemic and the energy price inflation consequent on Russia's invasion of Ukraine, which could not have been foreseen at the time the plan was developed, had changed the environment in which schools operate. The publication by the Department for Education in mid-2023 of a suite of documents setting out its proposals for the growth and development of multi-academy trusts, including a set of MAT quality descriptors, provided an invaluable stimulus for our thinking and a framework for the presentation of our refreshed and updated strategic plan, Project 2030: Creative Education Trust Strategic Plan 2024-2030. This plan was presented to the Board of Trustees for discussion at its meeting in December 2023 and ratified at its subsequent meeting in March 2024.

In support of the new strategic plan, Creative Education Trust also undertook a rigorous review of its operating model that led to a series of positive organisational developments in the course of 2023/24 to ensure the effective delivery of the new strategy. The main thrust of the strategic plan and the rationale for the revised operating model is CET's vision to be recognised as a system leading multi-academy trust by 2030 because:

- We serve a growing number of communities across the United Kingdom by transforming schools into beacons of excellence and agents of opportunity and renewal through our own endeavours and partnering with others.
- Through the rigour and innovation of our school improvement work we raise attainment and progress in line with government targets and then beyond, ensuring that all pupils' needs are addressed in schools that Ofsted has rated at least 'good'.
- We give our children unique insights into how academic rigour combined with creative thinking and creative practices can help them to embrace successfully the challenges of the 21st century.
- We ensure our children are safe, happy and well-behaved in our schools, that they learn effectively in school and understand how to manage the difficulties that may confront them beyond the school gate.
- We are ambitious for our children and committed to making them confident, resilient and active citizens whatever their starting point.
- Our children have access to a global cultural heritage that stimulates curiosity and respect, and we deepen our children's understanding of the past, present and future potential of their communities.
- Our ideals, inclusive culture, respect for evidence-based professional learning models and innovation, as well as the professional development opportunities we provide make Creative Education Trust a place where the best talent wants to work.
- We provide capacity and development opportunities back into the wider schools sector, through our professional learning programmes and through secondments.

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

- We put sustainability at the heart of the way we educate our children and manage our assets.
- We embrace new technologies to deliver the best educational experience for our children.
- Our governance and leadership are among the very best in the sector.
- We manage our finances and utilise our assets resourcefully to deliver our goals as educators.
- We are an employer of choice because we recognise and utilise best practice, providing further opportunities wherever possible and CPD for teachers.

Taking into account these high-level aspirations and bearing in mind the intent and language of the Department for Education Documents referenced above, the new plan sets out our detailed objectives under the following headings:

- i. High-quality and inclusive education for our communities
- ii. School improvement and supporting the wider sector
- iii. Creativity, innovation and expanding horizons
- iv. People, professional development and adding sector capacity
- v. Diversity, inclusivity and respect
- vi. Community and partnerships
- vii. Innovative, effective and efficient financial and risk management
- viii. Sustainability
- ix. Buildings and places
- x. Technology for enhanced learning and effective administration
- xi. Governance, compliance, ethical leadership and community roots
- xii. Reputation, system leadership and policy influencing
- xiii. Growth and dissemination

Public Benefit

In setting objectives and planning its activities the Trustees have given careful consideration to the Charity Commission's general guidelines on public benefit. The Trust seeks to promote, for the benefit of the communities in the areas surrounding its academies, the provision of facilities for learning and recreation with the object of improving the condition of life of those communities.

STRATEGIC REPORT

ACHIEVEMENTS AND PERFORMANCE

Once again, this report must begin by noting that the communities we serve continue to be disproportionately impacted by the after effects of the pandemic period and the subsequent cost of living crisis. As a consequence, one of the most important initiatives undertaken by Creative Education Trust in 2023/24 was the development of a plan to introduce Community Hubs attached to its schools. It is intended that two pilot schemes will be set up in 2024/25 - in Nottingham and Great Yarmouth.

Nationally the world of schools has not returned to the pre-Covid status quo, though many schools operators including Creative Education Trust are becoming increasingly successful at dealing with the challenges that have arisen. Significant levels of pupil absence and behaviour issues have continued to be national problems, and ones that have required redoubled professional efforts and focus of resources at Trust and school level to address.

It is pleasing to report that in response to our investment in expanding our school attendance teams and to a raft of initiatives to make participation in the educational and co-curricular opportunities of our schools as attractive as possible in the current environment, our attendance levels have been rising and negative indicators such as persistent absence and permanent exclusions have been falling.

Nevertheless, much more remains to be done. It is anticipated that the proposed Creative Education Trust Community Hubs will make an important contribution to supporting our most challenged families and getting their children back into school.

There continue to be heavy financial pressures across the sector. The level of per capita pupil funding and the national decline in numbers of primary aged children mean that budgets are stretched at a point in the cycle when many trusts including Creative Education Trust have long since made the most of the possible operating efficiencies. Forward financial planning continues to be difficult because of delays in government's decision making and uncertainties as to whether future pay settlements will be fully funded. Capital budgets continue to be a concern since Creative Education Trust operates a very mixed estate with some buildings very poor quality and ill-adapted to modern teaching. While our estates and finance teams collaborate to use available funds as strategically as possible, there is presently a requirement for £7.5m of condition expenditure and this is more than double our current annual School Condition Allocation (SCA) funding. In addition, it remains a priority to apply to future DfE school rebuilding programmes for a number of the Trust's buildings. It is debatable whether further investment into prolonging the life of unsuitable buildings represents good value for money with three schools beyond design life.

During the year, falling energy prices and a well-researched and well-timed re-procurement of both gas and electricity across Creative Education Trust presented a brighter picture than a year earlier. We have continued to make regular investment into energy saving measures including the installation of efficient modern gas boilers, heating systems, more efficient IT, photovoltaic cells, LED lighting and better switching and control systems. Most pleasing of all has been the significant cultural shift among pupils and staff, which in combination with technical upgrades resulted in in-year reductions of 1,289,276 kwh in gas consumption (13.5%) and 541,501 kwh in electricity consumption (9.7%). These reductions are in addition to those made in the previous year which provides a reduction in metric tonnes of CO₂ of 368 tonnes (previous year had reduced by 448 tonnes).

In addition to the core operating budget, the Board was able to apply £1m of designated reserves to targeted school improvement and professional development initiatives as well as essential asbestos removal works. A rigorous approach to Treasury management brought in an additional £0.5m of bank interest above budget. Due to the endeavours and professionalism of staff across the Trust, and despite continuing challenges posed by national capital and revenue funding settlements, we ended the year with a surplus and having maintained our target reserves position of 5%, with further reserves designated for strategic priorities in the next three years.

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

Trustees would also like to draw attention to the continuing aggregate increase in academic outcomes detailed in the "Key Performance Indicators section below. GCSE outcomes for the 2023/4 exams were 14% above 2019 levels, despite a decrease in attainment of students at the point of entry. Overall unvalidated progress scores are up by 0.13 from 2019.

Four out of our five primary schools achieved phonics results at the end of year 1 in advance of the national average, and the proportion of pupils achieving the expected standard in reading, writing and mathematics at the end of Key Stage 2 increased faster than the national average. Post-16 outcomes continued to improve year, on year with A*-C now standing at 65% and the average point score for vocational grades above the national figure.

After nine Ofsted inspections in 2022/23, 2023/24 brought a further six; 76% of Creative Education Trust Schools are now deemed to be 'Good'. Depending on the timing of future inspections and the evolution of the grading system we are working towards 100% of our schools being 'Good' (or equivalent) by the end of 2025/26. Trustees were particularly pleased that The Bulwell Academy moved from 'Inadequate' to 'Requires Improvement' in the immediate aftermath of strike action that had threatened its rapid journey of improvement. Our curriculum and educational offer continue to be praised in reports, as has Trust governance and oversight. Safeguarding is recognised as strong across the Trust and in recent reports our approach to attendance and inclusion have been commented on favourably.

2023/24 was a year of continuing development of Creative Education Trust's capability and capacity to further leverage the benefits of being a multi-academy trust, and to embed high-grade and shared approaches to key aspects of our work.

The prime driver of these developments was the new strategic plan and operating model review presented to the Board in December 2023. The operational plans attached to the high-level strategy are the blueprints which guide the activities of management and staff at Creative Education Trust.

Within the year the following developments took place in pursuit of the Board and management's agreed priorities and future ambitions:

- Completion of the review and refreshment of the Trust's strategic plan with a focus on the organisation Creative Education Trust wishes to be by 2030, and the steps to achieve this
- Complementary review of the Trust's Operating Model to enable the effective implementation of the refreshed strategy, and to prepare for further growth from 2024/25
- Commencement of the implementation of the objectives of Strategy 2030
- Completion of internal Governance Review and creation of new Scheme of Delegation
- Implementation by augmented Governance and Compliance team of the recommendations of the external review of Academy Council support and development
- Further developments to our Curriculum-led Financial Planning (CLFP) and budgeting to balance our budget for 2024/25
- Implementation of new Treasury management strategy and cash-flow model generating £0.6m of additional income
- Development of a plan for the opening of Creative Education Trust Community Hubs
- Launch of the Creative Education Trust Safeguarding Strategy 2023-2025 and the introduction of Regional Safeguarding Boards

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

- Planning and introduction of new Safeguarding and Personal Development Directorate effective from September 2024.
- Roll-out of our co-constructed Teaching & Learning Framework for Excellence, a research-informed framework with supportive instructional coaching model that will ensure that all teachers at Creative Education Trust are supported to be outstanding practitioners, and ensure that all our pupils have an expert in every classroom.
- Development and implementation of our cross-trust Frameworks for Behaviour, Curriculum and Assessment, and SEND.
- Continuing positive recognition by Ofsted and others of our Trust-wide primary and secondary curriculums and common assessment frameworks.
- Recruitment of an EdTech Trustee and a Trust EdTech Lead to support the development of our new EdTech strategy.
- Developed transformational in-house Apps for Education, Finance and HR.
- Further developments to our in-house training and development programmes culminating in the launch in July of ElevatEd, the Trust's Centre for Learning and Development at our second two-day National Conference.
- Overhaul and increased capacity for our recruitment team.
- Completion of integration programme for key MIS and HR systems.
- Further step-changes in culture and process of energy saving across the Trust leading to significant financial savings to re-invest in education.
- Successful completion of two major Trust-wide procurements – catering and cleaning which will lead to higher standards and greater value for money.
- The Trust continues to achieve excellent compliance performance and this is measured against typical sector specific Health & Safety compliance ratings. The estates and its operations are subject to rigorous compliance testing regimes and when measured against the list of required checks we regularly report achievement of between 96% and 98.6% Health and Safety compliance.

Key Performance Indicators

The Trust employs a variety of key performance indicators to measure performance in the various areas of its operations and these key performance indicators are closely monitored by both the Trust's senior management team and the Trustees.

The key financial performance indicators (KPIs) are:

- Achievement of a recurring operating surplus on our operations (excluding expenditure from designated reserves, movements in pension liabilities and amounts attributable to funds acquired on transfers of academies into the Trust during the year); and
- Maintenance of a level of unrestricted and restricted income funds that is in line with the Reserves policy of the Trust (excluding amounts attributable to transfers of academies into the Trust).

**CREATIVE EDUCATION TRUST
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**TRUSTEES' REPORT (CONTINUED)
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2024**

Both measures were achieved in the year. More details are provided in the Financial Review and Reserves Policy sections on pages 18-19.

The Trust's non-financial KPIs are as set out below:

- Pupil numbers across Creative Education Trust have reduced slightly this year, with 14,384 on roll in the October 2023 census (14,461 in the October 2022 census). This is attributed to the national decline in primary pupil numbers and also a planned reduction in part of our post-16 provision. However, many of our secondary academies continue to be full and oversubscribed and we regularly support local authorities in taking additional pupils into our schools. Secondary pupil numbers (excluding post-16) have continued to increase.
- The proportion of students gaining English and Mathematics at 5+ increased by 3% from 2023 to 2024, despite a decrease in the attainment of students on entry. Outcomes are now 14% above 2019 levels.
- The progress of students in English, mathematics, science, humanities and modern foreign languages has increased significantly. English, mathematics and humanities are estimated* to be 0.12, 0.16 and 0.27 above 2023 levels respectively. Science and modern foreign languages are above 2023 levels and are estimated to be 0.22 and 0.81 above 2019 levels respectively.
- The progress of students overall continues to increase, estimated to be up 0.07 from 2023 and up 0.14 from 2019.
- Progress for disadvantaged and SEND students continues to increase, estimated to be up 0.10 and 0.09 respectively from 2019. Progress for looked after children, a focus for the Trust, has also increased.
- The proportion of pupils surpassing the expected standard in phonics at the end of Year 1 increased or was above national in four out of five of the Trust's primary schools.
- The proportion of pupils achieving full marks in the Year 4 Multiplication Tables Check rose significantly, up 17% from 2023.
- The proportion of pupils achieving the expected standard in reading, writing and mathematics all increased significantly faster than the national rate, up 6%, 6% and 4% from 2023 respectively. The proportion of pupils achieving the expected standard in mathematics was higher than national. The proportion of pupils achieving the higher standard in reading increased by 31%, despite a national decrease.
- The average point score of Year 13 students' A-Level grades increased again, now a full grade higher than in 2019.
- All A-Level grade achievements have improved consistently over time; for A*-A, A*-B, A*-C, A*-D and A*-E, compared to no overall change nationally. A*-Cs have increased from 56% in 2019, to 61% in 2023, to 65% in 2024.
- The average point score of Year 13 students' vocational grades remains above the national average from 2023.

*Note - Progress 8 estimates taken from SISRA National data set.

- The 2023-2024 academic year saw six inspections across Creative Education Trust, all under the Education Inspection Framework (EIF).

Academy	Previous inspection grade	New inspection grade
The Bulwell Academy	Inadequate	Requires Improvement
Wrenn School	Good	Good
Lynn Grove Academy	Good	Good
Caister Academy	Good	Good
Wroughton Junior Academy	Requires Improvement	Requires Improvement
Ash Green School	Serious Weaknesses	Taking Effective Action

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

- Wroughton Junior Academy has had a significant injection of resources, and has improved outcomes. After a number of unsuccessful recruitment attempts, owing to local (coastal) and national recruitment difficulties, a substantive Headteacher has now been appointed. A Statement of Action Committee is in place to monitor improvements continuously and often.
- Ash Green School is improving attendance at a rate twice that of national, and is progressing in all areas for improvement identified by Ofsted.
- Bulwell Academy has moved from Inadequate to Requires Improvement, however the Statement of Action Committee remains in place until all areas are considered Good.
- In all inspections Safeguarding was found to be effective
- In all inspections, the Trust curriculum was found to be broad, balanced, aspirational and of high quality.

While the Trust continues to make year-on-year progress in raising educational standards, Trustees recognise that Creative Education Trust's journey to realise its high ambitions for the children in its schools is not yet finished. Trustees remain committed to providing the skills and resources to enable further rapid progress to be made.

Going Concern

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

Promoting the success of the company

The likely consequences of any decision in the long term:

- The Board and management of Creative Education Trust have mechanisms for ensuring that their decisions are informed by due consideration of their potential longer-term consequences, and for understanding the educational, political and financial contexts in which the organisation operates, as well as the range of possible future outcomes which may impact upon the organisation. In the first instance, all decisions are guided by the Trust's long-term five-year Strategic Plan, which is itself the result of extensive and informed consideration of the strengths and weaknesses of the organisation in relation to current and possible future government policy, public sector funding, educational debate, and other relevant factors. The Strategic Plan is in turn linked to the Trust's rolling three-year financial forecast, and shapes decisions about both short-term funding and longer-term investment.
- The Board ensures that it is kept abreast of thinking in a wide variety of areas that may impact on its strategic and tactical decision-making. It receives regular intelligence from senior management on policy developments and invites confidential briefings as required from independent individuals in the worlds of education and public policy to coincide with Board Meetings and at its annual two-day strategy retreat. Members of the Board have been selected to represent a variety of perspectives of value to Creative Education Trust's strategic decision making, with experienced senior figures from education, finance, audit, law, HR, digital media and artificial intelligence, and design and the built environment.
- Some of the Board's sub-committees, including Education Standards and Estates and Property, have co-opted professionals to expand further the range of knowledge available for informed decision making.
- Creative Education Trust was a founder member of The Queen Street Group (QSG), a voluntary association of 40 mature and successful Multi-Academy Trusts across England, between them running 800 schools. During the year, Creative Education Trust's CEO was a Vice-Chair of QSG and a member of its Executive Committee. The Trust's Director of Estates and Facilities was Chair of QSG's Estates Group, and its Director of IT Co-Chair of its EdTech Group.

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

- QSG provides a forum for like-minded educational organisations to share best practice through regular meetings of CEOs and other senior executives, and to support one another with experience and intelligence. QSG has a regular programme of meetings with education ministers, senior civil servants, the CEOs of education regulators and funders, as well as other senior decision makers and policy experts. Feedback from these interactions forms an invaluable background to the horizon-gazing and decision-making of Creative Education Trust's Board and senior management.
- Creative Education Trust is also an active member of the Larger MATs Group of the Confederation of School Trusts (CST). The Trust's Director of Finance is Chair of CST's FD and COO Group, providing a further window into the sector and benchmarking opportunities that feed into executive and Board discussion and decision making.

The interests of the company's employees:

- Our staff remain at the heart of our success as a multi-academy trust. We are committed to fostering a positive, inclusive, and supportive working environment where all employees feel valued, engaged, and empowered.
- We continue to offer a wide range of learning and development opportunities, including leadership programs, subject-specific development, and access to external qualifications, to help our staff enhance their skills and progress in their careers. Our investment in continuous professional learning and development reflects our belief that well-supported staff directly contribute to the success and improvement of our schools.
- Employee well-being continues to be a key priority, and we have a number of initiatives to support mental, emotional, and physical health. This includes continued access to an employee assistance program for staff; the use of occupational health services to support employees; and flexible working arrangements where these are possible. We recognise that happy, healthy employees are more likely to deliver high-quality education to our students.
- In the coming year, we will continue to prioritise recruitment, retention, staff development, and improving our employee data as central components of our strategy to maintain a motivated, high-performing workforce that delivers exceptional outcomes for our students.

The need to foster the company's business relationships with suppliers, customers, and others in a business relationship with the academy trust:

Creative Education Trust considers its stakeholders to be as follows:

- Pupils;
- Parents/ carers;
- Local communities;
- Employees;
- Local and central government agencies, local councillors, external education providers, local primary, and secondary schools; and
- Suppliers including catering, cleaning, and payroll providers.

Stakeholder engagement is extremely important to the Trust and is delivered through a range of means depending on the circumstances. Pupils, parents, and carers are provided with key school information via letters from the Principal / Headteacher, text messages, e-mails, the school website, and social media. This group of stakeholders is fully consulted in terms of developments within individual schools such as changes to uniform and changes to curriculum. Key school changes, such as decreases in the Published Admissions Number (PAN), are subject to full consultation with all relevant stakeholders. Their views are welcomed, encouraged, and listened to, and the impact of decisions taken into consideration before implementation.

Creative Education Trust's relationship with suppliers is of great importance to the successful operation of the Trust. The Board is mindful of the need to maintain the highest standards of integrity and practice in the Trust's procurement processes, as well as to ensure that suppliers are treated fairly, particularly where they are smaller businesses, often closely linked with the local communities served by the Trust's schools.

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**TRUSTEES' REPORT (CONTINUED)
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The Trust ensures that suppliers are only accepted after a proper scrutiny process involving GDPR checks to ensure that the Trust's data security is not compromised. When goods and services are procured, the Trust ensures that it follows sector rules that ensure the best value for money. Controls are in place to ensure that procurement is subject to obtaining an appropriate number of competitive quotes for goods and services. In addition, staff or Trustees who may have the ability to influence buying decisions are required to disclose all outside directorships and shareholdings to ensure that there are no conflicts of interest.

As a publicly funded organisation, the Trust is mindful of its obligation to treat suppliers fairly, in particular in the context of the recent pandemic and its aftermath. Payment terms are adhered to, and support has been provided to suppliers whose businesses have been negatively affected. In the case of major suppliers to the Trust, such as caterers and cleaning companies, the Trust maintains regular dialogue to ensure that there is a good level of understanding of issues for both sides. This process helps to maintain the security of supply in key areas for the ultimate benefit of schools, pupils, and the suppliers themselves.

The impact of the company's operations on the community and the environment:

- Creative Education Trust's schools are community assets situated in places with high levels of deprivation and multiple challenges. Creative Education Trust continues with its strategic objectives that schools are active and valued participants in their localities, with a key role in community renewal and pride. Pupils in the Trust's schools are taught to value their community's identity and encouraged to contribute actively to its life and its enhancement when at school and in adult life. Our facilities are frequently used in support of this endeavour.
- The Covid period heavily impacted wider community engagements and access to events, the Trust continues its increasing emphasis upon delivering sports activities, performing arts and other community engagements.
- Creative Education Trust's school-level governance arrangements specifically ensure parental and other local representation in the oversight of the management of each school's affairs, and it tries to ensure that its investments recognise local needs and community priorities. The Trust is purposefully endorsing and pursuing investments to engage further with key community activities and agencies.
- Environmental considerations are at the forefront of curriculum design and delivery in Creative Education Trust schools. The Trust has had a specific focus on reducing energy consumption in 2023 and 2024 and all capital investments scrutinise carbon reduction opportunities. The Trust has continued to achieve significant consumption reduction targets.
- In the management of its Estates and Facilities operational responsibilities and in the management of extensive holdings of land and buildings, the Trust pays particular attention to the guidance of the DfE's Good Estates Management Strategy (GEMS).
- One aspect of GEMS is to enable focus upon environmental concerns and efficiencies – ranging from the removal of legacy asbestos and other harmful materials from its older building stock to the replacement of traditional oil-fired boilers, carbon offset from planting in grounds, installing energy efficient windows and roofing materials, to an extensive rolling programme of replacement of fluorescent light fittings with LED. The Trust has continued to invest to ensure we can extend the lifecycle of our aged estates as well as ensuring significant further investment in retrofit and consumption reduction initiatives. 2023-24 shows further significant savings in energy and a growth in investment in new more efficient plant and equipment. Solar PV installation in two of our schools are now providing the expected yield.

The desirability of the company maintaining a reputation for high standards of business conduct:

- Creative Education Trust is a philanthropic organisation expressly dedicated to improving standards of public education and building social equity and cultural capital, particularly in relation to young people in poorly performing schools in 'left behind' communities.
- This social objective and philanthropic ethos govern its conduct in relation to all stakeholders, internal and external. To these ends it is constituted as an exempt charity regulated by the Secretary of State for Education. Creative Education Trust is obliged to follow the stipulations of the Academy Trust Handbook and other applicable government guidance for publicly funded organisations.

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

- The Board and management take very seriously their ethical duty to abide by the Nolan Principles for standards in public life. In addition, Creative Education Trust has signed up to QSG's Statement of Ethical Commitment, which obliges it to endorse formally two recent frameworks of ethical leadership: ASCL Leadership Commission: Framework for Ethical Leadership in Education; and ICSA/CST Guidance on Healthy Organisational Culture in Academy Trusts.

FINANCIAL REVIEW

During the year ended 31 August 2024, the Trust received income of £123 million (2023: £110 million) of which £111 million (2023: £103 million) related to restricted income funds, £4 million (2023: £3 million) related to unrestricted funds, and £8 million (2023: £4 million) related to restricted capital grants. The principal source of funding during the year continued to be the General Annual Grant received from the Trust's regulator, the Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA), which is an Executive Agency of the UK Government, sponsored by the Department for Education (DfE). General Annual Grant of £89 million was received in the year to 31 August 2024 (2023: £83 million) and other revenue grants from the ESFA/ DfE (including pupil premium totalled £16 million (2023: £15 million)).

The Trust had expenditure (excluding expenditure allocated to the pension reserve) of £119 million (2023: £113 million) including £112 million (2023: £106 million) of expenditure from restricted and unrestricted income and £7 million (2023: £7 million) of depreciation allocated directly against the restricted fixed asset fund. In addition, the Trust invested £2 million (2023: £1.3 million) of restricted general funds into the purchase of fixed assets.

As a result of the above, the Trust's surplus on restricted general funds and unrestricted general funds (excluding deficit on the pension reserve) for the year to 31 August 2024 totalled £1.9 million (2023: £30,000). The surplus in the year to 31 August 2024 arose from a number of one-off factors arising during the year; specifically, a significant workstream to centralise and maximise return on cash balances, a change in the assumption for a future support staff pay award and specific circumstances within two of the Trust's schools.

Reserves Policy

The Trustees' policy is to carry forward a prudent but not excessive level of reserves to facilitate cashflow, strategic developments, planned investment and improvement and support unforeseen contingencies. The Trustees' normal policy is to hold a level of unrestricted and restricted general funds (excluding those funds that are designated) equal to around five percent of the total income of the Trust.

At 31 August 2024, the Trustees' have designated reserves of £3.5 million for the ElevatEd (the Trust's Centre for Professional Learning and Development), School Improvement initiatives, a Community Hubs pilot scheme and various other strategic projects approved by the Board's Finance Committee. The Trust's available unrestricted and restricted general reserves at the 31 August 2024 (excluding reserves designated by Trustees) total £5.7 million (2023: £5.3 million), which equates to five percent of total income.

In addition to the above restricted and unrestricted general funds, the Trust is holding reserves of £211 million (2023: £209 million) of restricted fixed asset funds and £3 million (2023: £3 million) of endowment funds. The endowment funds relate specifically to Milton Keynes Academy and The Bulwell Academy, and the application of these endowment funds takes place in accordance with the endowment deeds, which stipulate that funds should be applied in the advancement of public benefit education at these schools.

The defined benefit pension scheme reserve has a negative balance of £1 million (2022: £3 million). The effect of the deficit position of the pension scheme is that the Academy Trust is paying higher employers' pension contributions over a period of years. The higher employers' pension contributions will be met from the Academy Trust's budgeted annual income. Whilst the deficit will not be eliminated immediately, there should be no actual cash flow deficit on the fund, nor any direct impact on the free reserves of the Academy Trust.

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

Investment Policy

During the year all of the Trust's restricted and unrestricted funds were held by UK banks in current and fixed term deposit accounts, in accordance with the Trust's investment policy. Endowment funds were held in an appropriate range of equity and fixed interest investments managed by an experienced fund manager in accordance with the Trust's Endowment investment policy.

PRINCIPAL RISKS AND UNCERTAINTIES

The Trust has identified nine principal risks on its strategic risk register, as detailed below. These areas are closely monitored via an established risk management process under the oversight of the Board and its sub-committees. Each strategic risk has a detailed operational risk register.

1. Safeguarding

Risk: Failure to maintain appropriate safeguarding procedures or follow safeguarding guidance could result in the injury or death of a child. Safeguarding being judged as inadequate by Ofsted which would present risk of re-brokerage.

Response: The Trust attaches the greatest importance to the safeguarding of children at its schools.

The Trust has a Director of Safeguarding and Personal Development and has an experienced Safeguarding in Education professional on the Board. The Safeguarding and Personal Development Directorate is made up of an Executive Director, a Head of Safeguarding, and three Regional Safeguarding Advisors, who provide localised advice and guidance to regional safeguarding leads.

Its policies and procedures are kept under constant review and the Board ensures that the Trust keeps safeguarding at the forefront of its activities.

All Creative Education Trust academies, hold an 'effective safeguarding' judgement from Ofsted, additionally, a recent external review of Safeguarding standards across Creative Education Trust found safeguarding systems to be strong, and no management actions were recommended.

The Trust has a robust scheme of quality assurance in place, when ensures that the Trust meets its statutory obligations under The Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014.

2. Estates and Facilities

Risk: Failure of one or more of systems, infrastructure or equipment gives rise to closure, interruption, damage or injury.

Response: The Trust continues to undertake regular, standardised risk assessment of all known and reasonably foreseeable health and safety hazards covering all premises, people, equipment, and activities to control risks and to plan and prioritise the implementation of the identified control measures. Specific responsibilities are assigned to the Estates team, Principals and Headteachers, teaching staff, other staff, pupils, and contractors. While we regularly review risks associated with our estates and facilities, it is clear that the ageing nature of some of our older buildings provides for greater risk of failure. The risks associated with building failure are kept under regular review, and the Trust strategically utilises available funding to mitigate these risks. However, access to future DfE school rebuilding programmes remains a key priority for a number of the Trust's buildings.

Significant investment in training and competency has been achieved in 2023/24 and all staff have or are undertaking IOSH training as well as Asbestos management qualifications. Third party auditors and assessors review the effectiveness of our systems and approach.

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

3. Educational Performance

Risk: Underperformance in key performance related measures leading to inadequate inspection outcomes, poor representation in performance tables and reputational damage.

Response: The Trust maintains accurate and complete school performance data and continuously trains staff in different academies to maintain and improve standards. Remedial action is taken to reduce risk where concerns arise, as identified through robust reporting and accountability structures.

4. Financial management

Risk: The challenge of delivering the Trust's strategic plans, within the constraints of government funding, in addition to the risks of closure and heightened regularity risk, which arise from poor financial management/ non-compliant financial reporting.

Response: The Trust's business model is highly sensitive to changes in funding and the impact of national pay awards. During 2023/24, the DfE announced that an error had been made in their National Funding Formula, resulting in a reduction in funding for the 2024/25 academic year. Due to the established strategic financial planning processes already in place, the Trust worked to prepare budgets that took account of this reduction in funding, while ensuring the strategic priorities of the Trust and our schools could still be facilitated. The DfE subsequently announced additional funding in July 2024, however this announcement took place after the Trust's budget had been finalised. The Trust has processes in place to establish how this funding may further support advancement of strategic priorities, under oversight from the Board.

During the year, the Trust also concluded its energy procurement effective from October 2024. This provides security regarding energy prices for the next two years.

Significant uncertainty over funding streams remains for the second and third year of the Trust's 3-year plan, and this presents a substantial challenge to the preparation of realistic 3-year plans to inform strategic decision-making. The Trust's 3-year plan and the impact of changes to government policy will continue to be monitored closely by the Trust's Finance Committee and the Board, alongside ongoing consideration of the Trust's reserves policy. In addition, the Trust is working to ensure all income streams are maximised and further review of procurement processes is ongoing to explore whether further economies of scale can be realised.

The Trust has comprehensive systems, policies and processes in place to ensure financial management processes are robust.

The Trust's exposure to financial risk is largely through bank balances, cash and trade creditors, with limited trade and other debtors. The Trust has inherited various Local Government Defined Benefit Pension Scheme deficits for support staff. Changes to Employer contribution rates are closely monitored to ensure they are built into the Trust's 3-year plan.

5. Insufficient pupil intake

Risk: Low pupil recruitment causing diseconomies of scale and financial challenges.

Response: Pupil numbers, particularly at key entry points, are closely monitored and the financial impact modelled and discussed at each Finance Committee. In addition, the Trust provides targeted marketing to support pupil recruitment and retention. In 2023/24 academic year, the Trust has recruited an internal Head of Corporate Communications and Marketing to provide ongoing focus in this area.

6. IT integrity

Risk: Outage or cyber-attacks give rise to risk of school closures, safeguarding risks, negative PR and disruption to Head Office and school operations.

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

Response: The Trust has in place comprehensive policies and processes to ensure it manages its risks in this area. The Trust employs security controls such as multi-factor Authentication, Cyber Security training for staff and other controls in line with Cyber Essentials and DfE Cyber security standards to combat risk of data loss and service outage. A specialist Data Protection officer ensures compliance with GDPR rules.

7. Staff recruitment and retention

Risk: The Trust is unable to recruit or retain key posts within Head Office or schools; leading to delivery failures at an operational or strategic level.

Response: The Trust works to keep pace with the employment market and continuously develops new initiatives to support recruitment and to ensure that the Trust is an employer of choice. In addition, the Trust focuses on various initiatives to support staff retention including a targeted focus on professional learning and development and staff well-being initiatives. The Trust also identifies individuals who have a material impact on day-to-day running of the Trust and its schools and has developed contingency plans for replacement of those staff in the event of those staff leaving the Trust.

8. HR Compliance

Risk: Organisational policies are inconsistent with employment legislation or Trust policies are not followed consistently by the whole organisation.

Response: The Trust engages a Director of Human Resources and has an experienced Human Resources professional on the Board. A comprehensive set of policies and procedures are in place to ensure compliance at all times, and regular checks are carried out to ensure that key controls have been operated throughout the year.

9. Governance

Risk: Ineffective or inconsistent Governance arrangements hinder organisational progress, interactions with stakeholders and heighten legal, regulatory or reputational risks including the risk of the DfE appointing members to the Board or issuing an "academy trust notice to improve".

Response: The Trust has a considered governance structure to ensure clear lines of sight and accountability. The Trust maintains a comprehensive system of internal reporting, with regular meetings of all stakeholders, including Board members, Principals, Headteachers and the Senior Management Team.

FUNDRAISING

During the year, the Trust did not use any external professional fundraisers. However, during the year the Trust bid for and was awarded various grants in support of its charitable objects.

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

STREAMLINED ENERGY AND CARBON REPORTING

UK Greenhouse gas emissions and energy use data for the period	1 September 2023 to 31 August 2024	1 September 2022 to 31 August 2023
Energy consumption used to calculate emissions (kWh)	15,808,442	17,775,598
<u>Scope 1 emissions in metric tonnes CO2e</u>		
Gas consumption	1,796	2,147
Owned transport – mini-buses	60	28
<u>Total scope 1</u>	1,857	2,175
<u>Scope 2 emissions in metric tonnes CO2e</u>		
Purchased electricity	1,149	1,221
<u>Scope 3 emissions in metric tonnes CO2e</u>		
Business travel in employee-owned vehicles	95	73
<u>Total gross emissions in metric tonnes CO2e</u>	3,101	3,469
<u>Intensity ratio</u>		
Tonnes CO2e per pupil	0.22	0.24

Quantification and Reporting Methodology

We have followed the 2019 HM Government Environmental Reporting Guidelines. We have also used the GHG Reporting Protocol – Corporate Standard and have used the 2022 UK Government’s Conversion Factors for Company Reporting.

Intensity measurement

The chosen intensity measurement ratio is total gross emissions in metric tonnes CO2e per pupil, the recommended ratio for the sector.

Measures taken to improve energy efficiency

Energy cost increases are now an important feature for all schools and consequently, the Trust is accelerating strategies and investments to support consumption reduction. We have seen a substantial periodic reduction in energy consumption of 1,967,156 (2022-23 2,778,272 Kwh) through further wise investment in training and skills along with new equipment such as LED lighting, IT infrastructure, Solar and PV investment and more efficient boilers and pumps. We continue to work at every school and every project to ensure suppliers can ensure that all future capital investments do consider energy efficiency and carbon impact.

Whilst Supply chain costs have increased significantly along with labour, materials and equipment costs. This means that we are faced with ever more challenging choices in dealing with condition and lifecycle projects. Inevitably, we will be doing less with the funding available, whether that be capital investment for condition or revenue expenditure for maintenance. We continue to ensure that the Trust’s investment activities using School Condition Allocation funding remain focused on strategies to support consumption reduction and sustainability and more increasingly, the requirement to ensure building assets are meeting the needs of users.

2023/24 shows further improved performance in energy consumption and this is due to more effective critical monitoring and action planning. Overall carbon reduction continues at pace, and this is being achieved through widespread investment and upgrading of inefficient equipment. Moreover, the work of the Estates’ function continues to be critically focused on waste.

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

The impact of the ageing condition of many of our buildings will limit the improvements we can make to reduce carbon impact. We have been working with designers and technical resources to develop retrofit schemes to modify, refit and refurbish our ageing stock. A number of buildings are beyond life and require replacement.

PLANS FOR FUTURE PERIODS

Creative Education Trust's Strategy 2030 lays out clear objectives and pathways for the further development of the Trust. These will guide future activity. In 2024/25 the Board of Trustees expects the Trust to deliver:

- Further significant increases in attainment and progress for the pupils of its schools
- Further gains in attendance and behaviour and reduction in exclusions
- A further increased percentage of schools judged Ofsted 'Good' via sub-grades
- Improved digital literacy for our pupils and enhanced impact for teachers via our new EdTech strategy.
- Launch of new personal development curriculum and culture and sport entitlement for our pupils
- Enhanced focus on our people's professional development through ElevatEd
- Increased focus on talent spotting, career pathways and succession planning, based on improved people data
- Use of EdTech to reduce workload and increase efficiency for all staff
- Equality formally embedded as a core value through our new EDI plan
- Increased focus on using our talented staff to leverage school-to-school improvement capacity
- Introduction of a sustainability strategy and further reductions in energy consumption
- Review of cross-trust procurement to find further cost efficiencies.
- Review of income-generating activities to increase revenues
- Implementation of new data warehouse infrastructure and unified management data dashboard
- Continued strategic investment in our estate, with a focus on improving our oldest building stock
- Play leading role in supporting the wider sector through DfE regional school improvement initiative
- Onboard further like-minded schools in line with Trust growth plan
- Launch community hubs pilot scheme
- Reduction in staff turnover
- Reduction in use of supply teachers

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

AUDITOR

In so far as the Trustees are aware:

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

The auditors, Bishop Fleming LLP, are willing to continue in office and a resolution to appoint them will be proposed at the annual general meeting.

The Trustees' Report, incorporating a strategic report, was approved by order of the Board of Trustees, as the company directors, on 4 December 2024 and signed on its behalf by:



Abbie Rumbold
Chair of Trustees

**CREATIVE EDUCATION TRUST
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**GOVERNANCE STATEMENT
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2024**

SCOPE OF RESPONSIBILITY

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

The Board of Trustees has delegated the day-to-day responsibility to the Chief Executive, as Accounting Officer, for ensuring financial controls conform with the requirements of both propriety and good financial management and in accordance with the requirements and responsibilities assigned to it in the funding agreement between Creative Education 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 met formally 5 times during the year. Attendance during the year at meetings of the Board of Trustees was as follows:

Trustee	Meetings attended	Out of a possible
Abbie Rumbold (Chair)	5	5
Lucy Becque	5	5
Nicholas Bull	5	5
Owen Carter (appointed 01.01.2024)	3	3
Simon Figgis	4	5
Diana Gerald	4	5
Marc Jordan	5	5
Merlin Joseph	2	5
Emily McDonald	5	5
William Richardson (term ended 31.12.2023)	2	2
Frances Soul	5	5

Every year the Board holds a two-day residential conference with the senior executive team and the Trust's Principals and Headteachers to review performance and develop strategy. This took place in July 2024 with a focus on the role of the Trust and its academies in their communities. Trustees were given practical insights through case studies into the challenges facing schools and their communities in the post-Covid era, and the impacts on attendance, behaviour and learning. The Board was able to discuss with senior staff proposals to develop Community Hubs to better enable the Trust and its academies to understand and support the communities they serve.

For the first time, the Board and Senior Staff strategy residential coincided with the Trust's National Conference. This gave Board members opportunities to learn at first-hand about the work of a wide group of school staff across the country, and to participate in sessions and discussion on the National Conference theme of 'Emerging to Excel' in teaching and learning. They were also able to participate in the launch of ElevatEd, Creative Education Trust's new professional development platform. In addition, during the year members of the Board also undertook a cycle of visits to Creative Education Trust schools.

There were various changes to the Board during the year. From 1 September 2023, Lucy Becque succeeded Peter Walls as Chair of the People and Remuneration Committee. In December 2023, Frances Soul took over as Chair of the Trust's Education Standards Committee, following the retirement of founding Trustee Dr William Richardson. On 1 January 2024, Owen Carter joined the Board.

**CREATIVE EDUCATION TRUST
(A COMPANY LIMITED BY GUARANTEE)**

**GOVERNANCE STATEMENT (CONTINUED)
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2024**

In July Marc Jordan, Founder and Chief Executive of Creative Education Trust, announced his intention to retire at the end of Academic Year 2024/25 after fifteen years in the role. The Board has constituted a Search Committee and appointed Recruitment Consultants to find his successor.

Conflicts of interest

The Trust has a comprehensive process in place to manage conflicts of interest. An annual declaration of business interests is provided by Members, Trustees, the Executive team, Principals / Headteachers, members of School leadership teams, Budget holders and finance staff involved in procurement. If the Trust intends to initiate a transaction with a declared business interest, it must be reviewed and approved by the Trust's Financial Controller. In addition, if a transaction meets the criteria of a "related party transaction" or "connected party transaction", these are also reviewed by the Director of Finance, who would co-ordinate ESFA approval and oversight by the Audit and Risk Committee.

Governance Review

Trustees consider their individual and collective skills and effectiveness on an ongoing basis. They are also mindful of diversity and succession. They have used recruitment for vacancies over the past five years to ensure that the composition of the board may best reflect the Trust's inclusive values and supports the longevity of the Trust. Retirements and new appointments are noted above.

During 2023-24 the Board recruited an experienced Head of Compliance and Governance to lead a new team of professionals to support and advise the Board, the Chief Executive Officer and Academy Councils. The positive impact of this new approach grew rapidly during the year as the planning of the annual cycle of Board Meetings and the nature of executive reporting to the Board were further developed and refined to keep pace with the scale and sophistication of the wider organisation and the responsibilities of Trustees as defined in the Academies Handbook.

Building on the consultancy work on Academy Councils undertaken in the previous year by LeadTo, the work of the Trust's Academy Councils was given new focus and energy by the Governance Team. A well thought through programme to provide support to Academy Councils in recruitment, induction and on-going training was put in place, and steps were taken to ensure that there are regular bilateral communication opportunities between the local Chairs and the Board of Trustees. A completely revised and updated Academy Council Handbook was developed during the year, to be launched at the start of the 2024/25 academic year. These endeavours culminated in a successful and well-attended National Development Day for Academy Council members in June.

In 2022/23 the Trust's solicitors refreshed the Board's Terms of Reference and reviewed the Scheme of Delegation. In 2023/24 this work was incorporated in a new and updated Scheme of Delegation for 2024/25 and approved by the Board in July. The refreshed Terms of Reference is now part of an extensive new Trustee Handbook to be launched in September 2024. Induction and development opportunities for Trustees have also been reviewed, extended and updated.

Now that this work has been completed, it is intended that a wide-ranging external review of the Trust's governance will be commissioned during autumn term 2024, to be undertaken in spring term 2025. It is planned that this will be repeated on a triennial basis to complement the annual Board self-evaluation.

**CREATIVE EDUCATION TRUST
(A COMPANY LIMITED BY GUARANTEE)**

**GOVERNANCE STATEMENT (CONTINUED)
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2024**

Finance Committee

The Finance Committee is a sub-committee of the main Board of Trustees. Its purpose is:

- a) To consider the Trust's indicative funding, drawing any matters of significance or concern to the attention of the Board;
- b) To consider and recommend to the Board the three-year plan of the Trust and any reforecast thereof;
- c) To consider the projections for the level of reserves within the Trust to ensure that they fall within agreed Trust policies and advise the board of reserves in excess of its target which can then be effectively deployed within the Trust;
- d) To consider the opportunities and threats faced by the Trust in achieving agreed targets and recommend appropriate actions to exploit or mitigate such opportunities and threats, as the case may be;
- e) To review treasury and endowment performance and to approve recommendations regarding utilisation of the endowment funds.

Attendance at meetings in the year was as follows:

Trustee	Meetings attended	Out of a possible
Nicholas Bull (Chair)	4	4
Simon Figgis	4	4
Marc Jordan	4	4
Abbie Rumbold	4	4

Audit and Risk Committee

The Audit and Risk Committee is a sub-committee of the main Board of Trustees. Its purpose is to:

- a) Monitor and review procedures for ensuring the effective implementation and operation of financial procedures;
- b) To review the financial statements and recommend their approval to the Board;
- c) To receive both internal and external auditors' reports and recommend to the Board action as appropriate in response to audit findings;
- d) To recommend to the Board the appointment or reappointment of the auditors (both internal and external as deemed appropriate) of the Trust;
- e) To review the audit plans and reports of the external auditors and internal auditors, and consider the effectiveness of the actions taken by management on the auditors' recommendations;
- f) To review management's control framework and auditor assessments of controls and report to the Board on the findings and recommendations for improvements; and
- g) To review management's analysis of the Trust's strategic and operational risks and to monitor the implementation of additional controls where applicable.

Attendance at meetings in the year was as follows:

Trustee	Meetings attended	Out of a possible
Simon Figgis (Chair)	4	4
Nicholas Bull	4	4
Merlin Joseph	2	2
Abbie Rumbold	4	4

**GOVERNANCE STATEMENT (CONTINUED)
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2024**

REVIEW OF VALUE FOR MONEY

As Accounting Officer, the Chief Executive 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 Trust has delivered improved value for money during the year by:

- Proactive monitoring of the energy markets, and procurement at a favourable time.
- Significant reprioritisation of budgets, to ensure that emerging priorities could be facilitated, despite external uncertainty in funding;
- An ongoing rigorous approach to integrated curriculum and financial planning for all schools to ensure that staffing of the curriculum is effective and efficient;
- Careful consideration of the application of both School Condition Allocation funding, revenue funding and reserves, to ensure the Trust's estate is safe, well- maintained and complies with regulations; and
- Use of Government backed framework agreements to procure a new trust-wide catering contract and a new cleaning contract for a number of schools.

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 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 Creative Education Trust for the period from 1 September 2023 to 31 August 2024 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 Board of Trustees is of the view that there is a formal ongoing process for identifying, evaluating, and managing the Academy Trust's significant risks that has been in place for the period from 1 September 2023 to 31 August 2024 and up to the date of approval of the annual report and financial statements. This process is regularly reviewed by the Board of Trustees.

THE RISK AND CONTROL FRAMEWORK

The Trust's system of internal 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 Committee and Estates and Properties 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 (assets purchase or capital investment) guidelines

**CREATIVE EDUCATION TRUST
(A COMPANY LIMITED BY GUARANTEE)**

**GOVERNANCE STATEMENT (CONTINUED)
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2024**

- Delegation of authority and segregation of duties
- Identification and management of risks

In advance of the 2023/24 academic year, the Board of Trustees had tendered the Trust's internal audit service, and with effect from September 2023, RSM have been the internal auditors for the Trust. Following RSM's appointment, the Board and RSM have worked together to develop a comprehensive internal audit strategy. This includes an expanded remit for internal audit, focused on obtaining independent assurance regarding the Trust's risk management framework, and the controls that are central to managing the Trust's key strategic risks.

The internal auditor attends the Trust's Audit and Risk Committee throughout the year to plan reviews and report the outcomes of those reviews. The internal auditors have delivered their schedule of work as planned and there were no high-risk control issues noted. Several medium and low recommendations were noted, and the Trust has implemented action plans or immediate changes to resolve these recommendations.

The overall opinion provided by RSM for 2023/24 states that the "Trust has an adequate and effective framework for risk management, governance and internal control. However, our work has identified further enhancements to the framework of risk management, governance and internal control to ensure that it remains adequate and effective".

REVIEW OF EFFECTIVENESS

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

- The work of the internal auditor
- The school resource management self-assessment tool
- The work of the executive leaders within the Academy Trust who have responsibility for the development and maintenance of the internal control framework
- The work of the external auditor

The Accounting Officer has been advised of the implications of the result of their review of the system of internal control by the Audit and Risk Committee and a plan to ensure continuous improvement of the system is in place.

Based on the advice of the Audit and Risk Committee and the Accounting Officer, the Board of Trustees is of the opinion that the academy trust has an adequate and effective framework for governance, risk management and control.

Approved by order of the members of the Board of Trustees on 4 December 2024 and signed on their behalf by:



Abbie Rumbold
Chair of Trustees



Marc Jordan
Accounting Officer

**CREATIVE EDUCATION TRUST
(A COMPANY LIMITED BY GUARANTEE)**

STATEMENT ON REGULARITY, PROPRIETY AND COMPLIANCE

As accounting officer of Creative Education 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 terms and conditions of all funding, including for estates safety and management, under the funding agreement between the Academy Trust and the Secretary of State for Education. As part of my consideration I have had due regard to the requirements of the Academy Trust Handbook 2024, 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 all 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 2024.

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



Marc Jordan
Accounting Officer
Date: 4 December 2024

**CREATIVE EDUCATION TRUST
(A COMPANY LIMITED BY GUARANTEE)**

**STATEMENT OF TRUSTEES' RESPONSIBILITIES
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2024**

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

Company law requires the Trustees to prepare financial statements for each financial . 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 of the Charities SORP 2019 and the Academies Accounts Direction 2023 to 2024;
- make judgments and accounting estimates that are reasonable and prudent;
- state whether applicable UK Accounting Standards have been followed, subject to any material departures disclosed and explained in the financial statements;
- prepare the financial statements on the going concern basis unless it is inappropriate to presume that the charitable company 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 ESFA/DfE have been applied for the purposes intended.

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

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



Abbie Rumbold
Chair of Trustees

Date: 4 December 2024

**CREATIVE EDUCATION TRUST
(A COMPANY LIMITED BY GUARANTEE)**

**INDEPENDENT AUDITORS' REPORT ON THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS TO THE MEMBERS OF
CREATIVE EDUCATION TRUST**

OPINION

We have audited the financial statements of Creative Education Trust (the 'academy trust') for the year ended 31 August 2024 which comprise the Statement of Financial Activities, the Balance sheet, the Statement of cash flows and the related notes, including a summary of significant accounting policies. The financial reporting framework that has been applied in their preparation is applicable law, United Kingdom Accounting Standards (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice), including FRS 102 'The Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland', the Charities SORP 2019 and the Academies Accounts Direction 2023 to 2024 issued by the Education and Skills Funding Agency.

In our opinion the financial statements:

- give a true and fair view of the state of the Academy Trust's affairs as at 31 August 2024 and of its incoming resources and application of resources, including its income and expenditure for the year then ended;
- have been properly prepared in accordance with United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice; and
- have been prepared in accordance with the requirements of the Companies Act 2006, the Charities SORP 2019 and the Academies Accounts Direction 2023 to 2024 issued by the Education and Skills Funding Agency.

BASIS FOR OPINION

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

CONCLUSIONS RELATING TO GOING CONCERN

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

Based on the work we have performed, we have not identified any material uncertainties relating to events or conditions that, individually or collectively, may cast significant doubt on the 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.

**CREATIVE EDUCATION TRUST
(A COMPANY LIMITED BY GUARANTEE)**

**INDEPENDENT AUDITORS' REPORT ON THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS TO THE MEMBERS OF
CREATIVE EDUCATION TRUST (CONTINUED)**

OTHER INFORMATION

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

We have nothing to report in this regard.

OPINION ON OTHER MATTERS PRESCRIBED BY THE COMPANIES ACT 2006

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

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

MATTERS ON WHICH WE ARE REQUIRED TO REPORT BY EXCEPTION

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

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

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

RESPONSIBILITIES OF TRUSTEES

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

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

**INDEPENDENT AUDITORS' REPORT ON THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS TO THE MEMBERS OF
CREATIVE EDUCATION TRUST (CONTINUED)**

AUDITORS' RESPONSIBILITIES FOR THE AUDIT OF THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

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

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

In identifying and assessing risks of material misstatement in respect of irregularities, including fraud and non-compliance with laws and regulations, we considered the following:

- the nature of the Academy sector, control environment and the Academy Trust's performance;
- results of our enquiries of management and the Trustee board, including the committees charged with governance over the Academy Trust's finance and control, about their own identification and assessment of the risks of irregularities;
- any matters we identified having obtained and reviewed the Academy Trust's documentation of their policies and procedures relating to: identifying, evaluating and complying with laws and regulations and whether they were aware of any instances of non-compliance; detecting and responding to the risks of fraud and whether they have knowledge of any actual, suspected or alleged fraud; the internal controls established to mitigate risks of fraud or noncompliance with laws and regulations;
- how the Academy Trust ensured it met its obligations arising from it being financed by the ESFA and other funders, and as such material compliance with these obligations is required to ensure the Academy Trust will continue to receive its public funding and be authorised to operate, including around ensuring there is no material unauthorised use of funds and expenditure;
- how the Academy Trust ensured it met its obligations to its principal regulator, the Secretary of State for Education; and
- these matters were discussed among the audit engagement team who also considered any potential indicators of fraud.

As a result of these procedures, we considered the opportunities and incentives that may exist within the organisation for fraud, which included incorrect recognition of revenue, management override of controls using manual journal entries, procurement and payroll. We identified the greatest potential for fraud as incorrect recognition of revenue and management override using manual journal entries.

In common with all audits under ISAs (UK), we are also required to perform specific procedures to respond to the risk of management override. We also obtained an understanding of the legal and regulatory frameworks that the Academy Trust operates in, focusing on provisions of those laws and regulations that had a direct effect on the determination of material amounts and disclosures in the financial statements. The key laws and regulations we considered in this context included the Academies Accounts Direction, Academy Trust Handbook, UK Companies Act and tax legislation.

In addition, we considered provisions of other laws and regulations that do not have a direct effect on the financial statements but compliance with which may be fundamental to the Academy Trust's ability to operate or to avoid a material penalty. These included safeguarding regulations, data protection regulations, occupational health and safety regulations, education and inspections legislation, building legislation and employment legislation.

**CREATIVE EDUCATION TRUST
(A COMPANY LIMITED BY GUARANTEE)**

**INDEPENDENT AUDITORS' REPORT ON THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS TO THE MEMBERS OF
CREATIVE EDUCATION TRUST (CONTINUED)**

Our procedures to respond to risks identified included the following:

- reviewing the financial statement disclosures and testing to supporting documentation to assess compliance with provisions of relevant laws and regulations described as having a direct effect on the financial statements;
- reviewing the financial statement disclosures and testing to supporting documentation to assess the recognition of revenue;
- enquiring of Trustees and management and those charged with governance concerning actual and potential litigation and claims;
- performing procedures to confirm material compliance with the requirements of its regulators;
- performing analytical procedures to identify any unusual or unexpected relationships that may indicate risks of material misstatement due to fraud;
- reading minutes of meetings of those charged with governance and reviewing internal control reports; and
- in addressing the risk of fraud through management override of controls, testing the appropriateness of journal entries and other adjustments; and assessing whether the judgements made in making accounting estimates are indicative of a potential bias.

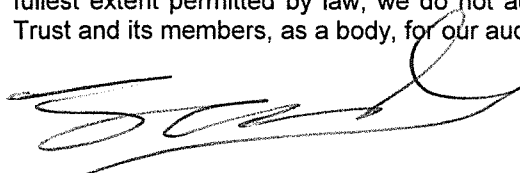
We also communicated relevant identified laws and regulations and potential fraud risks to all engagement team members, and remained alert to any indications of fraud or non-compliance with laws and regulations throughout the audit.

Our audit procedures were designed to respond to risks of material misstatement in the financial statements, recognising that the risk of not detecting a material misstatement due to fraud is higher than the risk of not detecting one resulting from an error, as fraud may involve deliberate concealment by, for example, forgery, misrepresentations or through collusion. There are inherent limitations in the audit procedures performed 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.

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

USE OF OUR REPORT

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



Joseph Scaife FCA DChA (Senior statutory auditor)

for and on behalf of

Bishop Fleming LLP

Chartered Accountants

Statutory Auditors

10 Temple Back

Bristol

BS1 6FL

Date:

10/12/24

**CREATIVE EDUCATION TRUST
(A COMPANY LIMITED BY GUARANTEE)**

INDEPENDENT REPORTING ACCOUNTANT'S ASSURANCE REPORT ON REGULARITY TO CREATIVE EDUCATION TRUST AND THE EDUCATION & SKILLS FUNDING AGENCY

In accordance with the terms of our engagement letter dated 20 April 2022 and further to the requirements of the Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA) as included in the Academies Accounts Direction 2023 to 2024, we have carried out an engagement to obtain limited assurance about whether the expenditure disbursed and income received by Creative Education Trust during the year 1 September 2023 to 31 August 2024 have been applied to the purposes identified by Parliament and the financial transactions conform to the authorities which govern them.

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

RESPECTIVE RESPONSIBILITIES OF CREATIVE EDUCATION TRUST'S ACCOUNTING OFFICER AND THE REPORTING ACCOUNTANT

The accounting officer is responsible, under the requirements of Creative Education Trust's funding agreement with the Secretary of State for Education dated 28 January 2011 and the Academy Trust Handbook, extant from 1 September 2023, for ensuring that expenditure disbursed and income received is applied for the purposes intended by Parliament and the financial transactions conform to the authorities which govern them.

Our responsibilities for this engagement are established in the United Kingdom by our profession's ethical guidance and are to obtain limited assurance and report in accordance with our engagement letter and the requirements of the Academies Accounts Direction 2023 to 2024. We report to you whether anything has come to our attention in carrying out our work which suggests that in all material respects, expenditure disbursed and income received during the year 1 September 2023 to 31 August 2024 have not been applied to purposes intended by Parliament or that the financial transactions do not conform to the authorities which govern them.

APPROACH

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

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

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

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

The work undertaken to draw our conclusion includes:

An assessment of the risk of material irregularity and impropriety across all of the Trust's activities;

Further testing and review of the areas identified through the risk assessment including enquiry, identification of controls processes and examination of supporting evidence across all areas identified as well as additional verification work where considered necessary; and

Consideration of evidence obtained through the work detailed above and the work completed as part of our audit of the financial statements in order to support the regularity conclusion.

In line with the Framework and guide for external auditors and reporting accountants of academy trusts issued March 2024, we have not performed any additional procedures regarding the Trust's compliance with safeguarding, health and safety and estates management.

**CREATIVE EDUCATION TRUST
(A COMPANY LIMITED BY GUARANTEE)**

**INDEPENDENT REPORTING ACCOUNTANT'S ASSURANCE REPORT ON REGULARITY TO CREATIVE
EDUCATION TRUST AND THE EDUCATION & SKILLS FUNDING AGENCY (CONTINUED)**

Conclusion

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



Reporting Accountant
Bishop Fleming LLP
Chartered Accountants
Statutory Auditors
10 Temple Back
Bristol
BS1 6FL

Date:

10/12/24

**CREATIVE EDUCATION TRUST
(A COMPANY LIMITED BY GUARANTEE)**

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

	Note	Unrestricted funds 2024 £000	Restricted funds 2024 £000	Restricted fixed asset funds 2024 £000	Endowment funds 2024 £000	Total funds 2024 £000	Total funds 2023 £000
Income and endowments from:							
Donations and capital grants	3	-	-	8,077	-	8,077	4,468
Other trading activities		3,336	-	-	-	3,336	2,760
Investments	6	600	-	-	64	664	226
Charitable activities		-	110,671	-	-	110,671	103,027
Other income		39	166	-	-	205	224
Total income and endowments		3,975	110,837	8,077	64	122,953	110,705
Expenditure on:							
Raising funds		-	-	-	47	47	51
Charitable activities		1,930	109,802	6,791	-	118,523	113,086
Total expenditure		1,930	109,802	6,791	47	118,570	113,137
Net income/(expenditure) before net gains on investments		2,045	1,035	1,286	17	4,383	(2,432)
Net gains on investments		-	-	-	376	376	11
Net income/(expenditure)		2,045	1,035	1,286	393	4,759	(2,421)
Transfers between funds	19	-	(576)	576	-	-	-
Net movement in funds before other recognised gains/(losses) carried forward		2,045	459	1,862	393	4,759	(2,421)

CREATIVE EDUCATION TRUST
(A COMPANY LIMITED BY GUARANTEE)

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

	Unrestricted funds 2024 £000	Restricted funds 2024 £000	Restricted fixed asset funds 2024 £000	Endowment funds 2024 £000	Total funds 2024 £000	Total funds 2023 £000
Net movement in funds before other recognised gains/(losses) brought forward	2,045	459	1,862	393	4,759	(2,421)
Other recognised gains/(losses):						
Actuarial gains on defined benefit pension schemes	28	3,461	-	-	3,461	9,362
Pension surplus not recognised	28	(2,113)	-	-	(2,113)	(639)
Net movement in funds	2,045	1,807	1,862	393	6,107	6,302
Reconciliation of funds:						
Total funds brought forward	2,031	1,938	209,564	2,887	216,420	210,118
Net movement in funds	2,045	1,807	1,862	393	6,107	6,302
Total funds carried forward	4,076	3,745	211,426	3,280	222,527	216,420

The Statement of Financial Activities includes all gains and losses recognised in the year.

The notes on pages 43 to 74 form part of these financial statements.

**CREATIVE EDUCATION TRUST
(A COMPANY LIMITED BY GUARANTEE)
REGISTERED NUMBER:07617529**

**BALANCE SHEET
AS AT 31 AUGUST 2024**

	Note	2024 £000	2024 £000	2023 £000	2023 £000
Fixed assets					
Tangible assets	14		205,505		207,556
Investments	15		3,280		2,887
			<u>208,785</u>		<u>210,443</u>
Current assets					
Debtors	16	4,733		3,123	
Cash at bank and in hand		20,869		18,998	
		<u>25,602</u>		<u>22,121</u>	
Creditors: amounts falling due within one year	17	(10,421)		(12,697)	
Net current assets			<u>15,181</u>		<u>9,424</u>
Total assets less current liabilities			<u>223,966</u>		<u>219,867</u>
Creditors: amounts falling due after more than one year	18		(32)		(64)
Net assets excluding pension liability			<u>223,934</u>		<u>219,803</u>
Defined benefit pension scheme liability	28		(1,407)		(3,383)
Total net assets			<u><u>222,527</u></u>		<u><u>216,420</u></u>

**CREATIVE EDUCATION TRUST
(A COMPANY LIMITED BY GUARANTEE)
REGISTERED NUMBER:07617529**

**BALANCE SHEET (CONTINUED)
AS AT 31 AUGUST 2024**

	Note	2024 £000	2024 £000	2023 £000	2023 £000
Funds of the Academy Trust					
Endowment funds	19		3,280		2,887
Restricted funds:					
Fixed asset funds	19	211,426		209,564	
Restricted income funds	19	5,152		5,321	
Restricted funds excluding pension reserve	19	216,578		214,885	
Pension reserve	19	(1,407)		(3,383)	
Total restricted funds	19		215,171		211,502
Unrestricted income funds	19		4,076		2,031
Total funds			222,527		216,420

The financial statements on pages 38 to 74 were approved and authorised for issue by the Trustees and are signed on their behalf, by:



Abbie Rumbold
Chair of Trustees

Date: 4 December 2024

The notes on pages 43 to 74 form part of these financial statements.

**CREATIVE EDUCATION TRUST
(A COMPANY LIMITED BY GUARANTEE)**

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

	Note	2024 £000	2023 £000
Cash flows from operating activities			
Net cash (used in)/provided by operating activities	22	(2,125)	2,281
Cash flows from investing activities	24	3,332	(263)
Cash flows from financing activities	23	664	226
		<hr/>	<hr/>
Change in cash and cash equivalents in the year		1,871	2,244
Cash and cash equivalents at the beginning of the year	25	18,998	16,754
Cash and cash equivalents at the end of the year	25, 26	20,869	18,998
		<hr/> <hr/>	<hr/> <hr/>

The notes on pages 43 to 74 form part of these financial statements

1. ACCOUNTING POLICIES

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

1.1 BASIS OF PREPARATION OF FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

The financial statements of the Academy Trust, which is a public benefit entity under FRS 102, have been prepared under the historic cost convention in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard Applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102), the Accounting and Reporting by Charities: Statement of Recommended Practice applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102) (Charities SORP (FRS 102)), the Academies Accounts Direction 2023 to 2024 issued by ESFA, the Charities Act 2011 and the Companies Act 2006.

1.2 GOING CONCERN

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

1.3 INCOME

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

- **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.

- **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 year is deducted from income and recognised as a liability.

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

1. ACCOUNTING POLICIES (continued)

1.3 INCOME (CONTINUED)

• **Sponsorship income**

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

• **Transfer on conversion**

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

1.4 EXPENDITURE

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

• **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.

1.5 INTEREST RECEIVABLE

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

1. ACCOUNTING POLICIES (continued)

1.6 TANGIBLE FIXED ASSETS

Assets costing £5,000 or more are capitalised as tangible fixed assets and are carried at cost, net of depreciation and any provision for impairment.

Where tangible fixed assets have been acquired with the aid of specific grants, either from the government or from the private sector, they are included in the Balance sheet at cost and depreciated over their expected useful economic life. Where there are specific conditions attached to the funding requiring the continued use of the asset, the related grants are credited to a restricted fixed asset fund in the 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.

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

Depreciation is provided on the following basis:

Property	-	2% straight line
Furniture and equipment	-	13% straight line
Fixtures and fittings	-	25% straight line
Computer equipment	-	33% straight line
Motor vehicles	-	20% straight line

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

1.7 INVESTMENTS

Fixed asset investments are a form of financial instrument and are initially recognised at their transaction cost and subsequently measured at fair value at the Balance sheet date, unless the value cannot be measured reliably in which case it is measured at cost less impairment. Investment gains and losses, whether realised or unrealised, are combined and presented as 'Gains/(Losses) on investments' in the Statement of financial activities.

1.8 DEBTORS

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

1.9 CASH AT BANK AND IN HAND

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

1. ACCOUNTING POLICIES (continued)

1.10 LIABILITIES

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

1.11 PENSIONS

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

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

The LGPS is a funded multi-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 operating surplus are the current service costs and the costs of scheme introductions, benefit changes, settlements and curtailments. They are included as part of staff costs as incurred. Net interest on the net defined benefit liability/asset is also recognised in the Statement of financial activities and comprises the interest cost on the defined benefit obligation and interest income on the scheme assets, calculated by multiplying the fair value of the scheme assets at the beginning of the period by the rate used to discount the benefit obligations. The difference between the interest income on the scheme assets and the actual return on the scheme assets is recognised in other recognised gains and losses.

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

Under FRS 102 an entity shall recognise a plan surplus as a defined benefit plan asset only to the extent that it is able to recover the surplus either through reduced contributions in the future or through refunds from the plan. Therefore when a pension scheme is valued at a surplus, it is recognised at a £Nil value.

1.12 FUND ACCOUNTING

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

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

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

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

2. CRITICAL ACCOUNTING ESTIMATES AND AREAS OF JUDGMENT

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

Critical accounting estimates and assumptions:

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

The present value of the Local Government Pension Scheme defined benefit liability depends on a number of factors that are determined on an actuarial basis using a variety of assumptions. The assumptions used in determining the net cost or income for pensions include the discount rate. Any changes in these assumptions, which are disclosed in note 28, will impact the carrying amount of the pension liability. Furthermore a roll forward approach which projects results from the latest full actuarial valuation performed at 31 March 2022 has been used by the actuary in valuing the pensions liability at 31 August 2024. Any differences between the figures derived from the roll forward approach and a full actuarial valuation would impact on the carrying amount of the pension liability.

Critical areas of judgment:

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

**CREATIVE EDUCATION TRUST
(A COMPANY LIMITED BY GUARANTEE)**

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

3. INCOME FROM DONATIONS AND CAPITAL GRANTS

	Restricted fixed asset funds 2024 £000	Total funds 2024 £000	Total funds 2023 £000
Capital Grants	8,077	8,077	4,468
TOTAL 2023	4,468	4,468	

4. FUNDING FOR THE ACADEMY TRUST'S CHARITABLE ACTIVITIES

	Restricted funds 2024 £000	Total funds 2024 £000	Total funds 2023 £000
EDUCATION			
DFE/ESFA GRANTS			
GAG funding	88,939	88,939	83,499
OTHER DFE/ESFA GRANTS			
Pupil Premium	5,363	5,363	5,131
Universal Infant Free School Meals	170	170	177
16-19 Funding	3,706	3,706	3,875
Mainstream School Additional Grant	3,128	3,128	1,303
Schools Supplementary Grant	-	-	2,554
Teachers Pay & Pension Grant	2,585	2,585	167
Rates Relief	501	501	442
Other DfE Group Grants	310	310	662
	104,702	104,702	97,810
OTHER GOVERNMENT GRANTS			
SEN Funding	2,023	2,023	1,818
Local Authority Grants	2,025	2,025	1,652
Other Grants received	88	88	150
	4,136	4,136	3,620
COVID-19 ADDITIONAL FUNDING (DFE/ESFA)			
Recovery Premium	1,438	1,438	1,296
Other Covid Funding	395	395	301
	1,833	1,833	1,597
TOTAL 2024	110,671	110,671	103,027

**CREATIVE EDUCATION TRUST
(A COMPANY LIMITED BY GUARANTEE)**

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

5. INCOME FROM OTHER TRADING ACTIVITIES

	Unrestricted funds 2024 £000	Total funds 2024 £000	Total funds 2023 £000
Uniforms	7	7	12
Trip Income	662	662	571
Catering Income	1,640	1,640	1,417
Music Services Income	53	53	41
Other Income	712	712	526
Lettings Income	262	262	193
TOTAL 2024	3,336	3,336	2,760

6. INVESTMENT INCOME

	Unrestricted funds 2024 £000	Endowment funds 2024 £000	Total funds 2024 £000	Total funds 2023 £000
Investment income	600	64	664	226
TOTAL 2023	161	65	226	

7. EXPENDITURE

	Staff Costs 2024 £000	Premises 2024 £000	Other 2024 £000	Total 2024 £000	Total 2023 £000
Expenditure on investment management	-	-	47	47	51
EDUCATION:					
Direct costs	69,363	4,793	9,202	83,358	78,923
Allocated support costs	14,238	10,317	10,610	35,165	34,163
	83,601	15,110	19,859	118,570	113,137
TOTAL 2023	78,556	13,880	20,701	113,137	

**CREATIVE EDUCATION TRUST
(A COMPANY LIMITED BY GUARANTEE)**

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

8. ANALYSIS OF EXPENDITURE BY ACTIVITIES

	Activities undertaken directly 2024 £000	Support costs 2024 £000	Total funds 2024 £000	Total funds 2023 £000
Educational Operations	83,358	35,165	118,523	113,086
TOTAL 2023	<u>78,923</u>	<u>34,163</u>	<u>113,086</u>	

ANALYSIS OF DIRECT COSTS

	Total funds 2024 £000	Total funds 2023 £000
Pension finance costs	34	109
Staff costs	66,260	62,491
Agency supply teachers	3,103	2,321
Depreciation	4,776	4,717
Educational supplies	3,394	3,327
Examination fees	1,450	1,384
External education and fees	1,379	1,243
Technology costs	38	32
Educational consultancy	1,628	1,648
Other direct costs	1,296	1,651
	<u>83,358</u>	<u>78,923</u>

**CREATIVE EDUCATION TRUST
(A COMPANY LIMITED BY GUARANTEE)**

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

8. ANALYSIS OF EXPENDITURE BY ACTIVITIES (CONTINUED)

ANALYSIS OF SUPPORT COSTS

	Total funds 2024 £000	Total funds 2023 £000
Pension finance costs	60	198
Staff costs	12,647	12,339
Depreciation	2,015	2,035
Other Costs	1,006	1,792
Agency Supply - support staff	1,591	1,404
Recruitment and other staff costs	714	791
Maintenance of premises and equipment	2,859	2,526
Cleaning	1,629	1,223
Rent and rates	928	884
Energy costs	2,547	2,188
Insurance	373	342
Security and transport	356	309
Catering	3,566	3,553
Technology costs	1,126	889
Office overheads	634	630
Legal & professional	922	1,100
Bank interest and charges	3	1
PFI charges	2,088	1,847
Governance costs	101	112
	35,165	34,163

9. NET INCOME/(EXPENDITURE)

Net income/(expenditure) for the year includes:

	2024 £000	2023 £000
Operating lease rentals	325	258
Depreciation of tangible fixed assets	6,795	6,735
Fees paid to auditors for:		
- audit	62	61
- other services	10	10

**CREATIVE EDUCATION TRUST
(A COMPANY LIMITED BY GUARANTEE)**

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

10. STAFF

a. STAFF COSTS AND EMPLOYEE BENEFITS

Staff costs during the year for the Academy Trust were as follows:

	2024	2023
	£000	£000
Wages and salaries	59,280	55,601
Social security costs	6,422	6,005
Pension costs	12,827	12,689
	78,529	74,295
Agency staff costs	4,694	3,726
Staff restructuring costs	378	535
	83,601	78,556

Staff restructuring costs comprise:

	2024	2023
	£000	£000
Severance payments	99	181
	99	181

**CREATIVE EDUCATION TRUST
(A COMPANY LIMITED BY GUARANTEE)**

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

10. STAFF (CONTINUED)

b. SEVERANCE PAYMENTS

The Academy Trust paid 30 severance payments in the year (2023 - 38), disclosed in the following bands:

	2024	2023
£0 - £25,000	25	33
£25,001 - £50,000	3	4
£50,001 - £100,000	2	1
	<u><u> </u></u>	<u><u> </u></u>

c. Non-statutory/non-contractual staff severance payments

Included in staff restructuring costs are special severance payments totalling £98,900 (2023: £180,917). Individually, the payments were: £100, £100, £100, £100, £100, £100, £294, £360, £500, £500, £1,538, £2,390, £2,600, £6,100, £6,100, £6,246, £12,000, £14,782, £22,167 and £22,723.

d. STAFF NUMBERS

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

	2024	2023
	No.	No.
Teachers	752	784
Administration and support	915	912
Management (including school leadership teams)	118	134
	<u><u> </u></u>	<u><u> </u></u>
	1,785	1,830

**CREATIVE EDUCATION TRUST
(A COMPANY LIMITED BY GUARANTEE)**

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

10. STAFF (CONTINUED)

e. HIGHER PAID STAFF

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

	2024 No.	2023 No.
In the band £60,001 - £70,000	84	50
In the band £70,001 - £80,000	33	24
In the band £80,001 - £90,000	9	6
In the band £90,001 - £100,000	11	7
In the band £100,001 - £110,000	-	1
In the band £110,001 - £120,000	3	3
In the band £120,001 - £130,000	1	1
In the band £130,001 - £140,000	1	3
In the band £140,001 - £150,000	3	2
In the band £180,001 - £190,000	-	1
In the band £190,001 - £200,000	2	-
In the band £220,001 - £230,000	1	1

In 2023, there was a general increase of employees in the band £60,000 - £70,000 due to standard teachers' pay rises and this trend has continued in 2024.

f. KEY MANAGEMENT PERSONNEL

The key management personnel of the Academy Trust comprise the Trustees and the senior management team as listed on page 1. The total amount of key management personnel benefits (including employer pension contributions and employer national insurance contributions) received by key management personnel for their services to the Trust was £1,923,176 (2023: £1,683,067).

One Trustee has been paid remuneration and has received other benefits from an employment with the Academy Trust. The value of the Trustee's remuneration and other benefits was as follows:

Marc Jordan (CEO and Trustee)
Remuneration £230,001 - £240,000 (2023: £220,001 - £230,000)
Employer's pension contribution paid £30,001 - £40,000 (2023: £30,001 - £40,000).

**CREATIVE EDUCATION TRUST
(A COMPANY LIMITED BY GUARANTEE)**

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

11. CENTRAL SERVICES

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

- Financial services
- Legal services
- Human resources
- Education support services
- Governance support services
- ICT support services
- Other as arising

The Academy Trust charges for these on a percentage of GAG income that is appropriate to the individual academy:

The actual amounts charged during the year were as follows:

	2024	2023
	£000	£000
Abbeyfield Academy	433	409
Ash Green Academy	342	312
Bulwell Academy	407	369
Caister Academy	246	232
Ellis Guilford School	495	459
Harpfield Primary Academy	54	49
Hart School	404	386
Lynn Grove Academy	397	362
Milton Keynes Academy	424	422
Queen Eleanor Academy	55	50
Thistley Hough Academy	357	323
Three Peaks Primary Academy	90	85
Weavers Academy	443	397
Woodlands Primary Academy	99	93
Wrenn School	471	422
Wroughton Infant Academy	52	55
Wroughton Junior Academy	89	81
TOTAL	4,858	4,506

**CREATIVE EDUCATION TRUST
(A COMPANY LIMITED BY GUARANTEE)**

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

12. TRUSTEES' REMUNERATION AND EXPENSES

During the years ended 31 August 2023 and 2024, respectively, retirement benefits were accruing to the Chief Executive Officer in respect of defined benefit pension schemes. No other Trustee received any remuneration in either year.

During the year ended 31 August 2024, travel expenses totalling £1,199 were reimbursed or paid directly to 4 Trustees (2023: £4,072 to 6 Trustees). The Chief Executive Officer's expenses are excluded from this disclosure, as they were incurred in his role as an Executive Director.

13. TRUSTEES' AND OFFICERS' INSURANCE

The Group has opted into the Department for Education's risk protection arrangement (RPA), an alternative to insurance where UK government funds 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 million. It is not possible to quantify the Trustees and officers indemnity element from the overall cost of the RPA scheme membership.

**CREATIVE EDUCATION TRUST
(A COMPANY LIMITED BY GUARANTEE)**

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

14. TANGIBLE FIXED ASSETS

	Leasehold Property £000	Furniture and equipment £000	Computer equipment £000	Motor vehicles £000	Total £000
COST OR VALUATION					
At 1 September 2023	241,515	11,375	10,561	142	263,593
Additions	968	2,138	1,639	-	4,745
Disposals	-	-	(2)	-	(2)
Transfers between classes	(86)	86	-	-	-
At 31 August 2024	<u>242,397</u>	<u>13,599</u>	<u>12,198</u>	<u>142</u>	<u>268,336</u>
DEPRECIATION					
At 1 September 2023	41,779	5,190	8,939	130	56,038
Charge for the year	3,934	1,400	1,452	9	6,795
On disposals	-	-	(2)	-	(2)
At 31 August 2024	<u>45,713</u>	<u>6,590</u>	<u>10,389</u>	<u>139</u>	<u>62,831</u>
NET BOOK VALUE					
At 31 August 2024	<u><u>196,684</u></u>	<u><u>7,009</u></u>	<u><u>1,809</u></u>	<u><u>3</u></u>	<u><u>205,505</u></u>
At 31 August 2023	<u><u>199,736</u></u>	<u><u>6,186</u></u>	<u><u>1,622</u></u>	<u><u>12</u></u>	<u><u>207,556</u></u>

Included within Property is freehold land and buildings with net book value of £34,305,332 (2023: £34,979,136).

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15. FIXED ASSET INVESTMENTS

	Listed investments £000
COST OR VALUATION	
At 1 September 2023	2,887
Revaluations	393
	<u>3,280</u>
AT 31 AUGUST 2024	<u>3,280</u>
NET BOOK VALUE	
AT 31 AUGUST 2024	<u>3,280</u>
AT 31 AUGUST 2023	<u>2,887</u>

16. DEBTORS

	2024 £000	2023 £000
DUE WITHIN ONE YEAR		
Trade debtors	41	50
Other debtors	48	37
Prepayments and accrued income	4,182	2,618
Tax recoverable	462	418
	<u>4,733</u>	<u>3,123</u>

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17. CREDITORS: AMOUNTS FALLING DUE WITHIN ONE YEAR

	2024	2023
	£000	£000
Other loans	32	32
Trade creditors	3,764	3,339
Other taxation and social security	1,425	1,454
Other creditors	1,973	2,026
Accruals and deferred income	3,227	5,846
	<u>10,421</u>	<u>12,697</u>
	2024	2023
	£000	£000
Deferred income at 1 September 2023	2,240	1,758
Resources deferred during the year	544	2,240
Amounts released from previous periods	(2,240)	(1,758)
	<u>544</u>	<u>2,240</u>

Other loans comprise an Energy Efficient Loan from Salix Finance Limited which is a concessionary loan. The loan is unsecured, interest free and the repayment period is 8 years at £32,000 per annum. The initial loan was for £257,000.

At the balance sheet date the Trust was holding funds received in advance for 2023/24 which included Universal Free School Meal Funding, Rates, Trip Income, Bursary, Higher Level Needs, and SEN Grant.

18. CREDITORS: AMOUNTS FALLING DUE AFTER MORE THAN ONE YEAR

	2024	2023
	£000	£000
Other loans	32	64
	<u>32</u>	<u>64</u>

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

19. STATEMENT OF FUNDS

	Balance at 1 September 2023 £000	Income £000	Expenditure £000	Transfers in/out £000	Gains/ (Losses) £000	Balance at 31 August 2024 £000
UNRESTRICTED FUNDS						
General Funds	2,031	3,975	(1,930)	-	-	4,076
ENDOWMENT FUNDS						
Endowment Fund	2,887	64	(47)	-	376	3,280
RESTRICTED GENERAL FUNDS						
General Annual Grant (GAG)	5,321	88,939	(87,402)	(1,706)	-	5,152
16-19 Funding	-	3,706	(3,706)	-	-	-
Pupil Premium	-	5,363	(5,363)	-	-	-
DfE Covid-19 Funding	-	1,565	(1,565)	-	-	-
Teachers Pay & Pension Grant	-	2,585	(2,585)	-	-	-
Mainstream School Additional Grant	-	3,128	(3,128)	-	-	-
Rates Relief	-	501	(501)	-	-	-
Universal Infant Free School Meals	-	170	(170)	-	-	-
Other EFA Grants: Excluding Capital	-	577	(577)	-	-	-
Other government grants	-	4,136	(4,136)	-	-	-
Other restricted funds	-	167	(167)	-	-	-
Capital funding/Revenue expenditure	-	-	(1,130)	1,130	-	-
Pension reserve	(3,383)	-	628	-	1,348	(1,407)
	1,938	110,837	(109,802)	(576)	1,348	3,745

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

19. STATEMENT OF FUNDS (CONTINUED)

	Balance at 1 September 2023 £000	Income £000	Expenditure £000	Transfers in/out £000	Gains/ (Losses) £000	Balance at 31 August 2024 £000
RESTRICTED FIXED ASSET FUNDS						
Fixed Assets Fund	207,556	-	(6,791)	4,740	-	205,505
SCA	1,808	3,138	-	(2,009)	-	2,937
Other capital grants	-	2,760	-	(1,955)	-	805
Sale of Land at Wrenn School	200	-	-	(200)	-	-
Ellis Guilford Lifecycle Sinking Fund	-	2,179	-	-	-	2,179
	<u>209,564</u>	<u>8,077</u>	<u>(6,791)</u>	<u>576</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>211,426</u>
TOTAL RESTRICTED FUNDS	<u>211,502</u>	<u>118,914</u>	<u>(116,593)</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>1,348</u>	<u>215,171</u>
TOTAL FUNDS	<u>216,420</u>	<u>122,953</u>	<u>(118,570)</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>1,724</u>	<u>222,527</u>

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

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

Restricted funds (excluding pension reserve) represent funds received from the Department for Education, local authorities and other bodies and are specifically spent on the running of the academies:

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

Pupil Premium - This represents funding received from the ESFA for children that qualify for free school meals to enable the Trust to address the current inequalities between those children and their wealthier peers.

Other DfE/ESFA Grants - This represents funding received from the DfE and ESFA for other specific purposes.

Other restricted funds - This includes other grants and donations and income received from parents to contribute towards educational trips and other activities.

DfE Covid-19 Funding - This represents funding received by the Academy Trust relating to costs incurred due to Covid-19 such as recovery premium, mass testing funding, summer school allocation and 12-15 vaccination grants.

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**NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
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19. STATEMENT OF FUNDS (CONTINUED)

Pension reserve represents the movements on the Local Government Pension Schemes' Liabilities.

Endowment funds represent an amount gifted to the Bulwell Academy and to Milton Keynes Academy by their former sponsor to "advance for the public benefit education" in those schools.

SCA - This represents SCA funding from the DfE. These funds are spent on the purchase of the Trust's assets. The Trust has comprehensive plans outlining how these funds will be spent in the following year.

Other capital grants - This represents capital grants from the Rugeley Endowment Trust and Local Authorities. These funds are spent on the purchase of the Trust's assets. The Trust has comprehensive plans outlining how these funds will be spent in the following year.

Ellis Guilford Lifecycle Sinking Fund - This represents funds held for lifecycle works to the buildings at Ellis Guilford School. There is no time limit on the use of this funding.

The transfers represent monies spent on fixed assets, moved to restricted fixed asset funds, and revenue expenditure spent on capital.

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

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19. STATEMENT OF FUNDS (CONTINUED)

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

	Balance at 1 September 2022 £000	Income £000	Expenditure £000	Transfers in/out £000	Gains/ (Losses) £000	Balance at 31 August 2023 £000
UNRESTRICTED FUNDS						
General Funds	2,031	2,991	(2,991)	-	-	2,031
ENDOWMENT FUNDS						
Endowment Fund	3,025	65	(51)	(163)	11	2,887
RESTRICTED GENERAL FUNDS						
General Annual Grant (GAG)	5,334	83,499	(82,162)	(1,350)	-	5,321
16-19 Funding	-	3,875	(3,875)	-	-	-
Pupil Premium	-	5,131	(5,131)	-	-	-
Schools Supplementary Grant	-	2,554	(2,554)	-	-	-
DfE Covid-19 Funding	-	1,597	(1,597)	-	-	-
Mainstream School Additional Grant	-	1,303	(1,303)	-	-	-
Rates Relief	-	3,620	(3,620)	-	-	-
Universal Infant Free School Meals	-	662	(662)	-	-	-
Other restricted funds	-	940	(940)	-	-	-
Capital funding/Revenue expenditure	-	-	(705)	705	-	-
Pension reserve	(11,312)	-	(794)	-	8,723	(3,383)
	(5,978)	103,181	(103,343)	(645)	8,723	1,938

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

19. STATEMENT OF FUNDS (CONTINUED)

**RESTRICTED
FIXED ASSET
FUNDS**

Fixed Assets Fund	209,559	-	(6,752)	4,749	-	207,556
SCA	1,481	4,268	-	(3,941)	-	1,808
Sale of Land at Wrenn School	-	200	-	-	-	200
	<u>211,040</u>	<u>4,468</u>	<u>(6,752)</u>	<u>808</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>209,564</u>
TOTAL RESTRICTED FUNDS	<u>205,062</u>	<u>107,649</u>	<u>(110,095)</u>	<u>163</u>	<u>8,723</u>	<u>211,502</u>
TOTAL FUNDS	<u><u>210,118</u></u>	<u><u>110,705</u></u>	<u><u>(113,137)</u></u>	<u><u>-</u></u>	<u><u>8,734</u></u>	<u><u>216,420</u></u>

Total funds analysis by academy

The Trust manages the reserves of all schools centrally, to ensure that resources can be strategically utilised in the most effective way to support school improvement. As a result, reserves have only been disclosed at Trust level.

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**NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
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19. STATEMENT OF FUNDS (CONTINUED)

TOTAL COST ANALYSIS BY ACADEMY

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

	Teaching and educational support staff costs £000	Other support staff costs £000	Educational supplies £000	Other costs excluding depreciation £000	Total 2024 £000	Total 2023 £000
Abbeyfield Academy	5,898	895	201	2,863	9,857	9,075
Ash Green Academy	4,685	668	215	1,600	7,168	6,676
Bulwell Academy	5,415	1,402	237	1,914	8,968	9,008
Caister Academy	3,325	779	216	1,174	5,494	5,310
Ellis Guilford School	6,148	1,152	419	2,619	10,338	10,268
Harpfield Primary Academy	958	175	32	313	1,478	1,388
Hart School	6,022	758	167	1,929	8,876	8,050
Lynn Grove Academy	5,509	972	220	1,567	8,268	7,635
Milton Keynes Academy	5,915	747	250	2,058	8,970	8,731
Queen Eleanor Academy	1,015	118	58	413	1,604	1,452
Thistley Hough Academy	5,014	599	252	1,900	7,765	7,141
Three Peaks Primary Academy	1,496	246	92	464	2,298	2,283
Weavers Academy	6,598	1,201	356	1,544	9,699	8,908
Woodlands Primary Academy	1,603	409	79	475	2,566	2,471
Wrenn School	7,009	1,154	297	1,721	10,181	9,000
Wroughton Infant Academy	1,005	250	35	180	1,470	1,556
Wroughton Junior Academy	1,156	250	91	561	2,058	1,956
Central Services	591	2,464	317	1,349	4,721	5,459
ACADEMY TRUST	69,362	14,239	3,534	24,644	111,779	106,367

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

20. ANALYSIS OF NET ASSETS BETWEEN FUNDS

ANALYSIS OF NET ASSETS BETWEEN FUNDS - CURRENT PERIOD

	Unrestricted funds 2024 £000	Restricted funds 2024 £000	Restricted fixed asset funds 2024 £000	Endowment funds 2024 £000	Total funds 2024 £000
Tangible fixed assets	-	-	205,505	-	205,505
Fixed asset investments	-	-	-	3,280	3,280
Current assets	4,076	15,605	5,921	-	25,602
Creditors due within one year	-	(10,421)	-	-	(10,421)
Creditors due in more than one year	-	(32)	-	-	(32)
Provisions for liabilities and charges	-	(1,407)	-	-	(1,407)
TOTAL	4,076	3,745	211,426	3,280	222,527

ANALYSIS OF NET ASSETS BETWEEN FUNDS - PRIOR PERIOD

	Unrestricted funds 2023 £000	Restricted funds 2023 £000	Restricted fixed asset funds 2023 £000	Endowment funds 2023 £000	Total funds 2023 £000
Tangible fixed assets	-	-	207,556	-	207,556
Fixed asset investments	-	-	-	2,887	2,887
Current assets	2,031	18,082	2,008	-	22,121
Creditors due within one year	-	(12,697)	-	-	(12,697)
Creditors due in more than one year	-	(64)	-	-	(64)
Provisions for liabilities and charges	-	(3,383)	-	-	(3,383)
TOTAL	2,031	1,938	209,564	2,887	216,420

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

21. Total return on Permanent Endowment

	Permanent Endowment £000	Unapplied total return £000	Total funds £000
As at 1 September 2023			
Trust for investment/permanent endowment	1,847	-	1,847
Unapplied total return	-	(151)	(151)
Total as at 1 September 2023	1,847	(151)	1,696
Movements in the reporting period			
Investment return: dividends and interest	-	64	64
Investment return: realised and unrealised gains	-	238	238
Less investment management fees	-	(46)	(46)
Total	-	256	256
Unapplied total return allocated to investment fund	48	(48)	-
Net movements in the reporting period	48	208	256
As at 31 August 2024			
Trust for investment/permanent endowment	1,895	-	1,895
Unapplied total return	-	57	57
Total as at 31 August 2024	1,895	57	1,952

As shown above, in 2024, the trustees have allocated a further £48,000 of the unapplied total return to the investment fund. This allocation reflects the indexation of 26.3% (cumulative CPI) for the period from the date of the original investment, to 31 August 2024. This allocation takes place annually.

Other endowment funds

The above note includes permanent endowment funds only, in line with Charities Commission guidance.

In addition to the above funds, the Trust is holding expendable endowment funds of £1,327,000 (2023: £1,191,000).

The total endowment funds for the Trust are therefore £3,280,000 (2023: £2,887,000).

**CREATIVE EDUCATION TRUST
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22. RECONCILIATION OF NET INCOME/(EXPENDITURE) TO NET CASH FLOW FROM OPERATING ACTIVITIES	2024 £000	2023 £000
Net income/(expenditure) for the period (as per Statement of financial activities)	4,759	(2,421)
ADJUSTMENTS FOR:		
Depreciation	6,795	6,735
Capital grants from DfE and other capital income	(8,077)	(4,468)
Defined benefit pension scheme cost less contributions payable	(721)	487
Defined benefit pension scheme finance cost	94	307
Decrease/(increase) in debtors	(1,610)	1,251
(Decrease)/Increase in creditors	(2,276)	510
(Decrease)/Increase in creditors due after one year	(32)	(32)
Returns on investments and servicing of finance	(664)	(226)
Revaluation of investments	(393)	138
NET CASH (USED IN)/PROVIDED BY OPERATING ACTIVITIES	(2,125)	2,281
23. CASH FLOWS FROM FINANCING ACTIVITIES		
	2024 £000	2023 £000
Interest received	664	226
NET CASH PROVIDED BY FINANCING ACTIVITIES	664	226
24. CASH FLOWS FROM INVESTING ACTIVITIES		
	2024 £000	2023 £000
Purchase of tangible fixed assets	(4,745)	(4,750)
Proceeds from the sale of tangible fixed assets	-	19
Capital grants	8,077	4,468
NET CASH PROVIDED BY/(USED IN) INVESTING ACTIVITIES	3,332	(263)

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25. ANALYSIS OF CASH AND CASH EQUIVALENTS

	2024 £000	2023 £000
Cash in hand and at bank	20,869	18,998
TOTAL CASH AND CASH EQUIVALENTS	20,869	18,998

26. ANALYSIS OF CHANGES IN NET DEBT

	At 1 September 2023 £000	Cash flows £000	At 31 August 2024 £000
Cash at bank and in hand	18,998	1,871	20,869
Debt due within 1 year	(32)	-	(32)
Debt due after 1 year	(64)	32	(32)
	18,902	1,903	20,805

27. CAPITAL COMMITMENTS

	2024 £000	2023 £000
CONTRACTED FOR BUT NOT PROVIDED IN THESE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS		
Purchase, construction and development in relation to the RET capital project	316	-

28. PENSION COMMITMENTS

The Academy Trust's employees belong to two principal pension schemes: the Teachers' Pension Scheme England and Wales (TPS) for academic and related staff; and the Local Government Pension Scheme (LGPS) for non-teaching staff, which is managed by Staffordshire County Council, Warwickshire County Council, Norfolk County Council, Northamptonshire County Council, Westminster City Council, Buckinghamshire County Council and Nottinghamshire County Council. Both are multi-employer defined benefit schemes.

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

There were no outstanding or prepaid contributions at either the beginning or the end of the financial year.

28. PENSION COMMITMENTS (CONTINUED)

TEACHERS' PENSION SCHEME

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

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

VALUATION OF THE TEACHERS' PENSION SCHEME

The Government Actuary, using normal actuarial principles, conducts a formal actuarial review of the TPS in accordance with the Public Service Pensions (Valuations and Employer Cost Cap) Directions 2014 published by HM Treasury every 4 years. The aim of the review is to ensure scheme costs are recognised and managed appropriately and the review specifies the level of future contributions.

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

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

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

The employer contribution rate for this period will be 28.68% of pensionable pay (including a 0.08% administration levy).

The employer's pension costs paid to TPS in the year amounted to £7,122,000 (2023: £6,352,000).

A copy of the valuation report and supporting documentation is on the Teachers' Pensions website (<https://www.teacherspensions.co.uk/news/employers/2019/04/teachers-pensions-valuation-report.aspx>).

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

28. PENSION COMMITMENTS (CONTINUED)

LOCAL GOVERNMENT PENSION SCHEME

The LGPS is a funded defined benefit pension scheme, with the assets held in separate trustee-administered funds. The total contribution made for the year ended 31 August 2024 was £5,648,000 (2023 - £5,192,000), of which employer's contributions totalled £4,370,000 (2023 - £4,062,000) and employees' contributions totalled £1,278,000 (2023 - £1,130,000). The agreed contribution rates for future years are 16 - 27.6 per cent for employers and 5.5 - 12.5 per cent for employees.

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

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

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28. PENSION COMMITMENTS (CONTINUED)

PRINCIPAL ACTUARIAL ASSUMPTIONS

	2024	2023
	%	%
Rate of increase in salaries	3.44	3.87
Rate of increase for pensions in payment	2.70	2.87
Discount rate for scheme liabilities	5.02	5.30
Inflation assumption (CPI)	2.79	2.87

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

	2024	2023
	Years	Years
RETIRING TODAY		
Males	20.3	20.4
Females	23.8	23.8
RETIRING IN 20 YEARS		
Males	21.3	21.4
Females	25.2	25.2

SHARE OF SCHEME ASSETS

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

	At 31	At 31 August
	August 2024	2023
	£000	£000
Equities	44,407	40,007
Government bonds	17,192	13,208
Property	8,971	7,420
Other bonds	5,805	4,828
Cash and other liquid assets	2,524	1,663
TOTAL MARKET VALUE OF ASSETS	78,899	67,126

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28. PENSION COMMITMENTS (CONTINUED)

The amounts recognised in the Statement of Financial Activities are as follows:

	2024 £000	2023 £000
Current service cost	(3,647)	(4,518)
Past service cost	(15)	-
Interest income	3,607	2,869
Interest cost	(3,701)	(3,176)
TOTAL AMOUNT RECOGNISED IN THE STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES	(3,756)	(4,825)

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

	2024 £000	2023 £000
AT 1 SEPTEMBER	69,455	73,172
Current service cost	3,647	4,518
Interest cost	3,701	3,176
Employee contributions	1,278	1,130
Actuarial losses/(gains)	493	(11,213)
Benefits paid	(1,436)	(1,359)
Past service costs	15	-
Curtailments	(14)	31
AT 31 AUGUST	77,139	69,455

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

	2024 £000	2023 £000
AT 1 SEPTEMBER	67,126	62,275
Expected return on assets	3,621	2,730
Actuarial gains/(losses)	3,954	(1,851)
Employer contributions	4,370	4,062
Employee contributions	1,278	1,130
Benefits paid	(1,436)	(1,359)
Administration expenses	(14)	139
AT 31 AUGUST	78,899	67,126

The Academy Trust has an unrecognised pension surplus of £2,113,000 (2023: £1,054,000) as it does not expect to recover the plan surplus either through reduced contributions in the future or through refunds from the plan. This is in respect of five defined benefit pension schemes operated by local authorities where the Trust has schools.

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

29. OPERATING LEASE COMMITMENTS

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

	2024	2023
	£000	£000
Not later than 1 year	260	325
Later than 1 year and not later than 5 years	370	454
	630	779

30. 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 he/she is a Trustee, or within one year after he/she ceases to be a Trustee, such amount as may be required, not exceeding £10, for the debts and liabilities contracted before they cease to be a Trustee.

31. RELATED PARTY TRANSACTIONS

Owing to the nature of the Academy Trust, transactions may take place with organisations in which the trustees have an interest. All transactions involving such organisations are conducted 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.

There were no related party transactions in the year.

32. POST BALANCE SHEET EVENTS

A significant weather event flood occurred on 22 September 2024 at Weavers Academy. The flood impacted a particular block that was built in 1950 and is at end of life. Contingencies have been put in place to minimise disruption to education, and a claim is ongoing with the DfE's Risk Protection Arrangement (RPA). We anticipate all attributable costs will be covered by the RPA.

33. CONTROLLING PARTY

There is no ultimate controlling party.