

Ambitions Academies Trust
(A Company Limited by Guarantee)
Annual Report and Financial Statements
Year ended 31 August 2023

Company Registration Number:
07977940 (England and Wales)

Ambitions Academies Trust

Contents

	Page
Reference and Administrative Details	1
Trustees' Report	3
Governance Statement	21
Statement on Regularity, Propriety and Compliance	28
Statement of Trustees' Responsibilities	29
Independent Auditor's Report on the Financial Statements	30
Independent Reporting Accountant's Report on Regularity	34
Statement of Financial Activities incorporating Income & Expenditure Account	37
Balance Sheet	38
Statement of Cash Flows	39
Notes to the Financial Statements	40

Ambitions Academies Trust

Reference and Administrative Details

Members

Mr Alan Connell
Mr James Patrick
Mrs Caroline Sard
Mr Nigel Smith
Mr Paul Smith
Mrs Lesley Spain

Trustees

Mrs Caroline Sard (Chair of Trustees) *
Mr Richard Smith (Vice Chair 1 September 2022 – 31 December 2022) #
Mr Anthony Smith (Vice Chair 1 January 2023 – 31 August 2023) #
Mrs Alison Beane *
Mrs Berni Catling #
Mr Martin Luffman *
Mr Kevin Maw (appointed 17 October 2023)
Mrs Louise Parker * (resigned 30 September 2022)
Mrs Helen Rice (appointed 16 November 2023)
Mrs Roz Scammell # (term of office ended 24 September 2022)
Mr John Seal # (resigned 31 August 2023)
Mr Roy Watson * (resigned 31 March 2023)

* Membership of Finance Committee

Membership of Audit & Risk Committee

Company Secretary

Mrs Carol Box

Senior Management Team

Sian Thomas	Chief Executive Officer and Accounting Officer
Alex Prout	Director of Primary Education
Jon Webb	Director of Secondary Education
Nicki Morton	Director of Special Education
Paul Holman	Director of Outcomes
Tracy Monk	HR Director
Andy Connell	Finance Director/Chief Financial Officer
Ian Hawkins	Estates Director
James Treble	Estates Director (from April 2023)

Ambitions Academies Trust

Reference and Administrative Details

Company Name

Ambitions Academies Trust

Principal and Registered Office

Manorside Academy

Evering Avenue

Poole

Dorset

BH12 4JG

Company Registration Number

07977940 (England and Wales)

Independent Auditor

Hopper Williams & Bell Limited

Statutory Auditor

Highland House

Mayflower Close

Chandlers Ford

Eastleigh

Hampshire

SO53 4AR

Bankers

Lloyds Bank Plc

PO Box 1000

Andover

BX1 1LT

Solicitors

Browne Jacobson

Nottingham Office

Mowbray House

Castle Meadow Road

Nottingham

NG2 1BJ

Ambitions Academies Trust

Trustees' Report

The Trustees present their annual report together with the Financial Statements and Auditor's Report of the charitable company for the period 1 September 2022 to 31 August 2023. The annual report serves the purposes of both a Trustees' Report and a Directors' Report under company law.

The Academy Trust operates six primary, four secondary, one studio school, and two special academies over 17 sites within Bournemouth, Poole and Weymouth. It has a combined roll of just over 5,800 students. The Trust also operates Ambitions Training School.

Structure, Governance and Management

Constitution

The Academy Trust is a private company limited by guarantee and an exempt charity. The charitable company's Memorandum and Articles of Association are the primary governing documents of the Academy Trust. The Trustees of Ambitions Academies Trust are also the Directors of the charitable company for the purposes of company law. The charitable company is known as Ambitions Academies Trust.

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

Members' Liability

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

Trustees' Indemnities

In accordance with normal practice, the Trust insures its Trustees and Academy Advisory Committee Members against errors, negligent acts or omissions relating to their work for the Trust, with no limit on any single claim.

Method of Recruitment and Appointment or Election of Trustees

The Trust has eight Trustees. Trustees are appointed to serve a term of office of four years. New Trustees are appointed/reappointed by the Members or the Trust Board as set out in the Trust's Articles of Association.

The Trust Board is responsible for recruiting Trustees. The Trust Board has undertaken a skills and requirements review to identify the skills needed to recruit and appoint to the Board. The Trustees interview applicants to ensure they meet the specified criteria for the vacant positions and for future succession planning. For the Trustees appointed by Members, a Member will join the panel for the formal interview.

Ambitions Academies Trust

Trustees' Report

Method of Recruitment and Appointment or Election of Trustees (continued)

The standard model of local school governance is the Academy Advisory Committees (AAC). The Trust also operates a 'high support' model of local governance, Academy Priority Support Committees (ASPC), led and chaired by the Trust's Director of Outcomes. An ASPC will transition to the AAC model following the period of high support. Members are appointed to the Academy committees as required to support the academies.

The Trust Board is responsible for the appointment of the Academy Committee Members.

Policies and Procedures Adopted for the Induction and Training of Trustees

A supportive and comprehensive induction process to the governance of the Trust is in place.

The Trust has a subscription with the National Governance Association (NGA) to support governance training and development of Trustees, Academy Committee members and Clerks with a comprehensive suite of e-Learning modules. As governance evolves, the NGA resources will provide updates on developments in the education sector and the best governance practices.

The governance training programme for 2022-23 was rolled out to Trustees and Academy Committee members. This sets out a termly schedule along with modules to be completed upon induction.

There is a clear Scheme of Delegation and Terms of Reference for the Full Trust Board and each Committee. All Trustees operate within the governance code of conduct. Ongoing support is provided to the Trustees to enable them to fulfil their specific role on the Board.

The induction of the Academy Committee Members is undertaken by the academy working closely with the Trust's Governance Lead to ensure consistency across the Trust.

Organisational Structure

For the period of these Financial Statements, the Trust's decisions are taken on behalf of all academies by the Trust Board, in respect of governance, financial control and procedure, and staffing structure.

Directors, under the guidance of the CEO, Principals, under the guidance of Directors of Education and Academy Committees, lead individual academies, making decisions on the direction of teaching and learning and achievement.

The CEO is the Accounting Officer of the Trust.

Ambitions Academies Trust

Trustees' Report

Arrangements for setting pay and remuneration of key management personnel

Arrangements for setting the pay and remuneration of the Trust's key management personnel are approved by the Trust Board's Personnel Committee. The Trust's teachers' pay policy is based on the national agreed pay scale as outlined in the School Teachers Pay and Conditions Document. The Trust adheres to Local Government pay arrangements for support staff and follows the Local Government pay spine.

Pay and remuneration for all personnel except the Chief Executive Officer is set by the Personnel Committee, which is a sub-committee of the Trustees. The Chief Executive Officer's pay and remuneration is set by an annual committee held solely for the appraisal and setting of pay and remuneration of the Chief Executive Officer.

Trade union facility time

Relevant union officials

Number of employees who were relevant union officials during the relevant period	Full-time equivalent employee number
9	7.73

Percentage of time spent on facility time

Percentage of time	Number of employees
0%	4
1%-50%	5
51%-99%	-
100%	-

Percentage of pay bill spent on facility time

Total cost of facility time	£2,576
Total pay bill	£40.6m
Percentage of the total pay bill spent on facility time	0.006%

Paid trade union activities

Time spent on paid trade union activities as a percentage of total paid facility time hours	38.1%
---	-------

Related Parties and other Connected Charities and Organisations

The Trust seeks to avoid related party transactions. In this period there are no related parties with which the Trust has transacted with.

Ambitions Academies Trust

Trustees' Report

Engagement with employees (including disabled persons)

The Trust believes in supporting, developing and working with its staff in order to meet the high expectations of the organisation. To achieve this, the Trust:

- Continues to develop a Joint Negotiation and Consultation Committee consisting of members of the Trust and Unions. The purpose of this Committee is to review key policies and discuss issues which affect the staff looking at ways that both the Trust and the Unions can provide support. Full Committee meetings take place at least termly with sub-committees also meeting termly.
- Works with Unions in situations involving redundancy, re-structures, disciplinary matters, grievance, etc. and to ensure procedures are fair and equitable with relevant support being provided.
- Carries out staff surveys and share the results with staff. Actions identified from the survey are then implemented.
- Has set up a Wellbeing Forum consisting of members of staff (known as the Wellbeing Champions) from each of the academies. This group meets termly to discuss factors relating to staff, feedback on wellbeing issues which have been identified in the academies, promote wellbeing through noticeboards which are regularly updated, formulating in a wellbeing policy based on the "Five Steps to Wellbeing". By July 2022 the Trust had completed the work on the Workload and well-being charter. This charter was implemented in September 2022.

The Trust's recruitment policy ensures that no candidate is discriminated against or unfairly treated because of a protected characteristic. Practical steps are taken to ensure reasonable adjustments are made at each stage of the recruitment process to allow disabled candidates to pursue a job vacancy and anonymous equality and diversity information is collected during the application process to ensure Ambitions Academy Trust's ability to monitor and improve its processes.

For staff members who become disabled during their employment with Ambitions Academies Trust, consideration is given to reasonable adjustments which will help to retain staff members whilst meeting the needs of the organisation in delivering its service.

Ambitions Academies Trust works positively with Unions in all matters concerning its employees from joint consultation in relation to policy development, TUPE processes, disciplinary and grievance situations, issues relating to attendance at work and other employee relationship matters.

Ambitions Academies Trust

Trustees' Report

Engagement with suppliers, customers and others in a business relationship with the trust
AAT uses supplier engagement to enhance relationships between the Trust and its suppliers focusing on people rather than systems and processes (the non-human elements). The Trust uses understanding and empathy and how these feelings impact motivation to nurture best value relationships, looking at the short-term needs rather than the volume of supply. Where both factors are prevalent, they are considered as part of supplier engagement. The Trust also uses supplier relationship management as an important tool, particularly when determining the best strategic partnerships to create and nurture. The use of supplier engagement is focused on driving better motivation and engagement with suppliers.

During the year the Trust has continued to use this approach to effect principal decisions. In particular this can be seen across the Estates department, HR department and ICT department and their work with our supplies for to support and enhance these functions. When ensuring best value for money is obtained, it is vital to take all aspects of 'Value' into consideration and our engagement with suppliers ensures we are looking at the human factors when making decisions.

Objectives and Activities

Objects and Aims

The Ambitions Academies Trust's objectives are set out in the Articles of Association. In summary it is to ensure the level of education AAT provide in each of its academies in Bournemouth, Poole and Weymouth results in all the pupils receiving the best quality of education it can provide.

The Trust operates as a group of academies that collaborate for the benefit of young people. Academies are geographically close which offers the Trust the opportunity to develop a common ethos, share best practice and combine resources. Ambitions Academies Trust exists to provide the best possible education for pupils and young people, improving the life chances of all pupils and young people across the Trust. The Trust's ambition is to provide an outstanding education across all sectors, early years, primary, secondary, special and post-16, ensuring that pupils and young people are given a broad and balanced education which prepares them well for success in their future lives. The Trust provides strong challenge and support to academies and ensures they deliver success for all.

Professional development, challenge, and support are at the heart of ensuring that staff are some of the finest teachers so they can deliver outstanding teaching. The mainstream and special classes benefit greatly from working collaboratively across the Trust. Ambitions Academies Trust was appointed as a Teaching School in 2014, the Trust is now invested in the Teaching school hub model, alongside this the Ambitions Training School has enabled us to build on our successful outreach and teacher training work that was developed through being a teaching school. This now enables us to provide extensive support to many schools and academies across the region.

Ambitions Academies Trust

Trustees' Report

Objects and Aims (continued)

After significant review the Trust invested in a 3-year subscription with the National College training platform to support consistent staff training and development. This platform provides a comprehensive suite of e-Learning modules that are constantly updated by industry professionals and tailored to roles within education. The platform also provides training audit functionality across all sites and staff to ensure compliance can be easily monitored for key training such as KCSIE and cyber security. We are in year 2 of having the CPD platform and leaders are now working hard to ensure that training courses can be linked to appraisal and developing staff so that at each level teaching and support staffs' skills levels are continually improving.

Objectives, Strategies and Activities

The aims of the Trust during the year ended 31 August 2023 are summarised below:

A Trust governance review in February 2019 led to the Trustees undertaking a strategic review which included reassessing the Trust vision, values and mission statement and clarifying the future direction. An External Review of Governance is scheduled for autumn 2023.

Vision and Values

- Outstanding Achievement for all underpinned by inclusivity, integrity, openness and honesty.

Mission Statement

- To ensure each pupil reaches their potential by securing outstanding achievement, high standards of social skills and improved life chances.
- To raise standards of teaching and learning by ensuring strong, effective governance and outstanding leadership at all levels.
- To achieve outstanding outcomes throughout the Trust through the efficient use of public funding and assets.

The Trust has continued to implement the Strategic Plan for 2021-23 with the Trust's strategic objectives as below:

- 1) To provide a Quality of Education that meets our pupils' needs enabling and is ambitious for the future progression.
- 2) Quality staff recruitment, ongoing training and deployment to develop our people.
- 3) Efficient and effective management of finance, ICT, resources and estates.
- 4) To ensure there is a culture of inclusivity where physical and emotional wellbeing is championed.

Under the leadership of the CEO, the executive team is responsible for implementing the strategic plan across all sectors of the organisation.

Ambitions Academies Trust

Trustees' Report

Objectives, Strategies and Activities (continued)

The Chair of Trustees holds regular strategic planning meetings with the CEO to discuss progress towards these strategic objectives. Additionally, the Trust Board meets twice per year to review progress towards these objectives and reassess the strategic direction.

The CEO and Directors formally review progress of implementing the objectives three times per year.

The objectives within each sector are set out below. Where appropriate an update has been provided as these objectives relate to the strategic plan which concludes in its present form this year.

HR Sector
The HR objectives for 2021-23 were focused on recruitment and CPD.
Attract and recruit the best people through a modern, open approach to recruitment – The Trust embedded a new recruitment platform in 2023 which has significantly streamlined recruitment systems providing greater efficiency and swifter outcomes.
Structured induction of staff at all levels to ensure they receive the information, guidance and support they need to perform their role and operate within the Trusts culture. The Trust surveys all new staff to ensure our induction supports all staff on their journey for working at AAT.
Implement a support staff appraisal system – we are now in year 2 of support staff appraisals, the focus now is linking targets to training.
Provision of development opportunities for people at all levels both for role-related skills and for personal development. These include leadership and management programmes and career pathways for Education and Support staff. The Trust has made good use of the apprenticeship opportunities this is a further focus in the 23-25 strategic plan.
Estates Sector
To ensure Curriculum Risk Assessments for all specialist subjects are in place and actioned. After an initial pilot, these risk assessments are now in place across the trust.
To ensure there is a site development plan for each academy which identifies all capital funding required. There is now a link between the use of capital funding to the Estate teams Preventative Maintenance Programme and this continues to be a focus for the new strategic plan.
Finance Sector
Centralisation of the finance assistant function. This has been piloted for three schools to date and this is now set to be achieved trust wide by September 2024.
To create a Trust Lettings Policy and Framework – complete.
To develop a suite of Bench Marking, Metrics, & ICFP that the Trust uses to review its accounting and budgeting processes. The finance team have introduced metrics through the management accounts, this is a focus for the new strategic plan and is of particular relevance with the challenging economic climate.

Ambitions Academies Trust

Trustees' Report

Objectives, Strategies and Activities (continued)

Wellbeing, Workload & Inclusion Sector
All academies have identified a consistent Wellbeing Champion who is able to regularly attend the forum and who signposts emotional health and wellbeing support to colleagues. This is complete, the focus is now on the impact of the charter.
AAT and academies produce a workload and wellbeing charter document which clearly indicates how workload and wellbeing is supported (this would be a contextualised document with AAT policy running through for consistency). This is complete, the focus is now on the impact of the charter.
75% of staff complete the Staff Surveys and results show a positive trend within AAT and each academy overtime. In 2023 the survey completion increased from 30% to 67%. Key point is that the survey results were incredibly positive.
Reduction in short and long term absenteeism due to work related stress. The Trust has come a long way in supporting staff, but particularly key is that there is a very open culture about talking about stress, anxiety and well-being. The culture has developed into a shared strategy where line managers and staff work together to find the right support.
All schools have in place a structured supervision/coaching model in order to ensure that highly effective and meaningful engagement takes place with staff at all levels in order to identify and address work related issues. This is now complete
The production of a HR and Wellbeing newsletter for staff – signposting support, key dates, events and to celebrate and recognised the achievement of staff across the Trust. With the significant progress of wellbeing and charter activities the HR sector have changed this focus to an HR report.
ICT
A comprehensive infrastructure and hardware lifecycle refresh programme has been established across the trust to support the three key aims for the ICT strategic plan
- Consistent ICT for Teaching and Learning
- Consistent ICT for RUNNING the academies and organisation
- Consistent ICT for DEVELOPING the organisation
The programme ensures effectiveness of the end user is achieved through well-functioning and well-maintained infrastructure.
Economy is ensured through utilising framework agreements and a system of ongoing review of ICT service support ensures that end users' needs are met.
The ICT strategy is in line with the "Meeting digital and technology standards in schools and colleges" guidance provided by the DfE.
Current ICT strategy and practice was validated through an external ICT audit which confirmed that allocated funding levels were in line with national metrics.

Ambitions Academies Trust

Trustees' Report

Public Benefit

The Trustees confirm that they have referred to the guidance contained in the Charity Commission's general guidance on public benefit. This has been consideration when reviewing the charitable company's objective and aims and in planning and operating the Trust for the period. The Trustees consider that the Nolan Principles and charitable company's aims are demonstrably to the benefit of the public.

The key public benefit delivered by the Trust is the maintenance and development of high-quality education to the young people of the communities the academies serve. The academies that the Trust operates are generally in deprived areas.

Through the training school, the Trust runs a number of courses throughout the year. It also runs NQT conferences. The training school runs the ITT for the Trust, a very successful model which not only provides excellent training, but also allows Principals a gateway to recruit new staff year on year.

Ambitions Academies Trust

Trustees' Report

Strategic Report

Achievements and Performance

Educational Achievements and Performance

The 2022-23 academic year was a challenging year for everyone.

Attendance figures across all schools in AAT and nationally experienced a dip compared to pre-pandemic years. We were encouraged by the improvement that was made in reducing the persistent absence figure; and our primary schools certainly showed green shoots of returning attendance to a figure that we expected prior to the pandemic. The Trust invested in a second school improvement partner from April 2023. One of the key areas of leadership for this new role was to lead an attendance strategy for AAT. The Trust also worked with an attendance advisor from the DfE.

2022-23 saw the second year of pupils sitting end of key stage assessments. It was the second year that secondary data was shared nationally, but primary data would see another year of data not being shared.

Yet again, all schools were facing the same national challenge of filling the educational gaps of students that had experienced over two years of disruption.

From September 2022, AAT leaders and staff continued in their relentless pursuit of providing the best learning opportunities for all the young people it serves. A key part of the educational strategy across all sectors of education at AAT continues to be the implementation of the reading strategy. Significant investment of time and staff training has been devoted to developing resources such as phonics, direct instruction, reading plus, lexia and accelerated reader. All have been steadily embedded to ensure that pupils arriving in our academies are supported to develop the required reading skills so they can access the broad age-related curriculum provided. This in turn supports their academic progress and attainment. As is the case for all areas of education there is often a lagged effect in seeing clear impact of strategies. Whilst some academies did see improvements in their reading and English exams this was not the case across the board. The year 6 reading paper with over 30% more text in it was a challenge for some of our pupils. In 2021 maths results across the board were disappointing, so it was good to see the improvement in this subject across the primary and secondary academies. Again, this was not consistent across every academy, resulting in a lot of discussion and changes to curriculum and assessment for the academic year 2023-24.

The Trustees education support and challenge programme continues to provide challenge for the educational sectors. The link trustee role was further developed to strengthen their relationships with their associated local school Academy Advisory Committees.

The vast majority of our academies maintain good or outstanding Ofsted judgements. One academy received an Ofsted visit in the 2022-23 where they retained their outstanding judgement. One academy received a monitoring visit which provided clear evidence that the academy was on track to gain a good Ofsted judgement when next inspected.

Ambitions Academies Trust

Trustees' Report

Achievements and Performance (continued)

Sector	Academy	Current Ofsted Judgement
Primary	Bayside Academy	Good
	Elm Academy	Outstanding
	Kinson Academy	Good
	King's Park Academy	Good
	Manorside Academy	Outstanding
	Queen's Park Academy	Outstanding
Secondary	All Saints' Church of England Academy	N/A due to transfer
	LeAF Studio	Good
	Oak Academy	Requires Improvement
	St Aldhelm's Academy	Good
	Wey Valley Academy	N/A due to transfer
Special	Longspee School	Outstanding
	Tregonwell Academy	Outstanding

Key Performance Indicators

The key financial performance indicators during the year were as follows:

Key Financial Performance Indicator 2022-23		Ambitions Academies Trust	Primary Academies	Secondary Academies	Special Academies
Year-end reserves: (excluding long term liabilities)	Target	8-12%	8-12%	8-12%	8-12%
	Actual	17%	51%	-11%	31%
As a number of months:		2	6	-4	4
Direct staff cost % of Income:	Target	60-70%	60-70%	60-70%	60-70%
	Actual	66%	63%	64%	64%
Total staff cost % of Income:	Target	70-75%	70-75%	70-75%	70-75%
	Actual	79%	74%	76%	74%

The Trust's year end reserves have improved across Primary and Special sectors during 2022-23. Both Primary and Special sectors hold reserves in excess of the KPI. The Primary sector's numbers of months reserves has reduced due to high inflation increasing annual income. The Secondary academies slightly increased their reserve deficit by £227k. The Trust reserve as a whole has risen from 15% (2021-22) to 17% reserves which is above our KPI target.

The Trust's direct staff costs as a percentage of income have increased from 63% (2021-22) to 66% in 2022-23. There has been a decrease the primary and secondary sectors while the special sector has seen an increase in direct staff costs as a percentage of income in 2022-23 when compared to 2021-22. All three sectors are now within the KPI target range.

The Trust's total staff costs as percentage of income has increased from 74% (2021-22) to 79% in 2022-23. This is within the target KPI set for the Trust. All three sectors are now within the KPI target range.

Ambitions Academies Trust

Trustees' Report

Going Concern

After making appropriate enquiries, the Trust Board 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.

In order to maintain the financial stability of the Trust, the budget monitoring process has been reviewed and adjusted, cashflow is monitored on a daily basis and each site forecasts monthly and this is reviewed thoroughly by the Executive team and Trust Board through the monthly management account meetings.

The Trustees recognise that St Aldhelm's Academy has significant legacy issues dating back to December 2012, resulting in a current deficit of £2.9m. This represents a reduction of £141k compared to the previous year.

Promoting the success of the company

The Trust Board understand they must fully consider the wide reaching and the long-term impacts that the Board's decisions will have on employees, suppliers, customers, and the surrounding community and environment. The Board seek to embed a culture which pursues success for the stakeholders through the Trust's actions. When determining the Trust's strategy, the Board must place due importance on the duty of promoting the success of the company and not become blinded by the immediate issues, but instead take a step back and consider the longer-term vision. The Board discharges this duty with effective training and induction processes when new Trustees join the Board.

It is important that the Board receives and has access to timely relevant information to make informed decisions and they will consider if they have sufficient information regarding all stakeholders' interests that may be affected prior to making decisions. Where all the information is not available the Board will use the expertise available to them within the Trust to support the decision making. The Board understand that every stakeholder is indirectly an asset and that promoting a culture that considers the interests of all stakeholders is of benefit to the Trust.

Ambitions Academies Trust

Trustees' Report

Financial Review

In the main, the Trust's income comes from the Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA). The income comes in the form of recurrent grants for specific purposes. These grants and the associated expenditure are shown as restricted funds in the consolidated Statement of Financial Activities. The Trust also receives specific grants and a high level of non-recurrent income for special educational needs provision from Local Authorities.

The Trust also received recurrent grants for fixed assets from the ESFA. These grants are shown in the consolidated Statement of Financial Activities as restricted income and represented in the fixed asset fund. The restricted fixed asset fund balance is reduced by annual depreciation charges over the expected useful life of the assets.

At 31 August 2023 the net book value of fixed assets was £90,957,559 (2022: £92,290,030). These assets were used exclusively for providing education to the Trust's pupils and related support services.

Reserves Policy

The Trust held a balance as at 31 August 2023, including St Aldhelm's Academy's deficit, of £93,794,324 (2022: £90,936,344), comprising of a surplus of £2,876,684 (2022: £4,187,894) of restricted funds, a pension reserve deficit of £6,634,000 (2022: £10,453,000), fixed asset reserves of £91,935,078 (2022: £93,378,753) and unrestricted reserves of £5,616,562 (2022: £3,822,697).

Total revenue reserves, which exclude the fixed asset fund of £91,935,078 (2022: £93,378,753) and the pension reserve deficit of £6,634,000 (2022: £10,453,000), as at 31 August 2023 were a surplus of £8,493,246 (2022: £8,010,591), again including St Aldhelm's Academy's legacy deficit. Excluding St Aldhelm's Academy's legacy deficit, total revenue reserves were a surplus of £11,401,550 (2022: £11,060,010). The fixed asset fund includes capital grants of £977,519 (2022: £1,088,723) for ongoing projects.

The Trust aims to hold between 8% and 12% of total revenue income in reserves. The total revenue income in reserve has increased from 15% to 17% in the 2022-23 academic year, as the Trust generated a surplus within the year which added to the consolidated reserve.

The pension reserve currently is in a deficit of £6,634,000 (2022: £10,453,000). This is a further significant reduction in comparison with previous years. The actuarial valuation has for a second year reduced significantly to a prediction of increasing interest rates based on the current economic climate. This remains a deficit that impacts on the total reserves of the Trust, although this does not mean that there is an immediate liability for this value. The impact on this value will be a potential increase in the pension contributions which are made to the LGPS. The Trust attempts to limit the potential future impact on the budgets by reviewing various scenarios during the budget setting process.

Ambitions Academies Trust

Trustees' Report

Reserves Policy (continued)

The Trustees consider that the underlying reserves levels, excluding the long-term liabilities of St Aldhelm's Academy and the cash reserves across the academies, are sufficient for the working capital and operational needs of the Trust, based on historic levels of activity. The reserves meet our need for ongoing investment in our properties. Given the current expansion of the Trust, these requirements are not fixed. The Trustees will keep the level of reserves under review.

Investment Policy

For the period covered by these Financial Statements, all cash balances have been held in current accounts in UK banks. Where the balance permits, the Trust intends to hold any surplus cash in low risk high interest deposit accounts using the services of a bank which specialises in charity clients.

Principal Risks and Uncertainties

The Trustees have assessed, through a Risk Register and through the robust scrutiny and challenge of the Audit and Risk Committee, the major risks to which the Trust are exposed. In particular, assessment has been made of the risks relating to specific teaching, provision of facilities and other operational areas of the Trust and its finances. Risks are assessed through a number of systems and procedures are implemented to mitigate these risks. Some of these mitigating procedures include internal financial controls, trend and sensitivity analysis, vetting of new staff, health and safety policies and data protection procedures. The Trust has ensured that adequate insurance cover is in place to mitigate risk through membership of the ESFA's Risk Pooling Arrangement.

The principal risks have been identified as:

Reputational – the continued success of attracting sufficient numbers of pupils to the academies by maintaining and improving educational standards. Through reviewing local birth rates, the Trust is aware of lower numbers across the BCP and Weymouth which has affected our primary schools and one secondary school. The Trust is working on a financial plan to mitigate the reduced pupil numbers.

Government funding – the Trust has considerable reliance on the continued government funding through the ESFA/DfE. There is no assurance that government policy or practice will remain the same and funding will remain at the same levels or on the same basis.

The cost of living crisis has had a significant effect on the Trust's finances, particularly in relation to utility costs rising, food costs rising and additional inflationary costs on all contracts.

Staffing – the ability to retain, recruit and train quality staff and leaders by ensuring continual personal development and clear succession planning.

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

Ambitions Academies Trust

Trustees' Report

Principal Risks and Uncertainties (continued)

Buildings and Facilities – ensuring that the estates under the control of the Trust remain safe, secure and compliant.

Pension Liability – this may fluctuate over time based on economic and Local Authority investment policy. This is a long-term liability where it is hoped that it will reduce in the future by employer contributions and additional lump sum payments.

In respect of St Aldhelm's Academy's financial recovery, the Trustees have implemented an ongoing process of monitoring through the Finance Committee to quantify and mitigate the risks. St Aldhelm's Academy is now producing strong financial improvement. Pupil numbers have risen steadily throughout the period with new pupils joining in every year group and this is projected to continue for the medium term.

Fundraising

As part of its work within the community, the Trust undertakes fundraising activities. This includes both fundraising in order to support its own operations and also to make donations to local and national charities. The Trust does not engage commercial participants or professional fund raisers in any of its fundraising activities; the work is undertaken by staff, students, family and community. The Trust has received no complaints with regards to its fundraising work in the 2022-23 academic year. The Trustees are satisfied that the public, including vulnerable people, are not put under unreasonably intrusive or persistent fundraising approaches nor are they put under any pressure to donate to the Trust.

Ambitions Academies Trust

Trustees' Report

Streamlined Energy and Carbon Reporting

Breakdown of energy consumption used to calculate emissions (kWh):

Energy type	2022/23	2021/22
Mandatory requirements:		
Gas	3,790,800	3,979,088
Purchased electricity from the grid	2,206,677	1,801,362
Transport fuel	160,846	105,011
Total energy (mandatory)	6,158,323	5,885,461
Voluntary requirements:		
Consumed electricity from on-site renewable sources	701,154	701,154
Total energy (voluntary)	701,154	701,154
Total energy (mandatory & voluntary)	6,859,477	6,586,615

Breakdown of emissions associated with the reported energy use (tCO₂e):

Emission source	2022/23	2021/22
Mandatory requirements:		
<u>Scope 1</u>		
Natural gas	693.4	726.3
Company owned vehicles (minibuses)	28.7	16.0
<u>Scope 2</u>		
Purchased electricity (location-based)	456.9	348.3
<u>Scope 3</u>		
Category 6: Business travel (grey fleet)	11.5	10.1
Total gross emissions (mandatory)	1,190.5	1,100.7
Voluntary requirements:		
<u>Scope 1</u>		
Consumed electricity from on-site renewable sources	-	-
Total gross emissions (voluntary)	-	-
Total gross emissions (mandatory & voluntary)	1,190.5	1,100.7
Intensity ratios:		
<u>Mandatory emissions only</u>		
Tonnes of CO ₂ e per pupil	0.194	0.180
Tonnes of CO ₂ e per square meter floor area	0.018	0.016

Ambitions Academies Trust

Trustees' Report

Streamlined Energy and Carbon Reporting (continued)

Quantification and reporting methodology

The 2019 UK Government Environmental Reporting Guidelines and the GHG Protocol Corporate Accounting and Reporting Standard (revised edition) were followed. The 2023 UK Government GHG Conversion Factors for Company Reporting were used in emission calculations. The report has been reviewed independently by Briar Consulting Engineers Limited.

The electricity and gas consumption were compiled from meter readings and invoices. Where invoices do not cover the full reporting year, the pro-rata or direct comparison estimation technique was applied. Mileage claims were used to calculate energy use and emissions associated with Trust owned vehicles and grey fleet. Consumption associated with Solar Photovoltaic generation has been compared to the previous report using the direct comparison estimation technique. It is assumed that all of the electricity generated is used on site. Generally gross calorific values were used except for grey fleet mileage energy calculations as per Government GHG Conversion Factors.

The associated emissions are divided into mandatory and voluntary emissions according to the 2018 Regulations, then further divided into the direct combustion of fuels and the operation of facilities (scope 1), indirect emissions from purchased electricity (scope 2) and further indirect emissions that occur as a consequence of Trust activities but occur from sources not owned or controlled by the organisation (scope 3).

Intensity ratio

Two intensity ratios are reported showing emissions (tCO₂e) per pupil and per square meter floor area. Emissions per pupil is the recommended ratio for the sector for consistency and comparability and pupil numbers are based on the Autumn 2022 Census. Emissions per square meter floor area is reported to reflect the energy efficiency of the buildings, which are the source of the majority of emissions.

Energy efficiency action during current reporting year

During the reporting year, the Trust has implemented the following energy efficiency actions:

- All sites are monitored via Alcumus in terms of meter reads. Alcumus allows the Trust to track, investigate, and manage the energy consumption from live meters. Smart meters have been installed as and when requested from the energy companies.
- Sustainability reporting and information posters are shared throughout the Trust empowering people to share best practice.
- Manorside academy replaced the curtain walling to the front elevation.
- New boilers have been installed replacing older and less efficient models.
- Roof covering replacement with improved insulations at Wey Valley.
- PIRs have been installed on lights in areas that are not used as much.
- Seven sites are now 100% LED with the remaining sites to be completed over the next three years.
- Solar Photovoltaic is now installed at all sites where this is feasible.
- Free air units to be looked at as a viable option to Air conditioning units in switch and server rooms – two of these units already trialled in both Iford and Kinson.

Ambitions Academies Trust

Trustees' Report

Plans for Future Periods

The Trust had 13 academies at the end of August 2023. These are across the following sectors Primary, Secondary, Special and post-16. The Trustees continue to work to fulfil the Trust's charitable objectives vision and value in all of its academies.

The Trust will continue to explore opportunities to expand the Trust within its current geographical boundaries. The Trust plans to continue in its pursuit to raise standards and outcomes for the communities it serves. The Trust will persist in raising the level of quality of the educational settings ensuring the highest level of buildings and ICT for the delivery of education. The Trustees are focused on ensuring the continued financial viability of the Trust as a whole and each of the individual academies. The Trustees are also concentrating on securing the best outcomes and Ofsted judgements for all of the Trust's academies.

Funds Held as Custodian Trustee on Behalf of Others

The Trust does not hold assets or funds as custodian trustee on behalf of any other organisation.

Auditor

Insofar as the Trustees are aware:

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

The Trustees' report, incorporating a strategic report, was approved by order of the Board of Trustees, as the company directors, on 4 December 2023 and signed on the board's behalf by:

C S Sard

Mrs Caroline Sard
Chair of Trustees

Ambitions Academies Trust

Governance Statement

Scope of Responsibility

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

As Trustees, we have reviewed and taken account the guidance in DfE's Governance Handbook and Competency Framework for Governance.

The Trust Board 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 Ambitions Academies Trust and the Secretary of State for Education. They are also responsible for reporting to the Trust Board 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 Trust Board has formally met eight times during the year. Attendance during the year at meetings of the Full Trust Board was as follows:

Trustee	Meetings attended	Out of a possible
Mrs Caroline Sard (Chair of Trustees)	8	8
Mrs Alison Beane	6	8
Mrs Berni Catling	7	8
Mr Martin Luffman	6	8
Mrs Louise Parker (resigned 30 September 2022)	-	1
Mrs Roz Scammell (term of office ended 24 September 2022)	-	1
Mr John Seal (resigned 31 August 2023)	6	8
Mr Richard Smith	8	8
Mr Anthony Smith	7	8
Mr Roy Watson (resigned 31 March 2023)	3	4

Work in 2022-23 included:

- Monitoring of the Trust's Strategic Plan for 2022-23 against the updated objectives to support and direct the ongoing success of the Trust. In addition to the Full Trust Board meetings, the Trustees met three times to review the strategic plan and progress towards objectives.
- CEO Recruitment work to scope a strategy and process for recruiting a CEO, in readiness for January 2024, working in partnership with an external recruitment consultant.
- Further strengthening the links between the Trust Board and the academies. Link Trustees and Academy Committee Chairs are invited to visit their schools and join the feedback session of the Trust's Quality of Education Review.

Ambitions Academies Trust

Governance Statement

Governance (continued)

- Trustee recruitment is a priority for the Trust Board. Retaining Trustees for a full 4-year term of office has been a significant challenge.
- Strengthening the Academy Committees with new members, including parent and staff members.
- Supporting all Trustees, Academy Committee Members and Clerks with the National Governance Association (NGA) subscription to enable continued training and development.
- The termly Chairs' forum for the Chair of Trustees and all Academy Committee Chairs with the CEO, Director for Outcomes and the Trust's Governance Lead has continued to provide a supportive and collaborative network.
- Meetings, chaired by the Chair of Trustees, with each of the Education Directors and Link Trustees to monitor the progress of strategic priorities for the sector. A summary report is prepared for review by all Trustees with any questions being taken forward to the Trust Board Meeting.
- Termly Members' meetings for the Members to hold the Trust Board to account. The Members receive a termly written report from the Trust Board.
- The Trustees completed their annual Skills Audit.
- The Trustees completed their annual self-review using the NGA's 'MAT Governance self-evaluation questions'. The results enable the Trust Board to focus on areas for improvement. The results are presented to the Members.
- The Quality of Education Review process and work on school improvement continues. Areas for strategic focus includes attendance and behaviour in the schools ensuring support for disadvantaged pupils and pupils with SEND.
- The HR strategy has seen the implementation of the wellbeing and workload charter. With the implementation complete monitoring to determine impact is ongoing as the Trust strives to be an employer of choice.
- The strategic objectives for Estates have been developed significantly this year with curriculum risk assessments in place for all specialist subjects.
- The IT strategy is well embedded and has supported the Trust enormously in raising standards in the schools
- The inclusion charter has been piloted in three academies. The Charter rollout and the SEN strategy is an item for the updated Strategic Plan.
- The development of dashboards to provide metrics and benchmarking data continues to evolve.

The Finance Committee is a sub-committee of the Trust Board. Its purpose is to monitor the Trust's finances over the year, including projected and actual levels of funding and review budgets. The Finance Committee is required to report back to the Trust Board and make recommendations, as required, for the Trustees' approval.

Ambitions Academies Trust

Governance Statement

Governance (continued)

Key areas of focus for the committee include:

- Monitoring and scrutiny of the monthly management accounts
- Staff requisition information
- Capital project review and approval
- Budget review and approval
- The increasing utility costs
- The management of debtors

Attendance at meetings in the year was as follows:

Trustee	Meetings attended	Out of a possible
Mr Martin Luffman (Chair)	6	6
Mrs Alison Beane	6	6
Mrs Caroline Sard	6	6
Mr Roy Watson (resigned 31 March 2023)	5	6

The Audit and Risk Committee is a sub-committee of the main Trust Board. Its main purpose is to review the effectiveness of financial and non-financial controls, risk management, the internal scrutiny programme and to appoint and oversee the work of the internal and external auditors.

Attendance at meetings in the year was as follows:

Trustee	Meetings attended	Out of a possible
Mr Richard Smith (Chair – autumn term)	3	3
Mr Anthony Smith (Chair – spring and summer terms)	3	3
Mrs Berni Catling	3	3
Mr John Seal (resigned 31 August 2023)	1	3

The Trust held its Annual General Meeting on 23 February 2023 in accordance with the Articles of Association.

Conflicts of interest

The Trust maintains a register of business interests, which includes Members, Trustees, Academy Advisory Committee members, and officers of the Trust that have a position of influence or work within the finance team. This is collected annually and updated when there are new appointments. The finance team requests that if someone has a change and a business interest arises during the year this is updated on the register of business interests.

Ambitions Academies Trust

Governance Statement

Governance (continued)

Before engaging with a new supplier, the requisitioner who has identified a new supplier will indicate on the new supplier form whether they or anyone else within the Trust has a related party relationship or conflict of interest on the new supplier form. The finance team also reviews the register of business interest to ensure the new supplier is not identified on the register.

Where a conflict is identified the necessary checks and permissions are sought as required by the Academy Trust Handbook. The Trust does not engage suppliers where there is a conflict of interest.

Governance reviews

The Trustees completed their annual self-review using the NGA's 'MAT Governance self-evaluation questions'. The results enable the Trust Board to focus on areas for improvement. The results were presented to the Members.

Review of Value for Money

As Accounting Officer, the Chief Executive has responsibility for ensuring that the Academy Trust delivers good value in the use of public resources. The Accounting Officer understands that value for money refers to the educational and wider societal outcomes 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 Trust Board where value for money can be improved, including the use of benchmarking data where appropriate. The Accounting Officer for the Academy Trust has delivered improved value for money during the year. The Trust prides itself on ensuring that value for money is achieved across all areas of the Trust. This can be evaluated through analysis of a variety of contracts that the Trust enters into, including: water, gas and electricity, alarm systems, photocopiers, ICT hardware, and ICT software. It is relentless in its pursuit of excellence so an important aspect of assessing value for money is linked to the outcomes provided by the various contracts.

The Trust has a robust Preventative Maintenance Plan (PMP), all contracts entered with regards to the compliance and maintenance of the estates are also considered alongside a value for money evaluation.

The Trust has continued to implement a robust system of ICT hardware refreshment across all sites. 2022-23 was the third year of a 10-year cycle of hardware refreshment across the Trust this includes student and staff devices as well as infrastructure and servers. The Trust is proud that it has now upgraded ICT hardware at every academy; this means that every classroom has a panel and every teacher has an upgraded laptop.

Education Reviews

Each academy's performance is reviewed through the Quality of Education Review. These reviews ensure that the work and outcomes in each sector are aligned to the strategic vision of the Trust.

Ambitions Academies Trust

Governance Statement

Review of Value for Money (continued)

Trust Forums

Trust wide forums for safeguarding and SEND are now well established and provide key information and systems practice to all staff and governance across the Trust. Educational focused Trust Forums continue to be developed and embedded across the three sectors. These forums are key in providing staff professional development and ensuring all academies are implementing best practice. We believe that collaboration between these teams is the key driving force in establishing effective working practices across the Trust. With the work the Trust is doing to align curriculums and assessments the subject forums are increasingly an opportunity for leaders to share good practice.

Financial Effectiveness

The Trust has also used central procurement and economies of scale to make the best use of resources in respect of areas such as HR support, IT provision, telephony, and broadband throughout the year. For capital projects and general expenditure, the Trust aims to make the best use of local suppliers where appropriate, supporting small and medium-sized local businesses whilst securing the best value for money.

The Purpose of the System of Internal Control

The primary purpose of internal controls is to help safeguard an organisation and further its objectives. Internal controls function to minimise risks and protect assets, ensure accuracy of records, promote operational efficiency, and encourage adherence to policies, rules, regulations, and laws.

The system of internal control is designed to manage risk to a reasonable level rather than to eliminate all risk of failure to achieve policies, aims and objectives. It can, therefore, only provide reasonable and not absolute assurance of effectiveness. The system of internal control is based on an on-going process designed to identify and prioritise the risks to the achievement of Academy Trust policies, aims and objectives, to evaluate the likelihood of those risks being realised and the impact should they be realised, and to manage them efficiently, effectively and economically. This has been achieved by commissioning an external review of ICT. This review further supported the work being undertaken in this area.

Capacity to Handle Risk

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

Ambitions Academies Trust

Governance Statement

The Risk and Control Framework

The Academy Trust's system of internal financial control is based on a framework of regular management information and administrative procedures, including the segregation of duties and a system of delegation and accountability. In particular it includes:

- Comprehensive budgeting and monitoring systems with an annual budget and 12 periodic financial reports which are reviewed and agreed by the Full Trust Board
- Regular reviews by the Finance 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 through the Trust dashboard, clearly defined purchasing (asset purchase or capital investment) guidelines Identification and management of risks through the risk register.

The Trust Board has considered the need for a specific internal audit function. During 2022-23, the Trustees have engaged Zenergy and Moxton Education to undertake internal scrutiny and perform additional checks. The internal auditors' role includes giving advice and performing a range of checks on the Trust's systems and processes.

The Audit and Risk Committee determine the schedule of work to be carried out throughout the year and receive the internal audit reports. Overall, no material control issues were found.

The checks carried out in the current period were:

- Streamline Energy and Carbon Reporting (SERC)
- IT Strategy

Additionally, the Chairs of the Finance Committee, Audit & Risk Committee and Personnel Committee have regular support and challenge meetings with the Finance Director, HR Director and Estates Director to review the systems and processes in place in the relevant area. The outcomes are then reported at the next committee meeting.

On a yearly basis the Trust prepares an Annual Internal Scrutiny review. This is reported to the Trust Board through the Audit Committee. Its scope is to report on the operational systems of control and on the discharge of the Board's financial and non-financial responsibilities. This is done annually by producing a summary report to the Committee outlining the areas reviewed, key findings, recommendations and conclusions.

Ambitions Academies Trust

Governance Statement

Review of Effectiveness

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

- the work of the external auditor the work of the internal auditor
- the work of the Executive Managers within the Academy Trust who have responsibility for the development and maintenance of the internal control framework
- there has been an explicit Finance Planning Group at executive level, which has met on a regular basis throughout the year to support the development and embedding of finance procedures across the Trust.

The Accounting Officer has been advised of the implications of the result of their review of the system of internal control by the Audit & Risk Management Committee and ensure continuous improvement of the system is in place. The system has been deemed to be effective overall, however during the year issues have been identified that are being addressed in the form of internal audit reviews of processes and systems.

Approved by order of the members of the Board of Trustees on 4 December 2023 and signed on its behalf by:

C S Sard

Mrs Caroline Sard
Chair of Trustees



Ms Sian Thomas
Accounting Officer

Ambitions Academies Trust

Statement of Regularity, Propriety and Compliance

As Accounting Officer of Ambitions Academies Trust I have considered my responsibility to notify the Academy Trust Board of Trustees and the Education & 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 2022, including responsibilities for estates safety and management.

I confirm that I and the Academy Trust Board of Trustees are able to identify any material irregular or improper use of 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 2022.

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



Ms Sian Thomas
Accounting Officer
4 December 2023

Ambitions Academies Trust

Statement of Trustees' Responsibilities

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 & Skills Funding Agency, United Kingdom Accounting Standards (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice) and applicable law and regulations.

Company law requires the Trustees to prepare financial statements for each financial year. Under company law, the Trustees must not approve the financial statements unless they are satisfied that they give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the charitable company and of its incoming resources and application of resources, including its income and expenditure, for that period. In preparing these financial statements, the Trustees are required to:

- select suitable accounting policies and then apply them consistently
- observe the methods and principles in the Charities SORP 2019 and the Academies Accounts Direction 2022 to 2023
- make judgments and 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 on 4 December 2023 and signed on its behalf by:

C S Sard

Mrs Caroline Sard
Chair of Trustees

Ambitions Academies Trust

Independent Auditor's Report on the Financial Statements to the Members of Ambitions Academies Trust

Opinion

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

In our opinion the financial statements:

- give a true and fair view of the state of the charitable company's affairs as at 31 August 2023 and of its 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;
- have been prepared in accordance with the requirements of the Companies Act 2006; and
- have been properly prepared in accordance with the Charities SORP 2019 and Academies Accounts Direction 2022 to 2023.

Basis for opinion

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

Conclusions relating to going concern

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

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

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

Ambitions Academies Trust

Independent Auditor's Report on the Financial Statements to the Members of Ambitions Academies Trust

Other information

The Trustees are responsible for the other information. The other information comprises the information included in the annual report other than the financial statements and our auditor's report thereon. It includes the Reference and Administrative Details, the Trustees' Report (including the Strategic Report), and the Governance Statement. 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 for the financial year for which the financial statements are prepared is consistent with the financial statements; and
- the Trustees' Report has been prepared in accordance with applicable legal requirements.

Matters on which we are required to report by exception

In the light of the knowledge and understanding of the charitable company and its environment obtained in the course of the audit, we have not identified material misstatements in the Trustees' Report.

We have nothing to report in respect of the following matters 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;
- the financial statements are not in agreement with the accounting records and returns;
- certain disclosures of Trustees' remuneration specified by law are not made; or
- we have not obtained all the information and explanations necessary for the purposes of our audit.

Ambitions Academies Trust

Independent Auditor's Report on the Financial Statements to the Members of Ambitions Academies Trust

Responsibilities of the Trustees

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

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

Our 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 a Report of the Independent Auditors 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:

- We obtained an understanding of the legal and regulatory frameworks that are applicable to the Academy Trust, and the sector in which it operates. These include but are not limited to compliance with the Companies Act 2006, United Kingdom Accounting Standards (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice), including Financial Reporting Standard 102 'The Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland', the Charities SORP 2019, the Academy Trust Handbook 2022, and the Academies Accounts Direction 2022 to 2023.
- We obtained an understanding of how the Academy Trust is complying with these frameworks through discussions with management.

Ambitions Academies Trust

Independent Auditor’s Report on the Financial Statements to the Members of Ambitions Academies Trust

- We enquired with management whether there were any instances of non-compliance with laws and regulations or whether they had knowledge of actual or suspected fraud. These enquiries are corroborated through follow-up audit procedures including but not limited to a review of legal and professional costs, correspondence and a review of board minutes.
- We assessed the susceptibility of the Academy Trust’s financial statements to material misstatement, including the risk of fraud and management override of controls. We designed our audit procedures to respond to this assessment, including the identification and testing of any related party transactions and the testing of journal transactions that arise from management estimates, that are determined to be of significant value or unusual in their nature.
- We assessed the appropriateness of the collective competence and capabilities of the engagement team, including consideration of the engagement team’s knowledge and understanding of the sector in which the Academy Trust operates in, and their practical experience through training and participation with audit engagements of a similar nature.

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 Independent Auditor’s Report.

Use of our report

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

Michaela Johns

M Johns FCCA (Senior statutory auditor)
For and on behalf of Hopper Williams & Bell Limited
Statutory Auditor
Highland House, Mayflower Close, Chandlers Ford, Eastleigh SO53 4AR

13 Dec 2023
Date

Ambitions Academies Trust

Independent Reporting Accountant's Assurance Report on Regularity to Ambitions Academies Trust and the Education & Skills Funding Agency

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

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

Respective responsibilities of Ambitions Academies Trust's Accounting Officer and the reporting accountant

The Accounting Officer is responsible, under the requirements of Ambitions Academies Trust's funding agreement with the Secretary of State for Education dated 30 July 2014 and the Academy Trust Handbook, extant from 1 September 2022, for ensuring that expenditure disbursed and income received is applied for the purposes intended by Parliament and the financial transactions conform to the authorities which govern them.

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

Ambitions Academies Trust

Independent Reporting Accountant's Assurance Report on Regularity to Ambitions Academies Trust and the Education & Skills Funding Agency

Approach

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

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

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

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

The work undertaken to draw to our conclusion includes:

- Consideration as to whether prior approval was sought from the Secretary of State where it is required by the Academy Trust Handbook (effective from 1 September 2022) (ATH).
- Review of any special payments to staff, including compromise agreements, to consider whether prior approval was sought where required by the ATH and that any payments are in line with the severance guidance published by ESFA.
- Consideration as to whether any borrowings have been made in accordance with the ATH.
- Review of any 'minded to' letters or Notices to Improve which have been issued to the Academy Trust.
- Review of any transactions with related parties to ensure that they have been carried out in accordance with the ATH.
- Review of governance arrangements to determine whether the requirements of the ATH have been met.
- Review of the Academy Trust's internal controls, including whether the general control environment has regard to the regularity of underlying transactions, including fraud management.
- Review of the Academy Trust's procurement policies to determine effectiveness and testing a sample of purchases to confirm that the policies have been correctly implemented.
- Identifying any conditions associated with specialist grant income and determining whether it has been spent as the purposes intended.

Ambitions Academies Trust

Independent Reporting Accountant’s Assurance Report on Regularity to Ambitions Academies Trust and the Education & Skills Funding Agency

Conclusion

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

Michaela Johns

M Johns FCCA
Reporting Accountant
Hopper Williams & Bell Limited
Chartered Accountants
Highland House, Mayflower Close, Chandlers Ford, Eastleigh SO53 4AR

13 Dec 2023
Date

Ambitions Academies Trust

Statement of Financial Activities for the year ended 31 August 2023 (including Income and Expenditure Account)

	Note	Un- restricted funds £	Restricted General Funds £	Restricted Pension Funds £	Restricted Fixed Asset Funds £	2022/23 Total £	2021/22 Total £
Income and endowments from:							
Donations and capital grants	2	39,443	247,000	-	2,054,844	2,341,287	2,013,497
Other trading activities	4	182,895	-	-	-	182,895	220,842
Investments	5	1,111	-	-	-	1,111	1,251
Charitable activities:							
Funding for the academy trust's educational operations	3	1,624,708	49,241,219	-	-	50,865,927	46,866,140
Total		1,848,157	49,488,219	-	2,054,844	53,391,220	49,101,730
Expenditure on:							
Charitable activities:							
Academy trust educational operations	7	54,292	50,733,895	759,000	3,564,053	55,111,240	53,768,187
Net income / (expenditure)		1,793,865	(1,245,676)	(759,000)	(1,509,209)	(1,720,020)	(4,666,457)
Transfers between funds	18	-	(65,534)	-	65,534	-	-
Other recognised gains / (losses):							
Actuarial gains on defined benefit pension schemes	28	-	-	4,578,000	-	4,578,000	33,656,000
Net movement in funds		1,793,865	(1,311,210)	3,819,000	(1,443,675)	2,857,980	28,989,543
Reconciliation of funds							
Total funds brought forward		3,822,697	4,187,894	(10,453,000)	93,378,753	90,936,344	61,946,801
Total funds carried forward		5,616,562	2,876,684	(6,634,000)	91,935,078	93,794,324	90,936,344

The notes on pages 40 to 67 form part of these financial statements.

Ambitions Academies Trust

Balance Sheet as at 31 August 2023

Company Number 07977940

	Note	2023 £	2023 £	2022 £	2022 £
Fixed assets					
Intangible assets	12		-		606
Tangible assets	13		<u>90,957,559</u>		<u>92,289,424</u>
			90,957,559		92,290,030
Current assets					
Debtors: Amounts falling due within one year	15	1,971,131		2,106,388	
Debtors:					
Amounts falling due after more than one year	15	275,000		-	
Cash at bank and in hand		<u>11,627,425</u>		<u>11,323,114</u>	
		13,873,556		13,429,502	
Liabilities					
Creditors: Amounts falling due within one year	16	<u>(4,124,115)</u>		<u>(4,325,041)</u>	
Net current assets			<u>9,749,441</u>		<u>9,104,461</u>
Total assets less current liabilities			100,707,000		101,394,491
Creditors:					
Amounts falling due after more than one year	17		<u>(278,676)</u>		<u>(5,147)</u>
Net assets excluding pension liability			100,428,324		101,389,344
Defined benefit pension scheme liability	28		(6,634,000)		(10,453,000)
Total net assets			<u>93,794,324</u>		<u>90,936,344</u>
Funds of the academy trust:					
Restricted funds					
Fixed asset fund	18	91,935,078		93,378,753	
Restricted income fund	18	2,876,684		4,187,894	
Pension reserve	18	<u>(6,634,000)</u>		<u>(10,453,000)</u>	
Total restricted funds			88,177,762		87,113,647
Unrestricted income funds	18		5,616,562		3,822,697
Total funds			<u>93,794,324</u>		<u>90,936,344</u>

The financial statements on pages 37 to 67 were approved by the Trustees and authorised for issue on 4 December 2023 and are signed on their behalf by:

C S Sard

Mrs Caroline Sard
Chair of Trustees

The notes on pages 40 to 67 form part of these financial statements.

Ambitions Academies Trust

Statement of Cash Flows for the year ended 31 August 2023

	Note	2023 £	2022 £
Cash flows from operating activities			
Net cash provided by (used in) operating activities	22	(308,061)	1,718,553
Cash flows from financing activities	23	(1,471)	(1,470)
Cash flows from investing activities	24	613,843	(628,511)
Change in cash and cash equivalents in the reporting period		<u>304,311</u>	<u>1,088,572</u>
Cash and cash equivalents at 1 September 2022		11,323,114	10,234,542
Cash and cash equivalents at 31 August 2023	25	<u>11,627,425</u>	<u>11,323,114</u>

Ambitions Academies Trust

Notes to the Financial Statements for the Year Ended 31 August 2023

1 Accounting policies

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

Basis of Preparation

The financial statements of the Academy Trust, which is a public benefit entity under FRS 102, have been prepared under the historical cost convention in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard Applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102), the Accounting and Reporting by Charities: Statement of Recommended Practice applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102) (Charities SORP (FRS 102)), the Academies Accounts Direction 2022 to 2023 issued by ESFA, the Charities Act 2011 and the Companies Act 2006. The financial statements are prepared in sterling which is the functional currency of the Academy Trust and are rounded to the nearest £1.

Preparation of consolidated financial statements

The financial statements contain information about Ambitions Academies Trust as an individual Academy Trust and do not contain consolidated financial information as the parent of a group. The Academy Trust is exempt under Section 402 of the Companies Act 2006 from the requirements to prepare consolidated financial statements as its subsidiary company is excluded from consolidation because its inclusion is not material for the purpose of giving a true and fair view.

Going Concern

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

Ambitions Academies Trust

Notes to the Financial Statements for the Year Ended 31 August 2023

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.

- Donations

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

- Grants

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

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

Capital grants are recognised in full when there is an 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.

- Other Income

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

- Donated goods, facilities and services

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

- Donated fixed assets (excluding Transfers on conversion/into the Academy Trust)

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

Ambitions Academies Trust

Notes to the Financial Statements for the Year Ended 31 August 2023

Expenditure

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

- Charitable Activities

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

All resources expended are inclusive of irrecoverable VAT.

Intangible Fixed Assets

Intangible assets costing £1,500 or more are capitalised and recognised when future economic benefits are probable and the cost or value of the asset can be measured reliably. Intangible assets are initially recognised at cost and are subsequently measured at cost net of amortisation and any provision for impairment. Amortisation is provided on intangible fixed assets at rates calculated to write off the cost of each asset on a straight-line basis over its expected useful life, as follows:

Purchased computer software	3 years straight line
-----------------------------	-----------------------

Tangible Fixed Assets

Assets costing £10,000 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.

The Academy Trust occupies academy land and buildings for one of its academies under a supplementary agreement with the Salisbury Diocesan Board of Education (SDBE). In accordance with the Academies Accounts Direction, the Academy Trust has considered whether it should recognise the academy's land and buildings as a fixed asset on its balance sheet. The Academy Trust has determined that the conditions required to conclude that it has control over the premises which it occupies under the supplementary agreement with SDBE are not met and consequently the Academy Trust has not recognised the value of land and buildings occupied under the supplementary agreement as a fixed asset on its balance sheet. Costs incurred which enhance or permanently add to the academy land or buildings owned by SDBE are not capitalised and all such costs are expensed.

Ambitions Academies Trust

Notes to the Financial Statements for the Year Ended 31 August 2023

Tangible Fixed Assets (continued)

The supplementary agreement permits the Academy Trust to occupy the premises on a rolling basis, with a two-year notice period. In accordance with the Academies Accounts Direction, the Academy Trust's occupation of the premises has been recognised in the Statement of Financial Activities as a notional donation from SDBE (since it pays no actual rent), and a matching notional rental expense. The Academy Trust has recognised the use of premises for the remaining notice period and has recognised a future notional donation as a debtor in the balance sheet, with a corresponding entry for the future notional rental expense as a creditor. The value of the donation has been estimated based on the rateable value of the buildings.

Depreciation is provided on all tangible fixed assets other than 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:

Freehold Land and Buildings	Buildings 15-50 years straight line; not provided on land
Leasehold Land and Buildings	Buildings 15-50 years straight line; land 125 years straight line
Furniture and Equipment	25% reducing balance
Computer Equipment	3 years straight line
Motor Vehicles	5 years straight line

Where the Academy Trust can identify the value of major components of freehold or leasehold buildings based upon additions following conversion to academy status, the Academy Trust reviews whether one or more such components have significantly different patterns of consumption of economic benefits. In such cases, the Academy Trust allocates the cost of the asset to its major components and depreciates each component separately over its useful life.

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

Liabilities

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

Provisions

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

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

Ambitions Academies Trust

Notes to the Financial Statements for the Year Ended 31 August 2023

Leased Assets

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

Investments

The academy's shareholding in the wholly owned subsidiary, Ambers Group Limited, is included in the balance sheet at the cost of the share capital owned less any impairment. There is no readily available market value and the cost of valuation exceeds the benefit derived.

Financial Instruments

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

Financial assets

Trade and other debtors are basic financial instruments and are debt instruments measured at amortised cost. Prepayments are not financial instruments. Amounts due from the charity's wholly owned subsidiary are held at face value less any impairment.

Cash at bank

Cash at bank is classified as a basic financial instrument and is measured at face value. An investment is treated as a cash equivalent when it has a short maturity of three months or less from the date of acquisition.

Financial liabilities

Trade creditors, accruals and other creditors are financial instruments, and are measured at amortised cost. Taxation and social security are not included in the financial instruments disclosure definition. Deferred income is not deemed to be a financial liability, as the cash settlement has already taken place and there is an obligation to deliver services rather than cash or another financial instrument. Amounts due from the charity's wholly owned subsidiary are held at face value less any impairment.

Taxation

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

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

Ambitions Academies Trust

Notes to the Financial Statements for the Year Ended 31 August 2023

Pensions Benefits

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

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

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

Fund Accounting

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

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

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

Ambitions Academies Trust

Notes to the Financial Statements for the Year Ended 31 August 2023

Critical accounting estimates and areas of judgement

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

Critical accounting estimates and assumptions

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

The present value of the Local Government Pension Scheme defined benefit liability depends on a number of factors that are determined on an actuarial basis using a variety of assumptions. The assumptions used in determining the net cost (income) for pensions include the discount rate. Any changes in these assumptions will impact the carrying amount of the pension liability. Furthermore, a roll forward approach which projects results from the latest full actuarial valuation performed at 31 March 2022 has been used by the actuary in valuing the pensions liability at 31 August 2023. Any differences between the figures derived from the roll forward approach and a full actuarial valuation would impact on the carrying amount of the pension liability.

The assumptions used are disclosed in note 28.

Under the Church Supplemental Agreement between the Academy Trust and the Salisbury Diocesan Board of Education the Academy Trust is given rent free use of certain land and buildings. The Academy Accounts Direction requires that an appropriate notional donation of rent is recognised in the financial statements. The rent has been estimated based on the rateable value of the land and buildings.

Critical areas of judgement

There are no other critical areas of judgement.

Agency arrangements

The Academy Trust acts as an agent in distributing 16-19 bursary funds from ESFA. Payments received from ESFA and subsequent disbursements to students are excluded from the statement of financial activities as the Academy Trust does not have control over the charitable application of the funds. The Academy Trust can use up to 10% of the allocation towards its own administration costs and this is recognised in the statement of financial activities. The funds received and paid and any balances held are disclosed in the notes to the financial statements.

Ambitions Academies Trust

Notes to the Financial Statements for the Year Ended 31 August 2023

2 Donations and capital grants

	Unrestricted funds £	Restricted funds £	2022/23 Total £	2021/22 Total £
Capital grants	-	2,054,844	2,054,844	1,772,667
Donated fixed assets	-	-	-	168,675
Other donations	39,443	247,000	286,443	72,155
	<u>39,443</u>	<u>2,301,844</u>	<u>2,341,287</u>	<u>2,013,497</u>
<i>Total 2022</i>	<u>72,155</u>	<u>1,941,342</u>	<u>2,013,497</u>	

3 Funding for the Academy Trust's educational operations

	Unrestricted funds £	Restricted funds £	2022/23 Total £	2021/22 Total £
DfE / ESFA grants				
General Annual Grant (GAG)	-	35,708,181	35,708,181	33,793,713
Pupil Premium	-	2,606,104	2,606,104	2,427,995
UIFSM	-	153,399	153,399	158,957
Rates reclaim	-	163,468	163,468	162,075
PE and sports grant	-	150,730	150,730	150,480
Teachers' pay grant	-	2,942	2,942	16,607
Teachers' pension grant	-	48,684	48,684	46,927
Other DfE grants	-	2,497,067	2,497,067	1,299,384
	<u>-</u>	<u>41,330,575</u>	<u>41,330,575</u>	<u>38,056,138</u>
Other government grants				
Local authority grants	-	7,779,166	7,779,166	7,199,950
COVID-19 additional funding (DfE/ESFA)				
Summer schools programme fund	-	-	-	65,761
COVID-19 additional funding (non-DfE/ESFA)				
Other Coronavirus funding	-	-	-	79,769
Other income from the Academy Trust's educational operations				
Trip income	523,578	-	523,578	251,173
Catering income	543,640	-	543,640	441,212
Other income	557,490	131,478	688,968	772,137
	<u>1,624,708</u>	<u>131,478</u>	<u>1,756,186</u>	<u>1,464,522</u>
	<u>1,624,708</u>	<u>49,241,219</u>	<u>50,865,927</u>	<u>46,866,140</u>
<i>Total 2022</i>	<u>1,304,608</u>	<u>45,561,532</u>	<u>46,866,140</u>	

Ambitions Academies Trust

Notes to the Financial Statements for the Year Ended 31 August 2023

4 Other trading activities

	Unrestricted funds £	Restricted funds £	2022/23 Total £	2021/22 Total £
Hire of facilities	182,895	-	182,895	220,842
<i>Total 2022</i>	<i>220,842</i>	<i>-</i>	<i>220,842</i>	

5 Investment income

	Unrestricted funds £	Restricted funds £	2022/23 Total £	2021/22 Total £
Short term deposits	1,111	-	1,111	1,251
<i>Total 2022</i>	<i>1,251</i>	<i>-</i>	<i>1,251</i>	

6 Expenditure

	Staff costs £	Non Pay Expenditure		Total 2022/23 £	Total 2021/22 £
		Premises £	Other £		
Academy's educational operations:					
Direct costs	33,024,373	-	5,843,863	38,868,236	36,658,123
Allocated support costs	7,556,156	3,640,665	5,046,183	16,243,004	17,110,064
	<u>40,580,529</u>	<u>3,640,665</u>	<u>10,890,046</u>	<u>55,111,240</u>	<u>53,768,187</u>
<i>Total 2022</i>	<i>40,483,476</i>	<i>3,171,117</i>	<i>10,113,594</i>	<i>53,768,187</i>	

Net income/(expenditure) for the period includes:

	2022/23 £	2021/22 £
Operating lease rentals	188,962	149,142
Amortisation	606	992
Depreciation	2,801,588	3,002,763
Fees payable to auditor for:		
Audit	30,580	32,205
Other services	9,375	15,420

Ambitions Academies Trust

Notes to the Financial Statements for the Year Ended 31 August 2023

7 Charitable activities

	2022/23	2021/22
	Total	Total
	£	£
Direct costs – educational operations	38,868,236	36,658,123
Support costs – educational operations	16,243,004	17,110,064
	<u>55,111,240</u>	<u>53,768,187</u>

Analysis of support costs:

	Educational operations	2022/23	2021/22
	£	Total	Total
	£	£	£
Support staff costs	7,556,156	7,556,156	9,819,299
Amortisation	606	606	992
Depreciation	644,365	644,365	690,635
Technology costs	453,479	453,479	463,802
Premises costs	3,640,665	3,640,665	3,171,117
Legal costs - other	51,502	51,502	32,078
Other support costs	3,850,757	3,850,757	2,899,749
Governance costs	45,474	45,474	32,392
Total support costs	<u>16,243,004</u>	<u>16,243,004</u>	<u>17,110,064</u>
<i>Total 2022</i>		<u>17,110,064</u>	<u>17,110,064</u>

Premises costs includes £761,859 (2022: £36,469) in respect of expenditure on capital projects, which were funded by capital grants from the ESFA.

Ambitions Academies Trust

Notes to the Financial Statements for the Year Ended 31 August 2023

8 Staff

a) Staff costs

Staff costs during the period were:

	2022/23	2021/22
	£	£
Wages and salaries	29,192,299	26,598,438
Social security costs	2,833,545	2,620,401
Pension costs	6,831,942	9,517,027
	<u>38,857,786</u>	<u>38,735,866</u>
Agency staff costs	1,619,120	1,613,199
Staff restructuring costs	103,623	134,411
	<u>40,580,529</u>	<u>40,483,476</u>

Staff restructuring costs comprise:

Redundancy payments	2,926	12,851
Severance payments	39,231	49,518
Other restructuring costs	61,466	72,042
	<u>103,623</u>	<u>134,411</u>

b) Severance payments

The Academy Trust paid three severance payments in the year, disclosed in the following bands:

	No.
£0 - £25,000	2
£25,001 - £50,000	<u>1</u>

c) Special staff severance payments

Included in staff restructuring costs are special staff severance payments totalling £39,231 (2022: £49,518). Individually, the payments were: £30,000, £6,934, and £2,297.

d) Staff numbers

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

	2022/23	2021/22
	No.	No.
Teachers	412	403
Administration and support	594	572
Management	23	23
	<u>1,029</u>	<u>998</u>

Ambitions Academies Trust

Notes to the Financial Statements for the Year Ended 31 August 2023

e) Higher paid staff

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

	2022/23	2021/22
	No.	No.
£60,001 - £70,000	16	15
£70,001 - £80,000	9	9
£80,001 - £90,000	8	7
£90,001 - £100,000	1	1
£110,001 - £120,000	4	4
£160,001 - £170,000	-	1
£170,001 - £180,000	1	-

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 employee benefits (including employer pension contributions and employer national insurance contributions) received by key management personnel for their services to the Academy Trust was £1,170,284 (2022: £1,129,737).

9 Related Party Transactions – Trustees' remuneration and expenses

During the period ended 31 August 2023, no Trustees received any remuneration or other benefits (2022: none).

During the period ended 31 August 2023, no Trustees received any reimbursement of expenses (2022: none).

10 Trustees' and officers' insurance

The Academy Trust 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 £10m. It is not possible to quantify the Trustees and officers indemnity element from the overall cost of the RPA scheme.

Ambitions Academies Trust

Notes to the Financial Statements for the Year Ended 31 August 2023

11 Central Services

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

- Human resources
- Financial services
- Legal services
- Educational support services
- IT

The Trust charges for core services as an equal share across all Academies. Tregonwell Academy and Longspee Academy, being larger, have the equivalent of two Academies. The actual amounts charged during the year were as follows:

	2022/23	2021/22
	£	£
All Saints' Church of England Academy	170,448	159,300
Bayside Academy	170,448	159,300
Elm Academy	170,448	159,300
King's Park Academy	170,448	159,300
Kinson Academy	170,448	159,300
LeAF Studio	170,448	159,300
Longspee Academy	340,896	318,600
Manorside Academy	170,448	159,300
Oak Academy	170,448	159,300
Queen's Park Academy	170,448	159,300
St Aldhelm's Academy	170,448	159,300
Tregonwell Academy	340,896	318,600
Wey Valley Academy	170,448	159,300
	<u>2,556,720</u>	<u>2,389,500</u>

Ambitions Academies Trust

Notes to the Financial Statements for the Year Ended 31 August 2023

12 Intangible fixed assets

	Computer software £	Total £
Cost		
At 1 September 2022	50,495	50,495
At 31 August 2023	<u>50,495</u>	<u>50,495</u>
Amortisation		
At 1 September 2022	49,889	49,889
Charged in year	606	606
At 31 August 2023	<u>50,495</u>	<u>50,495</u>
Net book values		
At 31 August 2022	606	606
At 31 August 2023	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>

13 Tangible fixed assets

	Freehold Land and Buildings £	Leasehold Land and Buildings £	Furniture and Equipment £	Computer Equipment £	Motor Vehicles £	Total £
Cost						
At 1 September 2022	20,833,938	80,245,115	2,206,705	2,932,174	364,086	106,582,018
Acquisitions	49,793	885,241	310,299	224,390	-	1,469,723
At 31 August 2023	<u>20,883,731</u>	<u>81,130,356</u>	<u>2,517,004</u>	<u>3,156,564</u>	<u>364,086</u>	<u>108,051,741</u>
Depreciation						
At 1 September 2022	1,904,203	8,580,721	1,467,208	2,134,986	205,476	14,292,594
Charged in year	403,712	1,670,008	209,890	465,670	52,308	2,801,588
At 31 August 2023	<u>2,307,915</u>	<u>10,250,729</u>	<u>1,677,098</u>	<u>2,600,656</u>	<u>257,784</u>	<u>17,094,182</u>
Net book values						
At 31 August 2022	18,929,735	71,664,394	739,497	797,188	158,610	92,289,424
At 31 August 2023	<u>18,575,816</u>	<u>70,879,627</u>	<u>839,906</u>	<u>555,908</u>	<u>106,302</u>	<u>90,957,559</u>

Ambitions Academies Trust

Notes to the Financial Statements for the Year Ended 31 August 2023

14 Investments

The academy is the sole member of Ambers Group Limited, registered in England & Wales (no. 10861330). Ambers Group Limited ceased trading during the year ended 31 August 2023, and its directors intend that the company will be dissolved.

15 Debtors

	2022/23	2021/22
	£	£
Amounts falling due within one year:		
Trade debtors	40,677	36,282
Amounts owed by group undertakings	-	222
VAT recoverable	579,437	574,838
Prepayments and accrued income	1,351,017	1,495,046
	<u>1,971,131</u>	<u>2,106,388</u>
Amounts falling due after more than one year:		
Prepayments and accrued income	275,000	-
	<u>2,246,131</u>	<u>2,106,388</u>
Aggregate amounts		

16 Creditors: amounts falling due within one year

	2022/23	2021/22
	£	£
Trade creditors	1,250,260	870,121
Other taxation and social security	638,741	595,922
Loans falling due within one year	1,470	1,470
Other creditors falling due within one year	924,643	855,460
Accruals and deferred income	1,309,001	2,002,068
	<u>4,124,115</u>	<u>4,325,041</u>
	2022/23	2021/22
	£	£
Deferred income at 1 September 2022	500,911	496,101
Released from previous years	(500,911)	(496,101)
Resources deferred in the year	280,207	500,911
Deferred income at 31 August 2023	<u>280,207</u>	<u>500,911</u>

Deferred income arises from grants paid in advance, covering the first seven months of the forthcoming financial year. These include UIFSM, Rates Relief, and other grants.

Loans falling due within one year relate to an interest-free Salix loan, repayable in instalments.

Ambitions Academies Trust

Notes to the Financial Statements for the Year Ended 31 August 2023

17 Creditors: amounts falling due in greater than one year

	2022/23	2021/22
	£	£
Loans falling due in greater than one year	3,676	5,147
Accruals and deferred income falling due in greater than one year	275,000	-
	<u>278,676</u>	<u>5,147</u>

Loans falling due in greater than one year relate to an interest-free Salix loan, repayable in instalments.

18 Funds

	Balance at 1 September					Balance at 31 August
	2022	Income	Expenditure	Transfers	Gains and losses	2023
	£	£	£	£	£	£
Restricted general funds						
General Annual Grant (GAG)	6,753,784	35,708,181	(36,470,328)	(206,649)	-	5,784,988
Pupil premium	-	2,606,104	(2,606,104)	-	-	-
UIFSM	-	153,399	(153,399)	-	-	-
Rates reclaim	-	163,468	(163,468)	-	-	-
PE and sports grant	-	150,730	(150,730)	-	-	-
Teachers' pay grant	-	2,942	(2,942)	-	-	-
Teachers' pension grant	-	48,684	(48,684)	-	-	-
Other DfE grants	483,529	2,497,067	(2,980,596)	-	-	-
Local authority grants	-	7,779,166	(7,779,166)	-	-	-
Sponsored academy deficit	(3,049,419)	-	-	141,115	-	(2,908,304)
Other educational activities	-	378,478	(378,478)	-	-	-
	<u>4,187,894</u>	<u>49,488,219</u>	<u>(50,733,895)</u>	<u>(65,534)</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>2,876,684</u>
Pension reserve	(10,453,000)	-	(759,000)	-	4,578,000	(6,634,000)
	<u>(6,265,106)</u>	<u>49,488,219</u>	<u>(51,492,895)</u>	<u>(65,534)</u>	<u>4,578,000</u>	<u>(3,757,316)</u>
Restricted fixed asset funds						
Fixed asset fund	92,290,030	-	(2,802,194)	1,469,723	-	90,957,559
ESFA capital grants (DFC)	4,551	450,521	-	(397,461)	-	57,611
ESFA capital grants (SCA)	1,084,172	1,404,188	(761,859)	(806,593)	-	919,908
Other capital grants	-	200,135	-	(200,135)	-	-
	<u>93,378,753</u>	<u>2,054,844</u>	<u>(3,564,053)</u>	<u>65,534</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>91,935,078</u>
Total restricted funds	<u>87,113,647</u>	<u>51,543,063</u>	<u>(55,056,948)</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>4,578,000</u>	<u>88,177,762</u>
Total unrestricted funds	<u>3,822,697</u>	<u>1,848,157</u>	<u>(54,292)</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>5,616,562</u>
Total funds	<u>90,936,344</u>	<u>53,391,220</u>	<u>(55,111,240)</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>4,578,000</u>	<u>93,794,324</u>

Ambitions Academies Trust

Notes to the Financial Statements for the Year Ended 31 August 2023

18 Funds (continued)

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

General annual grant

This includes all funding received from the ESFA to carry out the objectives of the academy. It includes the school budget share; minimum funding guarantee; education services grant; insurance; rates; and pre-16 high needs funding streams.

Other DfE/ESFA grants

This is funding received from the ESFA for specific purposes.

Local authority grants

This is funding received from the local authority for specific purposes, for example Special Educational Needs funding.

Other educational activities

This includes all other educational income/expenditure.

Pension reserve

This represents the negative reserve in respect of the liability on the LGPS pension scheme which was transferred to the Academy Trust on conversion.

Fixed asset fund

The fund includes the value of the tangible fixed assets of the academy on conversion, and amounts transferred from GAG or other restricted funds specifically for expenditure on tangible fixed assets, and the annual charges for depreciation of these assets.

DfE/ESFA capital grants, including School Condition Allocation (SCA)

This is funding received from the DfE/ESFA specifically for expenditure on capital improvements.

Transfers between funds

Transfers to the restricted fixed asset fund represent the cost of fixed asset additions which have been funded from restricted or unrestricted general funds.

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

Ambitions Academies Trust

Notes to the Financial Statements for the Year Ended 31 August 2023

18 Funds (continued)

Total funds analysis by academy

Fund balances at 31 August 2023 were allocated as follows:

	2022/23	2021/22
	£	£
All Saints' Church of England Academy	1,436,567	1,411,908
Bayside Academy	505,441	529,484
Elm Academy	3,077,503	2,851,717
King's Park Academy	2,346,072	2,061,595
Kinson Academy	(490,916)	(263,801)
LeAF Studio	(845,953)	(820,574)
Longspee Academy	2,082,419	1,769,114
Manorside Academy	253,479	243,073
Oak Academy	(1,678,599)	(1,069,820)
Queen's Park Academy	1,803,500	1,777,480
St Aldhelm's Academy	(2,908,304)	(3,049,419)
Tregonwell Academy	889,400	576,438
Wey Valley Academy	1,072,438	845,246
Central services	950,199	1,148,150
Total before fixed assets and pension reserve	8,493,246	8,010,591
Restricted fixed asset fund	91,935,078	93,378,753
Pension reserve	(6,634,000)	(10,453,000)
Total	93,794,324	90,936,344

The following academies are carrying a net deficit on their portion of the funds as follows:

	£
Kinson Academy	490,916
LeAF Studio	845,953
Oak Academy	1,678,599
St Aldhelm's Academy	2,908,304

The Academy Trust is taking the following action to return the academies to surplus:

Kinson Academy has declining pupil numbers. The academy has reduced to a single form of entry to manage class size and economies of scale. In the BCP area there is an overall reduction in primary aged pupils forecasted currently and for the following four to five years. The school has also had additional curriculum areas to enhance the curriculum offer. We have a successful nursery provider operating on the site that works closely with the school. It is envisaged this will increase the uptake of reception places within the school. The staffing structure has continues to be reviewed to ensure any saving are being maximised.

Ambitions Academies Trust

Notes to the Financial Statements for the Year Ended 31 August 2023

18 Funds (continued)

LeAf Studio had a £1m brought forward deficit from the predecessor trust. In 2021-22 it had a deficit of £25k. Since it has been part of AAT the historical deficit has reduced to £820k. LeAF has a settled staff structure with many staff at the top of their grade points. It is a small studio school with a PAN of 500 therefore it is difficult to grow the site. LeAF will be a break-even site when looked at over several years.

Oak Academy has built up a deficit due to historically declining pupil numbers. Oak has had an in-year deficit of £601k in 2022-23. Oak also carries a number of TUPE staff that are on pay grades greater than and not aligned to the AAT pay grades. Looking forward, Oak is now increasing its pupil numbers year on year 2021-22 (48) and 2022-23 (100) these increase will enable the academy to reach a much better economies of scale. Oak will struggle to set balanced budgets while it is going through this NOR increases due to the lagged nature of funding. Oak has been selected to be a part of the DfE's new build project - the positive impact of brand-new school buildings on the site due for completion in August 2025 will help raise the profile of Oak Academy. In conjunction with these works we are currently undertaking a promotional and publicity campaign.

St Aldhelm's Academy has produced a surplus for the fourth consecutive year. The surplus for 2022-23 is £141k and the remaining deficit is £2.9m. St Aldhelms has set a surplus budget for 2023-24 of £124k. The historic deficit is linked to the £1.25m fraud incident that resulted in a loan from the ESFA prior to AAT taking the academy on.

Ambitions Academies Trust

Notes to the Financial Statements for the Year Ended 31 August 2023

18 Funds (continued)

Total cost analysis by academy

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

	Teaching and Educational Support Staff Costs £	Other Support Staff Costs £	Educational Supplies £	Other Costs (excl. dep- reciation) £	2022/23 Total £	2021/22 Total £
All Saints' C of E Academy	4,072,961	782,857	564,882	1,243,595	6,664,295	5,800,649
Bayside Academy	1,171,502	304,062	93,083	348,204	1,916,851	2,054,297
Elm Academy	1,943,359	340,556	126,990	413,745	2,824,650	2,780,602
King's Park Academy	2,380,532	412,850	172,349	479,329	3,445,060	3,638,977
Kinson Academy	940,402	272,248	69,187	275,187	1,557,024	1,796,973
LeAF Studio	1,623,964	387,446	747,796	386,268	3,145,474	3,076,015
Longspee Academy	2,741,019	873,238	139,822	491,979	4,246,058	4,154,384
Manorside Academy	1,727,559	373,718	202,341	368,147	2,671,765	2,717,852
Oak Academy	2,995,896	523,805	229,389	1,061,821	4,810,911	4,677,455
Queen's Park Academy	1,729,133	360,148	162,389	294,937	2,546,607	2,515,907
St Aldhelm's Academy	4,456,820	785,202	387,924	1,060,674	6,690,620	6,065,407
Tregonwell Academy	2,922,617	1,114,411	316,295	608,734	4,962,057	5,056,221
Wey Valley Academy	4,318,609	1,025,615	474,193	1,009,257	6,827,674	6,429,693
	<u>33,024,373</u>	<u>7,556,156</u>	<u>3,686,640</u>	<u>8,041,877</u>	<u>52,309,046</u>	<u>50,764,432</u>

Ambitions Academies Trust

Notes to the Financial Statements for the Year Ended 31 August 2023

18 Funds (continued)

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

	Balance at 1 September 2021 £	Income £	Expenditure £	Transfers £	Gains and losses £	Balance at 31 August 2022 £
Restricted general funds						
General Annual Grant (GAG)	7,975,167	33,793,713	(34,732,955)	(282,141)	-	6,753,784
Pupil premium	-	2,427,995	(2,427,995)	-	-	-
UIFSM	-	158,957	(158,957)	-	-	-
Rates reclaim	-	162,075	(162,075)	-	-	-
PE and sports grant	-	150,480	(150,480)	-	-	-
Teachers' pay grant	-	16,607	(16,607)	-	-	-
Teachers' pension grant	-	46,927	(46,927)	-	-	-
Other DfE grants	-	1,299,384	(815,855)	-	-	483,529
Local authority grants	-	7,199,950	(7,199,950)	-	-	-
Catch-up premium	251,048	-	(251,048)	-	-	-
Summer schools programme	-	65,761	(65,761)	-	-	-
Other Coronavirus funding	-	79,769	(79,769)	-	-	-
Sponsored academy deficit	(3,121,809)	-	-	72,390	-	(3,049,419)
Other educational activities	-	159,914	(159,914)	-	-	-
	5,104,406	45,561,532	(46,268,293)	(209,751)	-	4,187,894
Pension reserve	(39,689,000)	-	(4,420,000)	-	33,656,000	(10,453,000)
	<u>(34,584,594)</u>	<u>45,561,532</u>	<u>(50,688,293)</u>	<u>(209,751)</u>	<u>33,656,000</u>	<u>(6,265,106)</u>
Restricted fixed asset funds						
Fixed asset fund	92,722,681	-	(3,003,755)	2,571,104	-	92,290,030
ESFA capital grants (DFC)	17,956	146,751	-	(160,156)	-	4,551
ESFA capital grants (SCA)	1,510,957	1,341,998	(36,469)	(1,732,314)	-	1,084,172
Other capital grants	16,290	283,918	-	(300,208)	-	-
Donated fixed assets	-	168,675	-	(168,675)	-	-
	<u>94,267,884</u>	<u>1,941,342</u>	<u>(3,040,224)</u>	<u>209,751</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>93,378,753</u>
Total restricted funds	<u>59,683,290</u>	<u>47,502,874</u>	<u>(53,728,517)</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>33,656,000</u>	<u>87,113,647</u>
Total unrestricted funds	<u>2,263,511</u>	<u>1,598,856</u>	<u>(39,670)</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>3,822,697</u>
Total funds	<u>61,946,801</u>	<u>49,101,730</u>	<u>(53,768,187)</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>33,656,000</u>	<u>90,936,344</u>

Ambitions Academies Trust

Notes to the Financial Statements for the Year Ended 31 August 2023

19 Analysis of net assets between funds

	Un- restricted funds	Restricted general funds	Restricted pension funds	Restricted fixed asset funds	Total funds
	£	£	£	£	£
Tangible fixed assets	-	-	-	90,957,559	90,957,559
Current assets	5,616,562	7,279,475	-	977,519	13,873,556
Current liabilities	-	(4,124,115)	-	-	(4,124,115)
Non-current liabilities	-	(278,676)	-	-	(278,676)
Pension scheme liability	-	-	(6,634,000)	-	(6,634,000)
Total net assets	5,616,562	2,876,684	(6,634,000)	91,935,078	93,794,324

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

	Un- restricted funds	Restricted general funds	Restricted pension funds	Restricted fixed asset funds	Total funds
	£	£	£	£	£
Intangible fixed assets	-	-	-	606	606
Tangible fixed assets	-	-	-	92,289,424	92,289,424
Current assets	3,822,697	8,518,082	-	1,088,723	13,429,502
Current liabilities	-	(4,325,041)	-	-	(4,325,041)
Non-current liabilities	-	(5,147)	-	-	(5,147)
Pension scheme liability	-	-	(10,453,000)	-	(10,453,000)
Total net assets	3,822,697	4,187,894	(10,453,000)	93,378,753	90,936,344

20 Capital commitments

	2022/23	2021/22
	£	£
Contracted for, but not provided in the financial statements	872,719	342,193

Ambitions Academies Trust

Notes to the Financial Statements for the Year Ended 31 August 2023

21 Long-term commitments, including operating leases

Operating leases

At 31 August 2023 the total of the Academy Trust's future minimum lease payments under non-cancellable operating leases was:

	2022/23	2021/22
	£	£
Amounts due within one year	195,271	164,147
Amounts due between one and five years	135,268	248,568
Amounts due after five years	9,375	15,625
	<u>339,914</u>	<u>428,340</u>

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

	2022/23	2021/22
	£	£
Net expenditure for the reporting period	(1,720,020)	(4,666,457)
Adjusted for:		
Amortisation	606	992
Depreciation	2,801,588	3,002,763
Capital grants from DfE and other capital income	(2,054,844)	(1,941,342)
Interest receivable	(1,111)	(1,251)
Defined benefit pension scheme cost less contributions payable	350,000	3,763,000
Defined benefit pension scheme finance cost	409,000	657,000
Increase in debtors	(139,743)	(3,041)
Increase in creditors	46,463	906,889
Net cash (used in) / provided by Operating Activities	<u>(308,061)</u>	<u>1,718,553</u>

23 Cash flows from financing activities

	2022/23	2021/22
	£	£
Repayments of borrowing	(1,471)	(1,470)
Net cash used in financing activities	<u>(1,471)</u>	<u>(1,470)</u>

Ambitions Academies Trust

Notes to the Financial Statements for the Year Ended 31 August 2023

24 Cash flows from investing activities

	2022/23	2021/22
	£	£
Dividends, interest and rents from investments	1,111	1,251
Purchase of tangible fixed assets	(1,442,112)	(2,402,429)
Capital grants from DfE Group	1,854,709	1,488,749
Capital funding received from sponsors and others	200,135	283,918
Net cash provided by / (used in) investing activities	<u>613,843</u>	<u>(628,511)</u>

25 Analysis of cash and cash equivalents

	2022/23	2021/22
	£	£
Cash at bank and in hand	<u>11,627,425</u>	<u>11,323,114</u>

26 Analysis of changes in net debt

	At 1 September 2022	Cash flows	Acquisition/ disposal of subsidiaries	New finance leases	Other non-cash changes	At 31 August 2023
	£	£	£	£	£	£
Cash	11,323,114	304,311	-	-	-	11,627,425
Loans falling due within one year	(1,470)	-	-	-	-	(1,470)
Loans falling due after more than one year	(5,147)	1,471	-	-	-	(3,676)
Total	<u>11,316,497</u>	<u>305,782</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>11,622,279</u>

27 Member liability

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

Ambitions Academies Trust

Notes to the Financial Statements for the Year Ended 31 August 2023

28 Pension and similar obligations

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

The latest actuarial valuation of the TPS related to the period ended 31 March 2016 and of the LGPS 31 March 2022.

Contributions amounting to £730,738 were payable to the schemes at 31 August 2023 (2022: £660,749) and are included within creditors.

Teachers' Pension Scheme

The Teachers' Pension Scheme (TPS) is a statutory, contributory, defined benefit scheme, governed by the Teachers' Pension Scheme Regulations 2014. Membership is automatic for 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 four years. The aim of the review is to specify the level of future contributions. Actuarial scheme valuations are dependent on assumptions about the value of future costs, design of benefits and many other factors.

The 31 March 2016 TPS actuarial valuation results were implemented from 1 September 2019. The key elements of the valuation and subsequent consultation were:

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

The latest actuarial TPS valuation results, as at 31 March 2020, were released in October 2023. The revised employer contribution rate, arising from this valuation, is due to be implemented from 1 April 2024.

Ambitions Academies Trust

Notes to the Financial Statements for the Year Ended 31 August 2023

28 Pension and similar obligations (continued)

The employer's pension costs paid to TPS in the period amounted to £4,040,767 (2022: £3,748,561).

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

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

Local Government Pension Scheme

The LGPS is a funded defined benefit pension scheme, with the assets held in separate trustee-administered funds. The total contribution made for the year ended 31 August 2023 was as follows:

	2023	2022
	£	£
Employer's contributions	2,452,000	1,974,000
Employees' contributions	647,000	551,000
	<u>3,099,000</u>	<u>2,525,000</u>

The agreed contribution rates for future years are 23.6% for employers and 5.5% to 12.5% for employees.

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

Principal actuarial assumptions

	2023	2022
Rate of increase in salaries	3.9%	3.9%
Rate of increase for pensions in payment/inflation	2.9%	2.9%
Discount rate for scheme liabilities	5.3%	4.3%
Inflation assumption (CPI)	<u>2.9%</u>	<u>2.9%</u>

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

	2023	2022
<i>Retiring today</i>		
Males	21.8	22.1
Females	<u>23.9</u>	<u>24.2</u>
<i>Retiring in 20 years</i>		
Males	23.1	23.4
Females	<u>25.3</u>	<u>25.6</u>

Ambitions Academies Trust

Notes to the Financial Statements for the Year Ended 31 August 2023

28 Pension and similar obligations (continued)

Sensitivity analysis

	Increase/(reduction) in defined benefit obligation	
	2023	2022
	£	£
Discount rate +0.1%	(690,000)	(929,000)
Discount rate -0.1%	712,000	955,000
Mortality assumption – 1 year increase	912,000	1,090,000
Mortality assumption – 1 year decrease	(887,000)	(1,058,000)
CPI rate +0.1%	688,000	896,000
CPI rate -0.1%	(667,000)	(873,000)

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

	2023	2022
	£	£
Equities	17,619,000	14,082,000
Gilts	-	2,869,000
Corporate bonds	1,989,000	1,304,000
Property	2,558,000	2,608,000
Cash and other liquid assets	284,000	522,000
Investment funds	1,989,000	-
Other	3,979,000	4,693,000
Total market value of assets	<u>28,418,000</u>	<u>26,078,000</u>

The actual return on scheme assets was a loss of £168,000 (2022: £1,099,000).

Amount recognised in the Statement of Financial Activities

	2022/23	2021/22
	£	£
Current service cost	2,802,000	5,719,000
Past service cost	-	18,000
Interest income	(1,144,000)	(413,000)
Interest cost	1,553,000	1,070,000
Total amount recognised in the SOFA	<u>3,211,000</u>	<u>6,394,000</u>

Ambitions Academies Trust

Notes to the Financial Statements for the Year Ended 31 August 2023

28 Pension and similar obligations (continued)

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

	2022/23	2021/22
	£	£
At 1 September	36,531,000	64,769,000
Current service cost	2,802,000	5,719,000
Interest cost	1,553,000	1,070,000
Employee contributions	647,000	551,000
Actuarial gain	(5,890,000)	(35,168,000)
Benefits paid	(591,000)	(428,000)
Past service cost	-	18,000
At 31 August	<u>35,052,000</u>	<u>36,531,000</u>

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

	2022/23	2021/22
	£	£
At 1 September	26,078,000	25,080,000
Interest income	1,144,000	413,000
Actuarial loss	(1,312,000)	(1,512,000)
Employer contributions	2,452,000	1,974,000
Employee contributions	647,000	551,000
Benefits paid	(591,000)	(428,000)
At 31 August	<u>28,418,000</u>	<u>26,078,000</u>

29 Related party transactions

No related party transactions took place in the period of account, other than certain Trustees' remuneration and expenses already disclosed in note 9.

30 Agency arrangements

The Academy Trust distributes 16-19 bursary funds to students as an agent for ESFA. In the accounting period ended 31 August 2023 the Academy Trust received £17,133 and disbursed £15,761 from the fund. An amount of £2,160 is included in other creditors relating to undistributed funds that are repayable to ESFA. Comparatives for the accounting period ended 31 August 2022 are £15,766 received, £14,978 disbursed and £788 included in other creditors.