



London South East Academies Trust
(A Company Limited by Guarantee)
Annual Report and Financial Statements
for the Year Ended 31 August 2024

Company Registration Number: 09028122

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Reference and Administrative Details

List of Members & Directors/Trustees, London South East Academies Trust

London South East Academies Trust Members		
Name	Appointed	Resigned
LSEC	07/05/2014	
Stephen Howlett, CBE DL	01/08/2017	31/08/2024
Angela Hands	01/08/2019	
Jacky Tiotto	08/12/2022	
Rama Venchard MBE	01/09/2023	
Louise Nadal	01/09/2024	

London South East Academies Trust Board			
Name	Appointed	Role	Comment
Rama Venchard MBE	01/09/2023	Chair	
Beverley Eaglesfield	21/03/2023	Vice Chair	Appt VC Role
Denise James-Mason	16/07/2019	Vice Chair	Resigned VC Role
Dr Sam Parrett, CBE	n/a	Trustee	
David Bailey	09/12/2020	Trustee	Resigned 30/07/2024
Charles Yates	01/01/2021	Trustee	
Christopher Philpott	11/12/2019	Trustee	
Prof Lynn Revell	12/05/2021	Trustee	
Marek Michalski	08/12/2021	Trustee	
Danny Kwalombota	18/10/2022	Co-opted Trustee	
Sarah Servantes	21/03/2023	Trustee	
Milena Cooper	19/02/2024	Trustee	
Shirley Puxty	07/05/2024	Trustee	
George Ryan	01/09/2024	Trustee	
Suba Dickerson	01/09/2024	Co-opted Trustee	

Company Secretary	
Name	Appointed
Jennifer Pharo	04/04/2019

Key Management Personnel	
Name	Position
Dr Sam Parrett, CBE	Chief Executive Officer
John Hunt	Chief Financial Officer & Deputy CEO Trust
Neil Miller	Deputy CEO - Academies

Reference and Administrative Details (continued)

Company Name:	London South East Academies Trust
Principal and Registered Office	Rookery Lane Bromley, BR2 8HE
Company Registration Number	9028122
Independent Auditor	Buzzacott 130 Wood Street London, EC2V 6DL
Bankers	Barclays Bank Level 27, 1 Churchill Place London E14 5HP
Solicitors	Eversheds Sutherland LLP One Wood Street London, EC2V 7WS Winkworth Sherwood Minerva House 59 London Road 5 Montague Close London, SE1 9BB

Trustees' Report

The Board of Trustees presents their annual report together with the Financial Statements of the charitable company for the year 1 September 2023 to 31 August 2024. The annual report serves the purposes of both a trustees' and a directors' report under company law.

The Academy Trust currently operates 10 open academies including Special Schools, Alternative Provision, and Primary Schools, across South East London, Lambeth and Surrey. In addition, during the year the Trust was successful in bidding for a SEMH Free School in Surrey, and this is now in the pre-opening phase for opening in 2027. Its academies have a combined pupil capacity of 2,193 and had a roll of 2,145 in the school census in May 2024.

The Financial Statements have been prepared in accordance with the accounting policies on pages 44 to 48 of the attached Financial Statements and comply with the Trust's Memorandum and Articles of Association, applicable laws and Accounting and Reporting by Charities: Statement of Recommended Practice applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the United Kingdom and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102) (Charities' SORP FRS 102).

Structure, Governance and Management

Constitution

The Academy Trust is a company limited by guarantee and an exempt charity. The charitable company's memorandum and articles of association are the primary governing documents of the Academy Trust. The Trustees of London South East Academies Trust are also the directors of the charitable company for the purposes of company law.

The Trust works closely with its sponsor, London South East Colleges (LSEC), and in April 2018 the independent boards of each entity agreed to work together to further their strategic aims as London & South East Education Group. Although not a legal entity, the Group had a collective turnover of £97.8m in 2023/24.

The Group is the umbrella organisation to co-ordinate the strategy of the organisations and to optimise and strengthen both governance and collaboration between group entities. This is achieved through schemes of delegation (subject to their non-delegable primary governance responsibilities and authority, their regulatory obligations, and management of potential conflicts of interest). The Group is not a legal entity and organisations as members of the Group are not subsidiary companies which are controlled or owned by the Group.

In January 2023, the College and Trust, as Founding Members, approved the formation of a registered charity, the London South East Region (LASER) Education Foundation. The charity has been constituted with aligned charitable objectives to support the College and Trust through fundraising, philanthropy, sponsorship and research and to further enhance the reputation, reach and engagement of the College and Trust with local communities and key stakeholders.

The Group rationale is borne from a shared mission vision and values and seeks to optimise governance alignment through a Group Strategy and provide efficiencies across the organisations. Built on charitable principles and a co-incidence of interest, the Group ethos is founded upon high-quality teaching and learning, the development of curriculum models fitting each school and cohort and a core and bespoke school improvement strategy which focuses on our shared strength.

Governors and Trustees have been appointed to the Group Board, Independent Legal Boards and the Joint Group Co-ordinating Committees, ensuring that a balanced combination of Governors and Trustees are represented on the each of these, as defined by the relevant Articles of Association and the Group Organisation Scheme of Delegation.

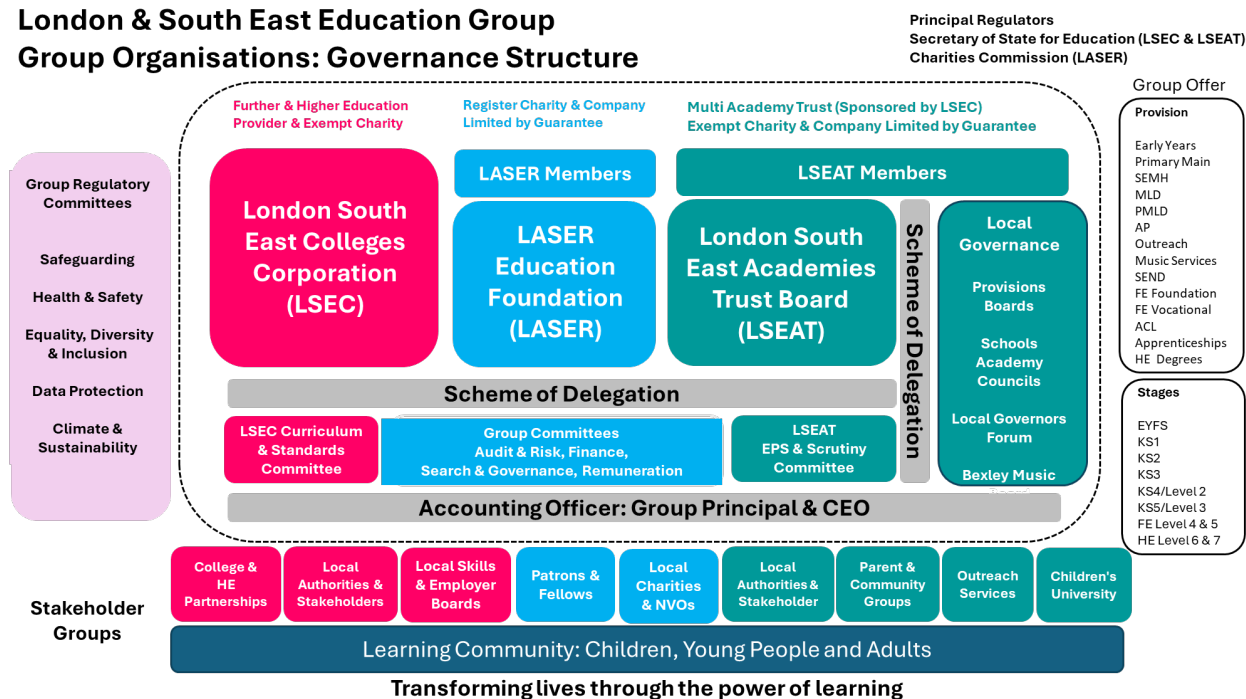
Details of the group governance arrangements in place for the year are shown below:

Trustees Report (continued)

Structure, Governance and Management (continued)

Constitution (continued)

**London & South East Education Group
Group Organisations: Governance Structure**



Details of the Trustees who served on the Trust Board during the year are included in the Reference and Administrative Details on page 1. Business is conducted through full Board meetings, a Group Finance Committee and a Group Audit and Risk Committee and an Education, Performance and Standards Committee. Local Governing Body and Regulatory Committees are also convened, some of which include Trustees. The membership of these Committees must include representation from LSEAT but may also include Group Governors or those from other legal entities within the group where this will improve governance through the provision of greater expertise and challenge. Minutes of meetings are maintained, and a register of interests is published on the Trust's website.

In 2020/21 The Trust set up Provision Based Boards and Academy Councils as local governance committees for each school. The design and development of this model are to ensure that the community and its parents are at the heart of the Trust. The Academy Councils are forums where the Trust can ensure community links remain in place, whilst also engaging with local stakeholders. Each school has one or more representative Local Community Governor from their Academy Council on the appropriate Provision Board.

The Trust Articles of Association permit the establishment of committees and the level of delegation and functions determined. Where the Trust Board does delegate, it remains responsible and accountable for decisions made. The Trust Board retains overall responsibility and a legal duty for the operation of the Academies and the delivery of education, with the level of delegation and autonomy, determined through a detailed Scheme of Delegation.

The role of the Provision Board is intrinsic to providing local governance and scrutiny, enabling and assisting the Board of Trustees in the fulfillment of their duties. The Provision Boards, chaired by a Trustee, play an active part in supporting and challenging the Leadership of the Academies on the quality and standard of education, monitoring risks and progress of pupils.

As an additional level of governance scrutiny, each individual Academy convened an Academy Council. Membership of Academy Councils will comprise Local Community Governors, Parent and Staff Local Community Governors. The Academy Councils will report to the appropriate Provision Board based on the Academy provision type.

Trustees Report (continued)

Structure, Governance and Management (continued)

Constitution (continued)

The Trust Board approves the appointment of Provision Board Chairs and Local Community Governors. The Provision Boards provide focused governance for each Academy, covering up to five Academies within their remit and provide assurance that the Trust Board is connected to its local community and that a local and diverse range of perspectives support decision-making.

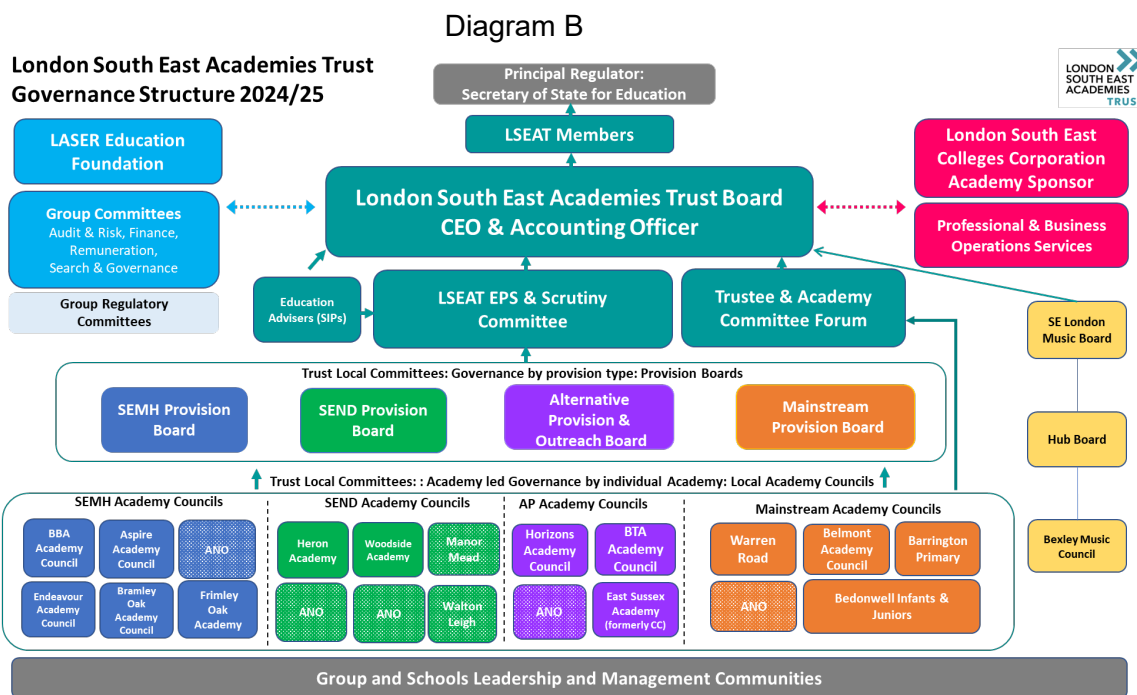
Focused governance includes monitoring and challenging Academy Leaders on educational standards and academic performance, safeguarding, individual Academies character and ethos and reviewing the Academies' Risk Register.

During 2023/24 there were circa 65 local community governors serving across ten academy councils and four provision boards. Attendance on local boards is 80%. In 2024/25 local community governors will rise to around 85 with a recruitment campaign commenced over the summer of 2024 and new schools joining the Trust.

Diagram B, below, provides details of the layers and levels of governance.

The Provision Boards will contribute most effectively to the Trust's vision and values by focusing on the following areas:

1. To provide a strategic view of the ethos and culture of each Academy.
2. To act as a critical friend to Academy Leaders by providing support and advice to the Academies on School Improvement through the monitoring of School Development Plans, the curriculum offer, pupil progress and attainment, and overall pupil experience.
3. To hold the Academy to account for the educational standards it achieves and the quality of the education it provides, as defined by Ofsted.
4. To ensure there are robust safeguarding procedures and associated policies in place to ensure the safety of all pupils.
5. To represent the parents and the local community, staying accessible and connected to the communities they serve.
6. To support, demonstrate and actively promote the Trust's vision and values.



Trustees Report (continued)

Structure, Governance and Management (continued)

Members' Liability

Each member of the charitable company undertakes to contribute to the assets of the charitable company in the event of it being wound up while he/she is a 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 cease to be a member.

Trustees' Indemnities

As disclosed in note 10, professional indemnity insurance is paid on behalf of the directors and officers of the Academy as part of the Department for Education Risk Protection Arrangement.

Method of Recruitment and Appointment or Election of Trustees

Potential new Trustees are identified by the Group Search & Governance Committee and can be recruited through recommendation, self-referral, response to an advertisement, or referral from a recruiting partner. The Trust always seeks to ensure that the skills and experience of new Trustees are complementary to those of existing Board members or respond to identified skills gaps. London South East Academies Trust's members appoint Trustees.

Policies and Procedures Adopted for the Induction and Training of Trustees

The training and induction provided for new Trustees will depend upon their existing experience. Where necessary, the induction process will provide training on charity, educational, legal and financial matters. All new Trustees are welcome to visit the Academy Trust and to meet with staff and students.

All Trustees are provided with copies of procedures, minutes, accounts, budgets, plans and other documents that they will need to undertake their role as Trustees. Induction tends to be done informally and is tailored specifically to the individual Trustees. All Trustees and Local Governors are subject to DBS and other suitability checks on induction and re-election as appropriate.

Organisational Structure

The Key Management Personnel control the Trust at an operational level implementing the policies laid down by the Trustees and reporting back to them. As a group, these personnel are responsible for the authorisation of spending within delegated limits and agreed budgets.

Arrangements for setting pay and remuneration of key management personnel

The Board of Trustees considers the pay of the key management personnel on an annual basis in line with the Department of Education guidance on "Setting Executive Salaries", published in July 2019. In accordance with its Executive Pay Policy, the Trust is committed to pay and remuneration that is transparent, proportionate and justifiable. When setting rates of pay, the Board takes a number of factors into account in order to ensure pay is commensurate with the accountabilities and duties of employment. Other factors which are considered include the financial and academic performance of both the Trust and each member Academy, the performance of the staff involved, and sector recommendations of annual pay awards. The Board also considers external benchmarks and salaries offered by other Academies for similar staff where this information is available.

Trade union facility time

The Trade Union (Facility Time Publication Requirements) Regulations 2017 require the Academy Trust to publish information on facility time arrangements for trade union officials at the Academy Trust. The Academy Trust confirms that there were no employees acting as trade union officials within the meaning of these regulations during the year ended 31 August 2024.

Related Parties and other Connected Charities and Organisations

The Trust has a connection with Bromley College of Further & Higher Education (trading as London South East Colleges) as sponsor of the Academies within the Trust. As explained above, the Trust and its sponsor work closely together in furtherance of their strategic aims. Through the provision of a group central service setup, the sponsor also provides some back-office services to the Trust, but no charge is levied in respect of these services.

Trustees Report (continued)

Structure, Governance and Management (continued)

Related Parties and other Connected Charities and Organisations (continued)

Communication across the Group is through all staff meetings, regular weekly staff bulletins, and communication via the Deputy CEO – Academies and Head Teachers. This is a two-way process, with the Trust news publication being circulated with updates from the Deputy CEO, Headteachers, and the leads of core operational services such as H&S, Estate Safety, Safeguarding and HR, covering different initiatives and updates on their respective schools and wider Trust. Trust Senior Leadership meetings are held termly, and senior leaders have the opportunity to share good practices and receive updates from key LSEAT personnel.

The Trust recognises a range of trade unions, and these are engaged as and when there are issues of negotiation and consultation with staff on a variety of staffing issues. Formal Joint Consultative Group meetings will be held with a Regional Trade Union Representative in the future to encourage their engagement with the development of Trust policies.

The Trust considers all applications for employment from disabled persons, bearing in mind the aptitudes of the individuals concerned and, where disabled candidates disclose their disability to the Trust and meet the minimum selection criteria, an interview will be offered. Where an existing employee becomes disabled every effort is made to ensure that their employment with the Trust continues and the necessary reasonable adjustments are implemented. The Trust's policy is to provide training, career development and opportunities for promotion, which are, as far as possible, identical to those for other employees.

Engagement with suppliers/customers/ others in a business relationship with the Trust

The Trust acknowledges that its supply chain is an essential element to the successful and safe operation of its academies, together with the overall success of the company. The supply chain can impact significantly on the education of our pupils as customers and the importance of these relationships and those within the wider LSEEG group are recognised. The Trust values its supply chain and uses a mix of local SME's for small one-off or regular transactions, through to larger entities with tendered compliant contracts such as cleaning and catering. The Trust always ensures it achieves value for money.

Objects and Aims

In July 2022, the Trust reviewed its mission together with related strategic goals and priorities. This mission, which remains as important and relevant as it was two years ago, says that through being passionate about their potential, we promise to realise the unique talents and abilities of the children and young people entrusted to London South East Academies Trust. Ambitious for every child, we will work tirelessly to ensure that progression and their 'next step' is always within reach. We recognize and respect the diversity and strength that our different schools bring to our community, within the school and beyond.

Our Trust mission is to create a network of outstanding schools that:

- promote excellence.
- celebrate diversity.
- enable personal development and achievement.
- foster social value in the communities they serve.

Alongside the mission, we have also developed a new set of Values and a Trust manifesto which set out our brand values and personality.

Our Values

Being part of London & South East Education Group means being part of a Group that is committed to transforming local communities for the better. Within our Trust, we provide every young learner with the education, skills and opportunities to succeed in life. We do this by:

Trustees Report (continued)

Objectives and Activities

Our Values (continued)

Leading Locally – we take our public responsibility very seriously. We serve communities and respond to their needs, generating social value and making a strong impact. We are more than education. We are leaders in the community.

Being Fearless Pioneers – one step ahead, we look courageously to the future and we stand out with confidence. We take the lead in shaping the local and national agenda and are true pioneers of the sector. We are never afraid to take things on.

Continuously Innovating – through our sector-leading research and evidence-based policies, we promote best practice that drives significant results. Our innovation creates a system for others to follow. We are a beacon of example.

People First – We are inclusive to everyone, yet we take a principled and personalised approach by learning, listening and treating everyone as individuals. All decisions are made with people at the centre.

Acting Responsibly – Acting responsibly is core to everything we do. We are ethical, we have integrity, and we operate responsibly, treating everyone with respect. We don't let people fail. We always do the right thing.

As an organisation we are:

Ambitious – we have high expectations for everyone and aspire to do things better. Being forward thinking is in our DNA. We think big and we aim to make a big impact. Anything is possible.

Proactive – we live on the front foot and relish making positive change. Dynamic, fast-paced and driven by bold new ideas, we lead with energy and are impatient for success. We never rest on our laurels.

Knowledgeable – we are experts in our field with the knowledge and can influence at a local and national level. Smart, intelligent and interesting – we have a proven track record of knowing what to do.

Collaborative – we work together, learn from each other and support one another, while sharing our expertise and experience. We are about partnerships where everyone pulls in the same direction. There is no 'us' and 'them'.

Trustworthy – we act openly, honestly and responsibly in everything we do. We do what we say and believe in accountability. Thousands trust us with their future – being trustworthy is integral to who we are.

Supportive - We care deeply in all that we do and for everyone involved. No matter what background, we provide the strong support that is required to bring the best out in everybody.

Through our Trust values, we have developed the following manifesto:-

- We believe that education changes lives and communities for the better.
- We believe in addressing the effects of poverty and disadvantage, to achieve better outcomes.
- We believe that every child deserves the opportunity to fulfil their potential and create a successful future.
- We believe that the vital education and life skills our schools provide are at the heart of the solution.
- We believe that great teaching helps all children become confident and respectful young people.
- We believe in providing the best, the right, and sometimes the only choice for learners in our communities.

Trustees Report (continued)

Objectives and Activities (continued)

Supportive (continued)

- We believe an inclusive, learner-centred approach empowers young people with the independence to succeed.
- We believe in forging partnerships with schools of all types to boost our collective knowledge and power.
- We believe in building on our proven track record, growing our influence and sharing our expertise with others.
- We believe in continuously learning, raising expectations, leading the way and setting new standards.
- We believe in creating sustainable impact and long-term social value that goes beyond education. We believe we can transform lives through the power of learning.

Objectives, Strategies and Activities

The main objectives of the Trust during the year ended on 31 August 2024 are summarised below:

- To raise the standard of educational achievement of all pupils;
- To provide value for money for the funds expended;
- To comply with all appropriate statutory requirements;
- To conduct the Trust's business in accordance with the highest standards of integrity, probity and openness; and
- To set in motion initiatives to increase the number of Academies within the Trust.

The principal long-term objectives of the Trust are laid out in the Funding Agreement in addition to the points summarised above.

The Trust has adopted a scheme of delegation, which sets out the respective functions of the Trust and its associated local advisory Boards. During 2023/24, The Warren Road Primary School joined the Trust on 1 January 2024, and with this addition, the Trust had a total of ten Academies covering primary, specialist primary and secondary phases across sites in Bromley, Bexley, Lambeth and Surrey, with three further Schools joining the Trust on 1 September 2024. The Academies have provision for mainstream primary pupils, together with pupils who have been excluded from mainstream education or pupils who are at risk of being excluded from such education. In addition, the Trust also provides provision for Social, Emotional and Mental Health (SEMH), and Profound and Multiple Learning Disability (PMLD) students who all have an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP).

The open Academies within the Trust, together with their PAN and pupil numbers are as follows:-

Academy	PAN	Pupil Numbers
Aspire Academy Bexley	64	61
Belmont Academy	446	439
Bramley Oak Academy	61	57
Bromley Beacon Academy	168	159
Bromley Trust Academy	129	130
Endeavour Academy Bexley	80	81
Heron Academy	80	83
Horizons Academy Bexley	117	93
Warren Road Primary School	840	842
Woodside Academy	208	200

Trustees Report (continued)

Objectives, Strategies and Activities (continued)

Warren Road Primary School joined the Trust on 1 January 2024 and served a pupil population of 842 during the year with a PAN of 840.

Public Benefit

In setting objectives and planning activities, the Board of Directors has paid due regard to the published guidance from the Charity Commission on the operation of the Public Benefit requirement under the Charities Act 2011.

Equal Opportunities

The Trustees recognise that equal opportunities are an integral part of good practice within the workplace. The Trust monitors the diversity of its staff and reviews its recruitment arrangements to support equality and diversity objectives.

Strategic Report

Achievements and Performance

SEMH Academies

Aspire Academy Bexley

Aspire Academy had a challenging year in 2023/24 due to staffing capacity. Despite these challenges, the academy continued to develop and thrive due to the very dedicated and experienced staff team, and overall outcomes at the end of the year were positive.

Key successes included:

- The continuation of existing Maths and phonics schemes (RWI/White Rose) and the dedication towards high-quality teaching and learning across the academy.
- Progress continued to be expected or above for the majority of pupils at Aspire. (Reading 91%, Maths 86%, and Writing 78%)
- Aspire continued to provide high-quality education and experiences for all pupils, focusing on academic and SEN needs.
- Personal development is seen as a real strength of Aspire with extra curricular activities being key.
- Main highlights for extra curricular included: many sporting opportunities including a school football team, music opportunities including working with the London Symphony Orchestra and singing at two concerts and a successful 2 night residential trip for 18 pupils.
- 20 pupils successfully completed KS2 SATS in the summer term, with 5 pupils achieving a year 6 expected level in Reading, 2 in Maths and 1 in SPAG.
- Further work was completed on the Forest school outdoor area which enabled more opportunities for outdoor learning.
- Attendance for the year was 90.6% showing pupils enjoy coming to the academy and the academy has high expectations and robust systems in place for attendance.

Bramley Oak Academy

Bramley Oak had an extremely successful year in 2023/24, with the main highlight being their Ofsted inspection in October 2023. The academy received a Good judgement with the inspection highlighting the impact the academy had on its pupils and their families lives.

Other successes of last year include:

- Following a significant delay to the building works due to the contractor going into liquidation, the works recommenced and renovations will be completed early in 2024/25.
- The completed work continues to have a significant positive impact on pupils and staff.
- Attendance continued to be strong, with new pupils attending the academy showing an average of a 35% increase in attendance from their previous setting.
- Teaching and learning strengthened with the completion of ECT for two members of staff.

Strategic Report

Achievements and Performance (continued)

SEMH Academies (continued)

Bramley Oak Academy (continued)

- Staff retention for last year was extremely high, and due to this consistency of staffing and high-quality CPD, the quality of education developed more rapidly.
- There was a steady improvement in relation to student progress outcomes with improved overall outcomes in Writing, Phonics and Maths compared to the previous year.
- 75% of eligible pupils sat some/all of their year 6 SATS assessments.
- 89% of pupils who completed Maths received a scale score, and 100% received a scale score in GPS and reading.

Bromley Beacon Academy (BBA)

Bromley Beacon Academy had a good year with the key highlight being a very successful ungraded inspection in March 2024 with Ofsted stating they felt the academy demonstrated significant evidence that it could be better than good if they received a graded inspection.

The Outcomes for 2023/24 when compared to 2022/23 were not quite as positive, however the year 11 cohort were extremely different with the 2023/24 having significantly more safeguarding contextual issues and also significantly lower in prior attainment.

Other key successes for 2023/24 included:

- The year 11 cohort were in line with prior data as stated by Family Fischer Trust.
- All pupils achieved at least a Level 1 pass in both English and Maths.
- 33% of pupils gained GCSE Grades 4-9 or equivalent in English and 13% in Maths.
- Teaching across the academy was deemed 100% good or better
- The curriculum is now embedded at KS5 with clear sequencing from KS1.
- There is now development for love for reading across the academy with a newly refurbished modern library now in place for all KS2 and KS3 pupils.
- There is a strong ethos of therapeutic support for all our pupils, as well as one-to-one tutoring in core subjects.
- Pupils at BBA historically have poor attendance due to their previous school experience and special needs. However, the academy's attendance data suggests that pupils' attendance improved the longer they stayed at BBA.

Endeavour Academy Bexley

Endeavour Academy had a successful year in 2023/24 which included the School working with the London Borough of Bexley to increase the commissioned number of places from 80 to 96. This is due to the reputation and outcomes of the academy increasing year on year.

Key successes for last year include:

- Continued focus on providing an inclusive curriculum that provides opportunities for success for all. This was demonstrated with improvements in attendance, behaviour and attainment data across the academy.
- Their KS4 summer outcomes were positive, with significant improvements from the previous two years.
- The average number of qualifications gained per pupil was 13
- Pupils achieving 5 1-9 GCSE remained at 100%
- Pupils gaining 5 GCSEs grades 4-9, including English and Maths, remained at 25%, with 33% gaining grade 4+ in English GCSE.
- 100% of Year 11 pupils secured a route into post-16 education, training and employment.
- Analysis of vulnerable group data shows that there is no evidence of any gaps and nothing to suggest that disadvantaged pupils do less well than their counterparts.
- Attendance for last year was in line with the Special School National Average.

Strategic Report (continued)

Achievements and Performance (continued)

Alternative Provision Academies

Bromley Trust Academy (BTA)

BTA had a successful year across all sites with them working very positively with the Local Authority to support the ever increasing issues of suspensions and exclusions.

Key successes for last year include:

- At the primary site, pupils were assessed thoroughly so as to determine the most appropriate onward provision to meet their specific identified needs.
- This resulted in 90% of pupils who left during 2023-24 receiving an Educational Health Care Plan with 63.33.% of pupils moving to an identified specialist provision.
- At Key Stage 4, in total pupils gained 178 qualifications across the Hayes and Blenheim sites.
- 100% of pupils achieved both an English and Maths qualification
- All pupils entered for additional qualifications for 23/24 including Level 2 Barista training, Level 2 CMI, Level 1 Hair and Beauty, Level 2 IFS and Level 2 ICT FS passed at the level they were entered for.
- There were 18 x L2 passes achieved for English and Maths FS, which is an improvement on the 22/23 when comparing cohort sizes.
- 1 x BTAH pupil is leaving with 13 x qualifications at Level 2/equivalent or higher; this includes L2 passes in English and Maths
- 64% of pupils made at least the expected progress from baseline in English, which is an increase in the 22/23 cohort.
- All pupils entered for GCSE Food and Nutrition and BTEC Food and Hygiene achieved a Level 2/Grade 4 or above pass.
- All pupils entered for Gateway qualifications – which include Gateway Science, Electronics and Entrepreneurship – achieved at least a Level 2 Award.

Horizons Academy Bexley (HAB)

Horizons had a challenging year in 2023/24 due to staffing capacity issues and significant changes within the Senior Leadership Team. With the continued support of the Trust, these challenges were addressed and the academy was able to ensure all pupils received the appropriate support and educational development.

Key success for last year included:

- 85% of learners achieved an English and Maths qualification (an increase from 76% in 22/23).
- 82% of PP learners achieved an English and Maths qualification compared to 78% in 22/23.
- 100% of pupils achieve an English qualification and 85% a maths qualification.
- Learners left Horizons with an average of 8 qualifications compared to 6 in 2022/23.
- 100% of the learners studying BTEC Business, Sports Leader, BTEC Home Cooking achieved level 2 (equivalent of GCSE 4+).
- 100% of the learners studying BTEC Health and Social Care and City and Guilds Award in Construction achieved level 1 (the highest qualification available to them in these subjects at this stage in their school career).
- 90% of learners made expected or better progress in maths and 76% in English.
- Attendance remains above the national average for an alternative provision.
- Outreach support engages with 33 schools across Bexley compared with 24 in 22/23
- Horizons achieved a Violence Reduction Unit funding agreement worth £76,500 to extend the Outreach offer to include Sport Mentoring.
- The Outreach support offer reached 595 children across Bexley compared to 137 in 2022/23.

Strategic Report (continued)

Achievements and Performance (continued)

Special Academies

Woodside Academy

Woodside Academy had a successful year in 2023/24 overall. Due to significant changes in the complexity of the cohort, a successful submission to Ofsted was made to enact Para.207. This means that Woodside has now deferred its next Ofsted inspection for three years. This has harnessed leadership capacity to focus on implementing a new curriculum approach for September 2024.

Key successes from 2023/24 include:

- Stable and consistent workforce, dedicated to the success of the children and committed to their own development and growth.
- Extending the KS4 vocational offer into KS5, creating alignment, consistency and further opportunities to accrue qualifications and broaden experience and skills
- A culture where the whole team is enthusiastic and ready for change because they recognise the increased complexity of need and understand the importance of making the most of each child's educational opportunities.
- Leaders are unrelentingly ambitious for their pupils' learning and personal development and for staff to be valued and supported to do the best job possible in demanding circumstances.
- The successful introduction and completion of the Duke of Edinburgh's Award and launch of the Children's University (CU), including our first CU graduation, which was held in Summer 2024.
- A range of primary statutory tests were applied for those children able to access them, including the RBA, KS1 phonics, MPG, KS1 & 2 teacher assessment.
- Attainment at KS4 and 5 was almost 100%, achieving a qualification in the complete range of qualifications, including English, Maths, Science, Digital Skills, Art and Design, Construction and Independent Living.

Heron Academy

Heron Academy had a positive year overall in 2023/24 however the progress made wasn't as significant as it should have been for staffing reasons but these have now been resolved.

Trust leaders supported the academy leaders in key areas including creating a new curriculum that is sequential from KS 3 to 5.

Key successes for 2023/24 include:

- 100% of pupils gained unit awards. These awards were selected in line with pupil interest and ability.
- All pupils in Year 11 automatically transfer into the School Post-16 provision – 0% NEETS.
- Our rich Arts offer enabled pupils to access community Arts projects and in-house arts lessons.
- 100% of Post-16 pupils in years 12-13 completed three units towards their personal progress accreditation in the summer term.
- All pupils in year 14 received placements in further education provisions.
- Ten pupils completed their Bronze Award for the Duke of Edinburgh. This is the first group to complete this award.
- Five Post-16 pupils completed their Arts Mark award. This is also the first group to complete this award.
- We have developed several internal work experience opportunities.
- We have made two new external work experience placements.

Strategic Report (continued)

Achievements and Performance (continued)

Mainstream Primary Academies

Belmont Academy

Belmont Academy had a successful 2023/24 despite capacity issues where the Senior Leadership Team had to all teach a significant amount of the timetable due to staff shortages. Despite the capacity issues, the academy was still able to develop and thrive.

Key successes for 2023/24 include:

- Statutory outcomes remain above national for 2023/24.
- Attainment at the end of KS2 was above the national average in all areas with 84% meeting the expected standard in Reading (74% national); 79% meeting the expected standard in Writing (72% national) and 74% meeting the expected standard in Maths (73% national).
- End of KS2 combined Reading, Writing and Maths was above the national average, with 68% meeting the standard compared to 61% nationally.
- KS1 outcomes for Reading, Writing and Maths remain above the national average (2023 national figures).
- Pupils in Year 1 passing the Phonics Screening Check remain at least in line with the national average.
- EYFS outcomes for year-end placed 70% of pupils at a Good Level of Development (GLD) above national data (67% 2023).
- Attendance continues to remain on an upward trajectory with weekly average attendance data remaining above the national average, with a whole school attendance of 95.3 for the year 2023/24.
- Safeguarding remains effective in the school and this was evidenced in the most recent Ofsted inspection (July 2023).

Warren Road Primary School

Warren Road Primary School continues to provide excellent all-round provision with an exciting and wide-ranging curriculum, including an extensive extra-curricular programme. Subject leaders are passionate and dedicated to continuing to develop and evaluate their subjects so that the highest standards of education are met consistently.

Key successes for 2023/24 include

- Statutory outcomes continue to be above or significantly above the national average.
- Attainment at the end of KS2 was significantly above national in all areas with 95% meeting the expected standard in Reading; 85% meeting the expected standard in Writing and 90% meeting the expected standard in Maths.
- End of KS2 combined Reading, Writing and Maths was significantly above national, with 81.7% meeting the expected standard and 21.7% meeting the greater depth standard.
- KS2 average scaled scores across all subjects were significantly above the national average. Reading 110, Maths 112, SPAG 113.
- KS1 outcomes for Reading, Writing and Maths remain above previous national averages.
- 82.4% of pupils in Year 1 passed the Phonics Screening Check.
- EYFS outcomes for year-end placed 71.8% of pupils at a Good Level of Development.
- This year, the School received the international 'Global Sustainability Award' from Eco-schools in recognition of staff and children's work on sustainability.
- Attendance continues to be a strength, with an average attendance of 96% and PA significantly below national averages at 6.2%.

Summary of all Academies

All academies within the Trust, as clearly demonstrated above, are providing a good educational experience for their pupils where they are able to achieve well. Moreover, the wider impact of the Trust was recognised in June 2024 with a National TES Award for Trust of the year (nine schools or less).

Strategic Report (continued)

Achievements and Performance (continued)

Summary of all Academies (continued)

School leaders and staff have continued to work hard to ensure that disadvantage gaps are being reduced, even though the last year has been challenging with significant student absence in specific schools. Positives to be drawn are the number of qualifications being delivered across our schools, the standards demonstrated by pupils' achievements and the low NEET data, which demonstrates that the pupils are learning, making progress, achieving, and successfully transitioning into the next stages of their education, employment or training.

EDI Grants Programme

During 2019/20, our Group launched a ten-year grants programme to help support equality, diversity and inclusion within our communities and to tackle inequality. This work has built on the ambition to improve social mobility and is in support of the Black Lives Matter movement, following the death of George Floyd. With research also revealing that minority ethnic groups face disproportionate challenges from the Covid-19 pandemic, we want to continue to address and help support this issue in a tangible way. Therefore, our pioneering grants programme has continued to fund projects over the past year in a range of EDI areas, tackling issues that are important to staff and pupils. Some examples of grants funded during the year are explained below:-

EDI Workshop for Headteachers

This project facilitated and built confidence and additional knowledge, for our Headteachers, in leading and embedding EDI in the Schools.

Facilitating Religious Education within the Schools

The aim of the project was to enhance the religious and cultural education experience of the pupils in School, to update the educational resources, and to provide the quality of educational experiences, and build confidence for teachers, in teaching different religions and to share good practice with other schools in our Trust.

Building Confidence in opening up conversations about controversial issues

This project covered CPD sessions for circa 100 staff, to build confidence in teachers, in opening up conversations with the pupils about controversial issues about young people, British values and effectively challenging prejudices and stereotypes in order to create positive changes.

Going Concern

The Trust has funding agreements in place with the ESFA and has been commissioned by its Local Authorities to deliver provision for 2024/25 which is financed through top-up funding. The medium-term financial plan for the Trust has been prepared on a prudent basis with appropriate contingencies and assumptions. Despite the challenges presented by the current economic climate, the plan demonstrates that the Trust will have sufficient working capital to meet liabilities as they fall due.

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

Strategic Report (continued)**Achievements and Performance** (continued)**Promoting the success of the company**

The directors recognise the potential long-term impact of its decisions and give appropriate due regard to this consideration in arriving at decisions.

The Trust has many stakeholders which include but are not limited to staff, pupils, parents and carers, funding agencies, local authorities, and the local community. These stakeholder relationships are very important to the Trust and significant senior staff time is invested in both building and maintaining relationships and partnerships. The Trust recognises the importance of such relationships to its future success and works to ensure that these remain strong.

The Trust and its member academies have a good reputation for high-quality education. The Special Provision Academies within the Trust attract out of borough placements funded by other Local Authorities. In this regard, maintaining a quality brand is essential for the Trust's success in attracting such placements and developing future external relationships.

Financial Review**Principal funding**

Much of the Trust's income is obtained from the Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA) in the form of recurrent grants, the use of which is restricted to the running of the Academy. The grants received from the ESFA during the year ended 31 August 2024 and the associated expenditure is shown as restricted funds in the Statement of Financial Activities.

The Trust also receives top-up funding grants from the relevant Local Authority in respect of the alternative and special provision it provides. The grants received together with the associated expenditure are shown as restricted funds in the Statement of Financial Activities.

Financial report for the year

The total income for the period was £60.6m. In accordance with correct disclosure requirements, the financial information which is presented in the statement of financial activities can obscure an overview of the annual operating performance of the Trust. Accordingly, such a view of the summarised operating performance of the Trust (which is extracted from the statement of financial activities) is re-stated below to exclude the inherited fixed assets:

	£'000
Overall net movements in funds	£18,527
Add: net expenditure attributable to the fixed assets fund	(£640)
Less: other non-recurring income for the year	(£19,145)
Add: LGPS actuarial loss	£380
Add: LGPS service cost adjustment	(£474)
Add: LGPS interest cost adjustment	(£83)
Add: LGPS admin costs	£92
Operating (deficit)/surplus (excluding inherited land and buildings)	(£1,343)

The overall financial performance of the Trust and most Academies for the year was strong, largely due to increased government grant funding. The deficit above reflects the transfers from revenue reserves to capital.

On 31 August 2024, the net book value of fixed assets was £92.2m and movements in tangible fixed assets are shown in note 11 to the Financial Statements. The assets were used exclusively for providing education and the associated support services to the pupils within the Academies.

Strategic Report (continued)

Financial Review (continued)

Reserves Policy

On 31 August 2024, the Trust had total funds of £96.4m. This comprised £92.8m restricted funds and £3.6m unrestricted general fund balances. The pension reserve balance, relating to the accounting for the Local Government defined benefit scheme for non-teaching staff, was in deficit by £0.1m at 31 August 2024 (2023: £0.2m). However, this does not mean that this liability will actually crystallise and the Trust is making appropriate deficit reduction payments. The financial results for the period are shown on page 41.

The Trustees have reviewed the Financial Statements of the Trust. This review encompassed the nature of income and expenditure streams, the need to match them with commitments and the nature of reserves. The level of reserves will be kept under review by the Trustees, and a formal reserves policy was approved at the Trust Board meeting on 9 July 2024.

The policy seeks to accumulate reserves in order to mitigate risk, protect against unforeseen future events, and to build sufficient reserves to maintain the estate and equipment for learners.

In the context of these principles, the Trust policy will be to hold sufficient reserves to:-

- i.) Manage cash flow and liquidity so that variable cash demands can be managed in order to smooth out irregular and cyclical spending and allow for unexpected and unpredictable needs.
- ii.) Fund annual capital investment in order to ensure the estate is safe and fit for purpose, and IT and other equipment is up to date and suitable for learning.
- iii.) Provide additional pupil interventions and support in our Schools to ensure the success of pupils and Schools.
- iv.) Support the growth of the Trust by providing additional central team and School improvement / management capacity in advance of the achievement of growth.
- v.) Manage known risks which are not insurable or where insurance does not provide value for money.

Investment Policy

The Investment Policy relates to the management of the Trust's cash flows, its banking, money market and investment transactions. The effective control of the risks associated with those activities; and the pursuit of optimum performance consistent with those risks. The Trust has a separate Treasury Management policy in place which is consistent with its social, ethical and environmental values.

Principal Risks and Uncertainties

A risk register is maintained at the Trust level which links into its board assurance framework. The risk register is reviewed at each meeting by the Group Audit Committee and Trust Board. The risk register identifies the key risks, the likelihood of those risks occurring, their potential impact on the Trust and the actions being taken to reduce and mitigate the risks. Risks are prioritised using a consistent scoring system with the scores being reviewed regularly during the year.

Outlined below is a description of three principal operational risks and uncertainties relating to the Trust.

Strategic Report (continued)

Principal Risks and Uncertainties (continued)

Estate Health and Safety

The Trust pays close attention to Health and Safety, including the safety of its estate, and this forms a key part of due diligence when new Schools join the Trust. The Trust has systems in place to monitor the safety systems in place across its Schools and is advised by a dedicated, qualified and experienced group H&S team. This is reported through to a H&S Committee together with a subcommittee which includes representatives from each School, and an annual H&S report is produced for the Board of Trustees.

The H&S risk increased during the previous two years following the transfer of new Academies to the Trust with building-related fire safety risks. Plans are in place to address these risks and good progress is being made in this regard. The Trust is working with the London Borough of Lambeth on a longer-term solution to resolve the more fundamental building design issues at Heron Academy and some works are expected to commence during 2024/25 to reduce the risk. In the interim, appropriate mitigations have been put in place to ensure the safety of pupils and staff.

Capacity to Support Growth

The Trust has a clear growth plan with a pipeline of Schools and Academies wishing to join over the next few years, with the potential to grow to in excess of 20 Academies. Growing too fast in the absence of putting in place the right infrastructure, ensuring systems are scalable, and teams have the necessary capacity may detriment the support and services provided to existing Academies and may result in Academies that join not receiving the level of service or support that would expect or require.

In addition, the onboarding process can be very challenging at times and each project needs to be carefully managed, ensuring the right amount of resource is in place to ensure the project reaches a positive conclusion with a good experience for the new School. Therefore, it is important for the Trust to ensure its systems, central teams and project management resources are scaled accordingly.

This risk is monitored closely by the Board of Trustees and senior leaders, and growth plans are reviewed regularly, and adjusted as required to ensure the risk is mitigated with the right resources being in place.

Financial Risk

The Trust has considerable reliance on the commissioning of places from Local Authorities. Places are generally commissioned on a year-by-year basis, which results in uncertainties for future years. In addition, the deficit in the Local Government Pension Scheme, which is described in note 24, is subject to annual FRS102 valuations and is regularly monitored by the Trustees. Despite the strong overall financial performance of the Trust, a number of Schools within the Trust have some significant financial challenges to address, and the current economic climate with high inflation, energy costs, and unfunded pay awards is putting severe pressure on our Schools. In addition, the Schools within the former Ignis Academy Trust transferred to LSEAT on 1 September 2024 require significant financial improvement to improve the annual operating deficits.

This risk is being monitored closely and is mitigated through strong working relationships with commissioning Local Authorities and the Department for Education. In addition, where required, prompt management actions are taken to ensure expenditure correlates to income, with reserves also being utilised to support School operations.

Streamlined energy and carbon reporting

The 2019 UK Government Environmental Reporting Guidelines and the GHG Protocol Corporate Accounting and Reporting Standard (revised edition) were followed. The 2022 UK Government

Strategic Report (continued)

Streamlined energy and carbon reporting (continued)

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 invoice records with some estimations to complete minor data gaps. Mileage records were used to calculate energy use and emissions associated with Trust-owned vehicles (e.g. minibuses) grey fleet. 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 712.62018 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).

Whilst a direct year-on-year comparison is difficult as data is being improved and whilst the trust is in a period of growth onboarding new schools, it can be seen from the data below that despite this, the Trust is having a positive impact in reducing its carbon emissions.

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

Energy type	2023/24	2022/23	2021/22
Mandatory requirements:			
Gas	2,678,047	2,313,062	2,206,312
Purchased electricity from the grid	1,531,710	2,132,671	1,520,303
Transport fuel	40,589	73,506	733,192
Total energy (mandatory)	4,250,347	4,519,239	4,459,807

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

Emission source	2023/24	2022/23	2021/22
Mandatory requirements:			
<u>Scope 1</u>			
Natural gas	489.8	423.1	402.7
Company-owned vehicles (minibuses)	6.0	8.2	6.3
<u>Scope 2</u>			
Purchased electricity (location-based)	317.1	441.6	294.0
<u>Scope 3</u>			
Category 6: Business travel (grey fleet)	4.2	9.8	9.6
Total gross emissions (mandatory)	817.1	882.7	712.6
<u>Intensity ratios (mandatory emissions only)</u>			
Tonnes of CO ₂ e per pupil	0.389	0.603	0.702
Tonnes of CO ₂ e per pupil and staff member	0.312	0.426	0.480
Tonnes of CO ₂ e per square meter floor area	0.037	0.043	0.040

Strategic Report (continued)

Streamlined energy and carbon reporting (continued)

Intensity measurement

Three intensity ratios are reported showing emissions (tCO₂e) per pupil, per pupil & staff member combined 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 census of the respective year. Emissions per pupil & staff member combined are voluntarily calculated to acknowledge the different staff to pupil ratio compared to typical schools of similar floor area size. Emissions per square meter floor area are also voluntarily calculated to reflect the energy efficiency of the buildings, which are the source of the majority of emissions. The reduction in the intensity measurements reflects the measures taken to improve energy efficiency explained below.

Measures taken to improve energy efficiency

Maintenance efficiency improvements have been made this year as components reach their life expiry and are replaced with more efficient components. This has included boiler replacements and their associated controls to more efficient and upgraded models and components, with the first full year of benefit being 2023/24. At Endeavour Academy, we have replaced all lighting with new LED fittings, which are 60-80% more efficient over Summer 2023, with the full benefit being realised in 2023/24; we have replaced three major roofs, which include increased (by 35% to current Building Regulations) insulation performance.

Looking forward, capital investment and major change are expected to further enhance our dependency on fossil fuels (gas). These include:

- (i) Refurbishing much Bramley Oak including replacing thermally inefficient windows, roof surfaces and increasing insulation.
- (ii) Investment in LED light fittings
- (iii) Investment in solar panels to increase green generation and reduce reliance on purchased electricity
- (iv) Further investment in replacing boilers and associated controls.

Fundraising

There were no fundraising activities during the year.

Plans for Future Periods

The Trust has continued to embed its 'One Trust Strategy' across all academies and Bexley Music Service to deliver school improvement, as well as improved, efficient and further reaching central services, with greater collaboration and teamwork.

Professional Development of our staff at all levels is key to school improvement and driving this crucial area across the whole Trust. External Trust-wide CPD has focused on NPQs, Masters, PHDs and Level 7 Apprenticeships. We have also expanded our dedicated internal Trust-wide CPD model and resources including:

- Expanding our team of Olevi facilitators with Warren Road Primary School joining us.
- Creating a Trust UQT programme to develop and support all UQTs onto specific pathways.
- Supporting all ECTs with a Trust Leader designated for this role to support them over their two year training cycle.
- Sharing of best practice in safeguarding by our Group Director for Safeguarding with school DSLs and DDSLs.
- Our School Improvement Team has expanded with more Trust Directors and expert external advisors.
- Staff have been seconded between roles across the Trust as part of their professional development and system leadership support, leading to progression and promotions in many cases.
- Trust SEND training for SENCOs

Strategic Report (continued)

Plans for Future Periods (continued)

- Trust Improvement Professionals training for senior leaders to provide peer support across our Trust
- Reading and phonics specialist training for reading and phonics leads
Working groups created for Attendance, Wellbeing and Sustainability to support Trust and national priorities.

The Trust continues to strive and improve the levels of attainment and progress of all its pupils at all levels and continues in its efforts to ensure its pupils enter into sustained employment or a place in mainstream or further education or training once they leave.

In 2023/24 our Trust schools had 2 Ofsted inspections with both of them being rated Good or better. We continue to support all our academies to ensure all of them offer quality first educational experiences for all our children and young people.

The Trust has continued to work with many different Local Authorities in London and the South East of England to provide commissioned places for those children requiring specialist provision. Due to these positive relationships, the vast majority of our special schools have been requested to expand their commissioned numbers to support the LAs with their increasing requirements for specialist places.

The Trust has ambitious growth plans to grow to at least 20 schools and has a pipeline of Schools interested in joining, including those taking advantage of our new Associate Membership Programme. Moreover, the Trust has an excellent working relationship with the Regions Group for both London and the South East, and they are fully supportive of our Growth Plans. The Trust grew by one school last academic year and the plan for 2024-25 has exciting plans to expand by at least five more schools. Many of these schools are rated as Good or better and will bring capacity to the organisation. In order to facilitate this period of growth, the Trust has created new leadership structures to ensure the One Trust Strategy and culture of the organisation continues.

In addition, upon the conversion of Heron Academy, the Trust successfully secured just under £0.5m to address some of the worst building condition issues. Part of this money has been utilised already to support improvements, with the remainder of the monies being spent in summer 2024 to further enhance the learning environment and remedy key health and safety issues.

The Trust has successfully negotiated a new Memorandum of Understanding for Horizons Academy covering a 3-year period. This will help to secure the medium-term plans and aspirations for our Alternative Provision in Bexley. The Bromley AP MoU for Bromley Trust Academy is due to be renegotiated at the end of the academic year 2024/25, and the Trust will continue to work in partnership with the London Borough of Bromley to agree the new document.

Our Outreach Team associated with these two Alternative Provisions is seen as highly effective by the mainstream primary and secondary schools within the two LAs with early intervention and support for children and young people who are at risk of permanent exclusion being provided where necessary. Building on our strong reputation, this team has been commissioned to support in another LA for the academic year 2024/25.

The Trust employs staff on numerous different terms and conditions following the transfer of staff under TUPE as Schools have joined the Trust. The Trust is committed to ensuring staff are remunerated fairly, and that pay is both proportionate and justifiable for all staff in accordance with its approved Pay and Executive Pay policies. In this regard, the Trust has worked hard to move staff onto standardised LSEAT terms and conditions where possible to do so and will continue this when new schools join us over time.

Strategic Report (continued)

Group Strategy

The Trust operates as part of the London & South East Education Group. We undertook a review of progress towards our Group strategic goals in 2022/23 and the last year of our strategy showed that we have now delivered £110m of independently verified social value since 2019, contributing to the social and economic mobility of children and families in the communities we serve, and through this, increased social justice.

In the 2023/24 academic year we consulted with staff, students, stakeholders and employers to develop our new strategy. Our aim is to have an even greater positive impact on our communities. We will achieve this through developing and pioneering evidence-based solutions and research to address the many challenges our learners and communities face from now through to 2030.

The new strategy framework was approved by the Trust in 2024 and this has informed our Trust Operating plan and annual priorities as well as all other supporting strategies.

Group Strategy 2024-2030: Transforming lives through the Power of Learning

Vision: Transforming Lives through the Power of Learning: We believe that education changes communities for the better.

Mission: We provide leadership knowledge and resources to unleash the power of learning as an agent for social change.

Strategic Plan

The strategy is broken down into three separate goals as follows:-

Goal One: People First	We will invest in our people to ensure that every person feels valued, recognised, and rewarded, and has the support they need to achieve their best in an inclusive organisation which fosters diversity.
Goal Two: Performance and Practice	We will embed a culture of research and innovation which fosters improved outcomes for all learners, supports organisational resilience and pioneers positive change in education system-wide.
Goal Three: Prosperity and Place	We will maximise our assets, resource and expertise to effect positive change locally, driving towards net zero, developing social capital, enabling sustainable and inclusive growth in the communities we serve.

Social Value

This is the fifth academic year that the Group has worked with the Social Value Portal (SVP) to measure the social value generated. We worked with the Social Value Portal to finalise the measure of social value generated in 2022/23, and work is underway to calculate the figure for 2023/24. As a Group, we generated £38,978,955, of which the Social Value raised by the Trust was £16,807k and from £13m in 2021/22. Through this approach over the life of the first Group Strategy, we have now delivered £110m of independently verified social value since 2019.

The largest social value contribution for the Trust continues to be local employment, which accounted for circa £16,639k. With local spend and apprenticeships each contributing £36,084k and £39,279k of social value respectively. At the time of writing, data collection and analysis for the 2023/24 report is still in the process of being finalised and externally reviewed. From an initial internal review, activities to generate social value are broadly in line with previous years. The Group is working with SVP to review how we measure social value, as we reach a more 'mature' stage of the process, and the TOMs framework is updated by SVP. This includes considering key definitions (e.g. 'local'), the measures available as part of the framework and the impact any changes have on social value estimates.

Trustees Report (continued)

Group Strategy (continued)

Development of the LASER Education Foundation

The Trust has contributed to the establishment of a new charity by becoming a Corporate Member alongside the London South East Colleges to add value to and enhance the educational experience of children and young people in our schools, colleges, and the communities we serve.

The charity will enable young people most in need to access education and a wide range of innovative holistic support programmes. These programmes include mentoring, specialist SEND support and facilities, access to specialist youth mental health services and wellbeing programmes. The charity will support the often difficult, transitional moments in a young person's life.

Work commenced in the past year on developing the charity identity, funding proposition, website and corporate communications. In July 2024 the charity gained Charity Commission status. This was a key enabler for fundraising eligibility, and fundraising activity will commence as soon as the charity bank account is operational. The College is providing start-up support to mobilise the new charity through staffing support and seed funding for core operational costs.

External Funding

Foyle Foundation

Building on the £10,000 awarded to Aspire Academy in July 2022, at the end of September, the Foyle Library Scheme generously awarded Bramley Oak £10,000 to support the development of their new library, a key element of the school's improvement plan. This funding, which covers up to half of the total cost, will be used to purchase new books, furniture, and digital software to enhance students' reading experiences.

Grants for Music

The Universal Music UK Sound Foundation has generously awarded grants totalling £1500 to Heron Academy, Woodside Academy, and BTA Midfield, enabling them to purchase new musical instruments. This wonderful support will enhance the music programs at these schools and inspire students to explore their musical talents.

BNI Foundation

The BNI Foundation helps to change lives by improving circumstances for children facing financial instability that negatively affects their educational opportunities. The Foundation granted £1000 to Aspire Academy to fund Forest School equipment to enhance pupils' outdoor learning opportunities.

UK Shared Prosperity Fund

Funding was secured through the UK Shared Prosperity Fund through a partnership with the London Borough of Bromley to enable the employment of an SEMH Keyworker role at BTA/BBA. In total £31,500 was secured and will support the transition programme identified in Project Galaxy to improve the experience of those pupils transferring from the Trust to the College.

PR and Media Coverage Summary:

This year saw a growth in media coverage for the Trust. This reflects the growth of the Trust this year and its extremely positive reputation within the sector. Some key highlights from the year include:

- Winning a prestigious TES Schools Award has contributed significantly to this increased profile, together with some very successful Ofsted visits and school improvement work.
- The Trust has maximized the growing reputation of our Trust by ensuring that it and its leaders and staff have been frequently profiled and featured in key sector publications.
- Spokespeople from the Trust are often called on to comment on issues. In addition, the Trust proactively speaks out on topics that directly affect our staff and pupils and in which we have high levels of expertise.

Trustees Report (continued)

PR and Media Coverage Summary: (continued)

- PR highlights include Deputy CEO Neil Miller, speaking to the Evening Standard about the expansion of Free School Meals to all primary school children in London. Quotes from Neil's article were also included in a feature on BBC's Newsnight.
- A piece from our Trust Chair, Rama Venchard, about Trust expansion in Schools Week received excellent traction, as did a piece from the Head of one of our newest schools (James Ellis) about the reasons why an outstanding primary school would join a Trust.
- The highlight of the year was the performance of the Bexley Music Primary Choir as part of the King's Christmas Message, aired internationally on Christmas Day. The Head of Bexley Music was interviewed live on Sky News, providing exceptional national broadcast coverage for the Trust.
- In addition, Trust leaders have spoken at several speaking events, including the MAT Excellence Awards conference and several Westminster Insights Forum events.
- Finally, we were pleased to see the wider impact of the Trust recognised in June 2024 with a National TES Award for Trust of the year (nine schools or less). Winning a prestigious TES Schools Award has contributed significantly to this increased profile, together with some very successful Ofsted visits and school improvement work over the year.

Funds Held as Custodian Trustee on Behalf of Others

The Trust does not act as custodian trustee on behalf of any others.

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.

Trustees' report, incorporating a strategic report, was approved by order of the Board of Trustees, as the company directors, on 10 December 2024 and signed on the Board's behalf by:



Rama Venchard, MBE
Chair of Trustees

Date: 10 December 2024

Governance Statement

There have been some changes to the Board Membership during the period September 2023 to August 2024. A new long-term Chair has been recruited, Rama Venchard MBE, from 1 August 2023 on a four-year term.

Other changes to Trustees and Directors are referenced in the table on page 1 including the resignation of one Trustee in year and appointment of two Trustees in year and a further two appointed in September 2024.

As Trustees, we have reviewed and taken account of the guidance in DfE's Governance Handbook and competency framework for governance and the Academies Trust Handbook for 2024, which were provided to Trustees in September 2023. In 2024 the Confederation of School Trusts of which the Trust is a Member, launched a new Trust Governance Code aligned to the DfE Trust Quality Standards, which the Trust Board approved to adopt in December 2023.

Scope of Responsibility

As Trustees we acknowledge we have overall responsibility for ensuring that London South East 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.

The Board of Trustees has delegated the day-to-day responsibility to the Chief Executive Officer, as Accounting Officer, for ensuring financial controls conform with the requirements of both propriety and good financial management and in accordance with the requirements and responsibilities assigned to it in the funding agreement between London South East Academies Trust and the Secretary of State for Education. They are also responsible for reporting to the Board of Trustees any material weaknesses or breakdowns in internal control.

The Trust works closely with London South East Colleges (LSEC) who together form the London & South East Education Group, this is an umbrella organisation to coordinate the strategy of the Group and to optimise and strengthen both governance and collaboration between group entities. This is achieved through schemes of delegation (subject to their non-delegable primary governance responsibilities and authority, their regulatory obligations, and management of potential conflicts of interest). The Group is not a legal entity, and organisations as members of the Group are not subsidiary companies which are controlled or owned by the Group.

Trustees from both LSEAT and LSEC have been appointed to the Joint Group Committees, ensuring that a balanced combination of Governors and Trustees are represented on each of these, as defined by the relevant Articles of Association. Clear and robust Terms of Reference have been approved for each Board and Committee alongside Schemes of Delegation. These all provide assurance together with strong governance accountability across the Group and the Legal Boards.

Formal agendas, papers and reports are supplied to Trustees and each Group Committee in a timely manner prior to meetings. Briefings are provided on an ad-hoc basis.

Governance Reviews

On an annual basis, Trustees complete a skills audit, an individual annual review and also a Board self-evaluation review, which is good practice. The Board evaluation is based on a template provided by the Confederation of Schools Trust (CST) and has been adapted to include key context relating to the Trust.

To support the annual self-assessment, the Trust has developed a Board improvement and capacity framework which is aligned with the CST Assurance Framework which sets out knowledge, skills and behaviours required to be a governor or charitable trustee. It also aligns to DfE Trust Quality Standards which measures the criteria for being a Strong Trust.

Governance Statement (continued)

Governance Reviews (continued)

The framework has seven domains and fourteen elements of improvement, which includes guiding questions to consider as well as descriptors of what strong and weak improvement capacity would look like at the Board level.

Trustees are required to use the questions and descriptors to rate the Board against each element along a four-point scale:

- Red (weak capacity)
- Amber Red (AR)
- Amber Green (AG)
- Green (strong capacity).

Once the evaluation has been undertaken, a Trust Improvement Action Plan is created. This will focus on the key improvement areas identified and also link to strategic priority areas. Target completion dates may be annual or more than one year, where actions are associated with long-term strategic goals and improvements. Individual annual reviews identify training needs to support committee membership and succession planning as well as address overall Trustee performance on the Board.

The new Board self-evaluation and action plan for 2023/24 aligned to the new CST Code of Governance and DfE Quality Standards will be finalised in Autumn 2024.

Members

Members of London South East Academies Trust are responsible for ensuring the Trust achieves its objectives, as well as compliance with charity and company law and funding agreements. They ensure that Trustees use their discretion regarding their use of the Trust's funds reasonably, taking into consideration guidance on accountability or propriety.

Members comprise:

- the original signatories to the company's memorandum of association.
- additional members appointed and removed by special resolution of the existing membership.

The role of members includes:

- overseeing the achievement of the objectives of the Trust as set out in the articles of association and amending its articles of association when required;
- taking part in annual and extraordinary general meetings;
- appointing and removing members and Trustees;
- ensuring the financial stability of the Trust and approving its accounts;
- ensuring compliance with general principles of charity law;
- approving the appointment of external auditors.

Board of Trustees

The Trust is responsible through its Board of Trustees and Accounting Officer (the Chief Executive Officer), for all financial transactions within delegated authority. The work of the Trustees is supported by the joint Group Committees through a scheme of delegation which is consistent with the Articles of Association and the Academies Trust Handbook.

Trustees are appointed under the Trust's articles of association including being co-opted by directors. The role of Trustees includes:

- setting the strategic direction of the Trust and ensuring that the strategies of its academies are clearly defined, setting overall policy, defining goals and setting targets and evaluating performance;
- exercising the Trust's powers;
- expending Trust funds for its objects as set out in the articles of association;

Governance Statement (continued)

Board of Trustees (continued)

- ensuring the sound, proper and effective use of the finances of the Trust, including responsibility for budget setting and auditing requirements in respect of academy accounts;
- ensuring the Trust pursues its objects, is compliant with both company and charity law and has due regard for any other relevant legislation or regulations.

Group Finance Committee

The Group Finance Committee meets on a termly basis and provides additional scrutiny over financial performance of the Trust and related policies and provides assurances to the Board of Trustees that financial performance and oversight are being managed effectively.

Group Audit and Risk Committee

The Group Audit and Risk Committee meets on a termly basis and provides a forum for reporting by the internal, regularity and financial statements auditors, who have access to the Committee for independent discussion, without the presence of management.

The internal auditors review the systems of internal control, risk management and governance processes in accordance with an agreed plan of input and report their findings to management and the Group Audit Committee.

Management is responsible for the implementation of agreed recommendations and internal audit undertakes periodic follow-up reviews to ensure such recommendations have been implemented. The Committee also advises the Board on the appointment of internal, regularity and financial statements auditors and their remuneration for both audit and non-audit work and approves the fees to be paid.

The Group Audit Committee is required to report to the Board on the result of its work during the year and that of the internal and external auditors through its annual Audit Committee Report. This report is considered by the Board prior to the financial statements being approved.

Trust Education Performance and Standards Committee

The Trust Education Performance and Standards Committee is the forum for reporting the academic performance and quality of education of the Trust Schools. Reviewing comparisons with each other and against national benchmarks. The Committee also considers, reviews and provides scrutiny of curriculum and teaching strategies alongside the professional development of teaching and support staff and managers.

Group Remuneration and Group Search & Governance Committees

These Committees meet two or three times a year. The Group Remuneration provides a forum for reviewing remuneration and benefits and the Trust Policies in this regard. The Group Search and Governance Committee provides a forum for reviewing Board recruitment, training and development, succession planning and Board Reviews.

Conflicts of interests

The Board of Trustees confirm through their adopted and agreed Code of Governance a transparent policy position and practice for conflicts of interests. These include a declaration of interest at the start of each and every Board and Committee Meeting and full disclosure and an annual declaration by every Trustee of conflicts of interest and suitability for the role. This ensures that any new conflicts due to personal changes in employment, non-executive appointments or family connections are declared timely and appropriately.

All declarations of interests are reviewed by the Group Executive Director Governance and published on the Trust website and include committee membership details and related party membership.

Governance Statement (continued)

Conflicts of interests (continued)

Meetings

The Board of Trustees met six times during 2023/24 and overall attendance is reported at 92%. Individual attendance during the year was as follows.

Board of Trustees

Trustee meetings attended out of a possible:

London South East Academies Trust Board						
Name	Appointed	Role	Meetings	Attended	%	Comment
Rama Venchard MBE	01/09/2023	Chair	6	6	100%	
Beverley Eaglesfield	21/03/2023	Vice Chair	6	6	100%	Appt VC Role
Denise James-Mason	16/07/2019	Vice Chair	6	5	83%	Resigned VC Role
Dr Sam Parrett, CBE	n/a	Trustee	6	6	100%	
David Bailey	09/12/2020	Trustee	6	5	83%	Resigned 30/07/2024
Charles Yates	01/01/2021	Trustee	6	6	100%	
Christopher Philpott	11/12/2019	Trustee	6	5	83%	
Prof Lynn Revell	12/05/2021	Trustee	6	5	83%	
Marek Michalski	08/12/2021	Trustee	6	6	100%	
Danny Kwalombota	18/10/2022	Co-opted Trustee	6	5	83%	
Sarah Servantes	21/03/2023	Trustee	6	5	83%	
Milena Cooper	19/02/2024	Trustee	4	4	100%	
Shirley Puxty	07/05/2024	Trustee	2	2	100%	
George Ryan	01/09/2024	Trustee	n/a	n/a	n/a	Appt 01/09/2024
Suba Dickerson	01/09/2024	Co-opted Trustee	n/a	n/a	n/a	Appt 01/09/2024
		Total Attendance	72	66	92%	
Jennifer Pharo	n/a	Group Chief Governance Officer	6	6	100%	

The Group Finance Committee of the Trust met 3 times during 2023/24. Attendance during the meetings of the Committee for representatives of the Trust was as follows:

GROUP FINANCE COMMITTEE				
		Meetings	Attended	%
Group Finance Committee Chair (resigned Mar 24)	Angela Hands	3	3	100
Group Finance Committee Chair (from March 24)	David Eastgate	4	3	75
Trustee	Charles Yates	4	4	100
Trustee	Dr Sam Parrett, CBE	4	4	100
Governor	Joanne Bell (Resigned 03/24)	3	3	100
Trustee	Danny Kwalombota (Moved to A&R Oct 24)	1	1	100
Governor	Tony Gilbey	4	4	100
Trustee	Sarah Servantes	4	4	100
Trustee	Milena Cooper	1	1	100
Total Participation		28	27	96
Group Chief Governance Officer	Jennifer Pharo	4	4	100

Governance Statement (continued)

Board of Trustees (continued)

The Group Audit and Risk Committee of the Trust met three times during 2023/24. Both internal and external auditors attend the Audit & Risk Committee. Attendance during the meetings of the Committee for representatives of the Trust was as follows:

GROUP AUDIT & RISK COMMITTEE				
		Meetings	Attended	%
Group Audit & Risk Committee Chair	Marek Michalski	3	3	100
Governor and Trustee	David Bailey	3	3	100
Governor	Sarah Lewis	3	3	100
Trustee	Danny Kwalombota	3	3	100
Internal Auditors	Scrutton Bland	3	3	100
External Auditors	Buzzacott	3	3	100
Total Participation		18	18	100
Group Chief Governance Officer	Jennifer Pharo	3	3	100

The Trust Education Performance and Standards Committee met three times during 2023/24. Attendance during the meetings of the Committee for representatives of the Trust was as follows:

TRUST EDUCATION, PERFORMANCE & STANDARDS COMMITTEE				
Role	Name	Meetings	Attended	%
Committee Chair	Christopher Philpott	3	3	100
Trustee	Denise James Mason	3	3	100
Trustee	Prof Lynn Revell	3	3	100
Trustee	Beverley Eaglesfield	3	1	33
Trustee	Shirley Puxty	1	1	100
Trustee	Dr Sam Parrett, CBE	3	3	100
Total Trust Participation		16	14	88
Group Chief Governance Officer	Jennifer Pharo	3	3	100

The Remuneration Committee met twice during 2023/24. Attendance during the meetings of the Committee for representatives of the Trust was as follows:

GROUP REMUNERATION COMMITTEE				
Role	Name	Meetings	Attended	%
Group Remuneration Committee Chair	Stephen Howlett, CBE DL	2	1	50
Chair LSEC Corporation	David Eastgate	2	2	100
Chair London South East Academies Trust	Rama Venchard MBE	2	2	100
		6	5	83
Group Chief People Officer	Janet Curtis Broni	2	2	100
Group Chief Governance Officer	Jennifer Pharo	2	2	100

The Search & Governance Committee met once during 2023/24. Attendance during the meetings of the Committee for representatives of the Trust was as follows:

Governance Statement (continued)**Board of Trustees** (continued)

GROUP SEARCH & GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE				
Role	Name	Meetings	Attended	%
Group Search & Governance Committee Chair	Stephen Howlett, CBE DL	1	1	100
Chair London South East Academies Trust	Rama Venchard MBE	1	1	100
Chair LSEC Corporation	David Eastgate	1	1	100
Governor & Trustee	Dr Sam Parrett, CBE	1	1	100
		4	4	100
Group Chief Governance Officer	Jennifer Pharo	1	1	100

Review of Value for Money

As Accounting Officer, the Chief Executive Officer has responsibility for ensuring that the Academy Trust delivers good value in the use of public resources. The Accounting Officer understands that value for money refers to the educational and wider societal outcomes, as well as estates safety and management, achieved in return for the taxpayer resources received.

The Accounting Officer considers how the Trust's use of its resources has provided good value for money during each academic year and reports to the Board of Trustees where value for money can be improved, including the use of benchmarking data where available. The Accounting Officer for the Academy Trust has delivered improved value for money during the year by:

- Ensuring the pandemic has not had a detrimental impact on value for money;
- Improving back office services;
- Using tendered contracts in order to reduce costs and improve services;
- Improving pupil progression and attainment from previous benchmarks;
- Achieving a surplus from incoming resources for the year;
- Investing both Trust resources and other grants received to improve the safety of the Trust estate;
- Implementing a centralised Planned Preventive Maintenance function to improve estate safety and compliance;
- Using reserves for the benefit of pupils and Trust Schools;
- Increasing the size of the Trust in order to benefit from greater economies of scale.

The Purpose of the System of Internal Control

The system of internal control is designed to manage risk to a reasonable level rather than to eliminate all risk of failure to achieve policies, aims and objectives; it can therefore only provide reasonable and not absolute assurance of effectiveness. The system of internal control is based on an ongoing process designed to identify and prioritise the risks to the achievement of 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.

The system of internal control has been in place in London South East Academies Trust for the year ended 31 August 2024, and up to the date of approval of the Trustees' report and Financial Statements.

Governance Statement (continued)

Capacity to Handle Risk

The Trustees have reviewed the key risks to which the Trust is exposed, together with the operating, financial and compliance controls that have been implemented to mitigate those risks. The Trustees are of the view that there is a formal ongoing process for identifying, evaluating, and managing the Trust's significant risks that have been in place for the year 1 September 2023 to 31 August 2024 and up to the date of approval of the annual report and Financial Statements. This process is regularly reviewed by the Trustees.

The Risk and Control Framework

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

- Comprehensive budgeting and monitoring systems with an annual budget and periodic financial reports, which are reviewed and agreed by the Board of Trustees;
- Regular reviews by the Board of Trustees of reports which indicate financial performance against the forecasts and of major purchase plans, capital works and expenditure programmes;
- Regular reviews by the Board of Trustees of reports which indicate the academic performance of the Schools;
- Setting targets to measure financial and other performance;
- Clearly defined purchasing (asset purchase or capital investment) guidelines;
- Delegation of authority and segregation of duties;
- Identification and management of risks.

The Board of Trustees has considered the need for a specific internal audit function and appointed Scrutton Bland as the internal auditor for the year to provide a full assurance service in accordance with internal Auditing Standards. The internal auditor's role includes giving advice on internal control matters and performing a range of checks on the Academy Trust's financial and other systems. In particular, the checks carried out in the current period covered:

- Single Central Register
- Payroll and Pensions
- Risk Management
- Human Resources, Recruitment and Retention
- Cyber Security
- Procurement, Income and Debtors
- GDPR
- Management of Capital Projects
- Payroll Process Mapping

The Internal Auditor reports to the Board of Trustees through the Group Audit & Risk Committee at least termly on the results of internal audit reports. The Internal Auditor provides the Group Audit & Risk Committee with a report on internal audit activity across the Trust, and the report includes the Auditor's independent opinion on the adequacy and effectiveness of the Trust's system of risk management, internal control, and governance processes.

Risks Faced by the Trust

The Trust has in place a Risk Management Policy which sets out how risks are identified and evaluated. Risks are collated into a comprehensive risk register for review by the Group Audit & Risk Committee and Board of Trustees, including through deep dives into areas of significant risk. The risk register includes existing controls, new controls/improvements that are required, and clear links to the board assurance framework.

Review of Effectiveness

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

Governance Statement (continued)

Review of Effectiveness (continued)

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

The Accounting Officer has been advised of the implications of the result of the work of auditors and their review of the system of internal control, and plans to address any weaknesses and ensure continuous improvement of the system are in place.

The Internal Auditors Annual Report, presented to the Group Audit & Risk Committee on 27 November 2024, and the Audit Committee's Annual Report, approved on 27 November 2024, contain the opinion that the Trust has adequate and effective risk management, governance, and internal control processes, together with adequate processes surrounding its efficiency and effectiveness.

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

Approved by order of the members of the Board of Trustees on 10 December 2024 and signed on the Board's behalf by:



Rama Venchard, MBE
Chair of Trustees



Dr Sam Parrett, CBE
Accounting Officer

Statement on Regularity, Propriety and Compliance

As Accounting Officer of London South East Academies Trust, I have considered my responsibility to notify the Academy Trust Board of Trustees and the Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA) of material irregularity, impropriety and non-compliance with ESFA terms and conditions of funding, including for estates safety and management, under the funding agreement in place between the Academy Trust and the Secretary of State for Education. As part of my consideration, I have had due regard to the requirements of the Academies Trust Handbook 2023, including responsibilities for estates safety and management.

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

As reported last year, during the summer of 2023 the Trust was the victim of a small payment diversion which was perpetrated by a member of staff. The fraud was quickly discovered and investigated independently. The actions arising from this review have been implemented and our controls improved to help ensure there is no future recurrence. The fraud attributable to 2023/24 totalled £2,800, with the loss from the fraud being covered by the Department for Education's risk protection arrangement (RPA) except for the deduction of a £500 retention. Steps are being taken to recover the remaining loss through debt collection agencies.

I confirm that no other 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.



Dr Sam Parrett, CBE
Accounting Officer
10 December 2024

Statement of Trustees' Responsibilities

The Trustees (who act as governors of London South East Academies Trust and 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 Annual Accounts Direction published by the Education and Skills Funding Agency, United Kingdom Accounting Standards (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice) and applicable law and regulations.

Company law requires the Trustees to prepare Financial Statements for each financial year. Under company law, the Trustees must not approve the Financial Statements unless they are satisfied that they give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the 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 (FRS 102) and the Academies Accounts Direction 2023 to 2024
- make judgments and accounting estimates that are reasonable and prudent
- state whether applicable UK Accounting Standards (FRS 102) 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 10 December 2024 and signed on its behalf by:



Rama Venchard, MBE
Chair of Trustees

Independent Auditor's Report on the Financial Statements to the Members of London South East Academies Trust

Opinion

We have audited the financial statements of London South East Academies Trust (the 'charitable company') for the year ended 31 August 2024, which comprise the statement of financial activities, the balance sheet, the statement of cash flows, the principal accounting policies and the notes to the financial statements. The financial reporting framework that has been applied in their preparation is applicable law, United Kingdom Accounting Standards, including Financial Reporting Standard 102 'The Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland' (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice), Accounting and Reporting by Charities: Statement of Recommended Practice applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102) (the Charities SORP 2019) and the Academies Accounts Direction 2023 to 2024.

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 2024 and of its income and expenditure for the period then ended;
- have been properly prepared in accordance with United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice;
- have been prepared in accordance with the requirements of the Companies Act 2006; and
- have been prepared in accordance with the Charities SORP 2019 and Academies Accounts Direction 2023 to 2024.

Basis for opinion

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

Conclusions relating to going concern

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

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

Other information

The Trustees are responsible for the other information. The other information comprises the information included in the annual report other than the financial statements and our auditor's report thereon. Our opinion on the financial statements does not cover the other information, and, except to the extent otherwise explicitly stated in our report, we do not express any form of assurance conclusion thereon.

Independent Auditor's Report on the Financial Statements to the Members of London South East Academies Trust (continued)

Other information (continued)

In connection with our audit of the financial statements, our responsibility is to read the other information and, in doing so, consider whether the other information is materially inconsistent with the financial statements or our knowledge obtained in the audit or otherwise appears to be materially misstated. If we identify such material inconsistencies or apparent material misstatements, we are required to determine whether there is a material misstatement in the financial statements or a material misstatement of the other information. If, based on the work we have performed, we conclude that there is a material misstatement of this other information, we are required to report that fact. We have nothing to report in this regard.

Opinions on other matters prescribed by the Companies Act 2006

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

- the information given in the trustees' report, which is also the directors' report for the purposes of company law and includes the strategic report, for the financial year for which the financial statements are prepared is consistent with the financial statements and
- the Trustees' report, which is also the directors' report for the purposes of company law and includes the strategic report, has been prepared in accordance with applicable legal requirements.

Matters on which we are required to report by exception

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

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

Responsibilities of trustees

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

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

Auditor's responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements

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

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

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

- ◆ the engagement partner ensured that the engagement team collectively had the appropriate competence, capabilities and skills to identify or recognise non-compliance with applicable laws and regulations;
- ◆ we identified the laws and regulations applicable to the charitable company through discussions with management and from our knowledge of the academy trust sector;
- ◆ the identified laws and regulations were communicated within the audit team regularly, and the team remained alert to instances of non-compliance throughout the audit;
- ◆ we considered the legal and regulatory frameworks that are applicable to the charitable company and determined that the most significant are the Companies Act 2006, the Charities SORP (FRS 102), the Academies Accounts Direction 2023 to 2024, the Academies Trust Handbook 2023 and the academy trust's funding agreement with the ESFA as well as legislation pertaining to safeguarding in the UK;
- ◆ we understood how the charitable company is complying with those legal and regulatory frameworks by making inquiries to management and those responsible for legal, compliance and governance procedures. We corroborated our inquiries through our review of the minutes of trustees' meetings and papers provided to the trustees.
- ◆ we planned and carried out a separate limited assurance engagement in respect of regularity, propriety and compliance in accordance with the Framework and Guide for External Auditors and Reporting Accountants of Academy Trusts issued by the ESFA, as set out in our separate independent reporting accountant's assurance report on regularity.

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

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

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

- ◆ performed analytical procedures to identify any unusual or unexpected relationships;
- ◆ tested journal entries to identify unusual transactions;
- ◆ tested the authorisation of expenditure as part of our substantive testing thereon;

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

- ◆ assessed whether judgements and assumptions made in determining the accounting estimates set out in the accounting policies were indicative of potential bias; and
- ◆ used data analytics to identify any significant or unusual transactions and identify the rationale for them.

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

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

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

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

Use of our report

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



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

Date: 11 December 2024

Independent Reporting Accountant's Assurance Report on Regularity to London South East Academies and the Education and Skills Funding Agency

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

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

Respective responsibilities of London South East Academies Trust's Accounting Officer and the reporting accountant

The Accounting Officer is responsible, under the requirements of London South East Academies Trust's funding agreement with the Secretary of State for Education dated August 2016 and the Academies Trust Handbook, extant from 1 September 2023, for ensuring that expenditure disbursed and income received is applied for the purposes intended by Parliament and the financial transactions conform to the authorities which govern them.

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

Approach

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

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

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

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

The work undertaken to draw to our conclusion includes:

Independent Reporting Accountant's Assurance Report on Regularity to London South East Educational Trust and the Education and Skills Funding Agency
(continued)

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

Conclusion

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 year 1 September 2023 to 31 August 2024 has not been applied to purposes intended by Parliament and the financial transactions do not conform to the authorities which govern them.



Buzzacott LLP, Chartered Accountants
130 Wood Street
London
EC2V 6DL

Date: 11 December 2024

**Statement of Financial Activities for the year ended 31 August 2024
(including Income and Expenditure Account)**

	Notes	Un- restricted Funds £000	Restricted General Funds £000	Restricted Fixed Asset Funds £000	Total 2024 £000	Total 2023 £000
Income and endowments from:						
Donations and capital grants	2	67	-	1,726	1,793	4,677
Transferred from local authority on conversion		-	-	-	-	17,221
Transfer of existing academies into the Trust	27	-	14	19,131	19,145	-
Charitable activities						
Funding for the academy trust's educational operations	3	5,633	33,658	-	39,291	31,037
Investments	4	374	-	-	374	169
Total		6,074	33,672	20,857	60,603	53,104
Expenditure on:						
Charitable activities						
Academy Trust educational operations	5	6,057	33,155	2,484	41,696	33,012
Total		6,057	33,155	2,484	41,696	33,012
Net (expenditure)/income		17	517	18,373	18,907	20,092
Transfers between funds	15	(1,341)	(58)	1,399	-	-
Other recognised gains and losses	24	-	(380)	-	(380)	1,449
Net movement in funds		(1,324)	79	19,772	18,527	21,541
Reconciliation of funds						
Total funds brought forward		5,036	(148)	73,023	77,911	56,370
Total funds carried forward		3,712	(69)	92,795	96,438	77,911

All of the Academy Trust's activities derive from continuing operations during the above periods.

Balance Sheet as at 31 August 2024

Company Registration Number: 09028122

	Notes	2024 £000	2024 £000	2023 £000	2023 £000
Fixed assets					
Tangible assets	11		92,197		72,308
Current assets					
Debtors	12	1,609		1,625	
Cash at bank and in hand		8,244		7,979	
		9,853		9,604	
Liabilities					
Creditors: amounts falling due within one year	13	(5,529)		(3,833)	
Net current assets			4,324		5,771
Net assets excluding pension liability					
Defined benefit pension scheme liability	24		(83)		(168)
Total net assets			96,438		77,911
Funds of the Academy Trust:					
Restricted funds					
. Fixed asset fund	15	92,795		73,023	
. General fund	15	14		20	
. Pension reserve	24	(83)		(168)	
Total restricted funds		92,726		72,875	
Unrestricted income funds	15		3,712		5,036
Total funds			96,438		77,911

The Financial Statements on pages 41 to 72 were approved by the Trustees and authorised for issue on 10 December 2024 and are signed on their behalf by:



Rama Venchard, MBE
Chair of Trustees

Statement of Cash Flows for the year ended 31 August 2024

		2024	2023
		£000	£000
Cash flow from operating activities			
Net cash provided by operating activities	19	2,192	566
Cash flows from investing activities	20	(1,927)	(432)
Change in cash and cash equivalents in the reporting period		265	134
Cash and cash equivalents at 1 September 2023		7,979	7,845
Cash and cash equivalents at 31 August 2024		8,244	7,979

Notes to the Financial Statements for the year ended 31 August 2024

1. Statement of accounting policies

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

1.1 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 (FRS102), 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 (Charities SORP FRS 102), the Academies Accounts Direction 2023 to 2024 issued by ESFA, the Charities Act 2011 and the Companies Act 2006.

London South East Academies Trust meets the definition of a public benefit entity under FRS 102.

1.2 Going Concern

The Trustees assess whether the use of going concern is appropriate i.e. whether there are any material uncertainties related to events or conditions that may cast significant doubt on the ability of the 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.

1.3 Income

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

- **Grants**

Grants are included in the Statement of Financial Activities on a receivable basis. The balance of income received for specific purposes but not expended during the period is shown in the relevant funds on the balance sheet. Where income is received in advance of meeting any performance-related conditions, there is no 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.

- **Sponsorship Income**

Sponsorship income provided to the academy trust, which amounts to a donation, is recognised in the Statement of Financial Activities in the period in which it is receivable (where there are no performance-related conditions), where the receipt is probable, and it can be measured reliably.

- **Donations**

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

Notes to the Financial Statements for the year ended 31 August 2024 (continued)

1. Statement of accounting policies (continued)

1.3 Income (continued)

- **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 fixed assets (excluding Transfers on conversion/into 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.

1.4 Expenditure

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

- **Charitable Activities**

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

All resources expended are inclusive of irrecoverable VAT.

1.5 Tangible Fixed Assets

Assets costing £5,000 or more are capitalised as tangible fixed assets and are carried at cost, net of depreciation and any provision for impairment. Where tangible fixed assets have been acquired with the aid of specific grants, either from the government or from the private sector, they are included in the Balance Sheet at cost and depreciated over their expected useful economic life. 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 such assets is charged to the restricted fixed asset fund in the Statement of Financial Activities so as to reduce the fund over the useful economic life of the related asset on a basis consistent with the Academy Trust's depreciation policy. Where tangible fixed assets have been acquired with unrestricted funds, depreciation on such assets is charged to the unrestricted fund.

On transfer into the Trust, land and buildings have been valued at fair value by independent valuers using the depreciated replacement cost.

Notes to the Financial Statements for the year ended 31 August 2024 (continued)

Statement of accounting policies (continued)

1.5 Tangible Fixed Assets (continued)

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

- Building improvement works 6.67%
- Long leasehold buildings 1.11% to 3.33%
- Fixtures, fittings and equipment 10%
- ICT equipment 33%
- Motor vehicles 20% to 25%
- Office Equipment 33%

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

1.6 Liabilities

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

1.7 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.

1.8 Leased Assets

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

1.9 Financial instruments

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

Financial assets – trade and other debtors are basic financial instruments and are debt instruments measured at amortised cost as detailed in note 12. Prepayments are not financial instruments.

Cash at bank – is classified as a basic financial instrument and is measured at face value. Financial liabilities – trade creditors, accruals and other creditors are basic financial instruments and are measured at amortised cost as detailed in notes 13 and 14. 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.

Notes to the Financial Statements for the year ended 31 August 2024 (continued)

Statement of accounting policies (continued)

1.10 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.

1.11 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, and the assets are held separately from those of the Academy Trust.

The TPS is an unfunded scheme and contributions are calculated so as to spread the cost of pensions over employees working lives with the Academy Trust in such a way that the pension cost is a substantially level percentage of the current and future pensionable payroll. The contributions are determined by the Government Actuary on the basis of quinquennial valuations using a prospective benefit method. As stated in note 24, the TPS is a multi-employer scheme and the Academy Trust is unable to identify its share of the underlying assets and liabilities of the scheme on a consistent and reasonable basis. The TPS is, therefore, treated as a defined contribution scheme, and the contributions are recognised as they are paid each year.

The LGPS is a 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 method and discounted at a rate equivalent to the current rate of return on a high-quality corporate bond of equivalent term and currency to the liabilities. The actuarial valuations are obtained at least triennially and are updated at each balance sheet date. The amounts charged to operating surplus are the current service costs and gains and losses on settlements and curtailments. They are included as part of staff costs. Past service costs are recognised immediately in the Statement of Financial Activities if the benefits have vested. If the benefits have not vested immediately, the costs are recognised over the period until vesting occurs. The expected return on assets and the interest cost are shown as a net finance amount of other finance costs or credits adjacent to interest.

As described in note 24, the LGPS obligation relates to the employees of the academy trust and includes those employees who were transferred from Warren Road Primary School and new employees who were eligible to, and did, join the Scheme in the period. The obligation in respect of employees who transferred from the Warren Road Primary School represents their cumulative service at both the predecessor school and the academy trust at the balance sheet date.

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

1.12 Fund Accounting

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

Restricted fixed asset funds are resources which are to be applied to specific capital purposes imposed by funders where the asset acquired or created is held for a specific purpose. Restricted general funds comprise all other restricted funds received with restrictions imposed by the funder/donor and include grants from the Education and Skills Funding Agency.

Notes to the Financial Statements for the year ended 31 August 2024 (continued)

Statement of accounting policies (continued)

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

The present value of the Local Government Pension Scheme defined benefit liability depends on a number of factors that are determined on an actuarial basis using a variety of assumptions. The assumptions used in determining the net cost (income) for pensions include the discount rate. Any changes in these assumptions, which are disclosed in note 24, will impact the carrying amount of the pension liability. Furthermore, a roll forward approach, which projects results from the latest full actuarial valuation performed at 31 March 2022, has been used by the actuary in valuing the pensions liability at 31 August 2024. Any differences between the figures derived from the roll forward approach and a full actuarial valuation would impact the carrying amount of the pension liability.

Estimates of the useful economic lives of tangible fixed assets are made to determine the annual depreciation charge.

On transfer into the Trust, land and buildings have been valued at fair value by independent valuers using the depreciated replacement cost.

1.14 Transfer of existing academies into the Academy Trust

The transfer of an existing academy into the multi-academy trust involved the transfer of identifiable assets and liabilities and the operation of the school for £nil consideration. The substance of the transfer is that of a gift, and it has been accounted for on that basis as set out below.

The assets and liabilities transferred from Warren Road Primary School to the academy trust have been valued at their fair value. The fair value has been derived based on that of equivalent items. The amounts have been recognised under the appropriate balance sheet categories, with a corresponding amount recognised in transfer from the local authority on conversion in the Statement of Financial Activities and analysed under restricted general funds and restricted fixed asset funds. The value of the inherited Land and Buildings was derived from an independent valuer and the useful economic life was determined in accordance with the Trust's depreciation policy. The value of inherited equipment was assessed based on the asset records of the single academy trust at the date of transfer. The value of the inherited pension position was provided by the actuary for the Bromley Pension Fund. Further details of the transaction are set out in note 27.

2. Donations and capital grants

	Unrestricted Funds £000	Restricted Funds £000	Restricted Fixed Asset Funds £'000	Total 2024 £000	Total 2023 £000
Capital grants	-	-	1,726	1,726	4,644
Other donations	67	-	-	67	33
	<u>67</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>1,726</u>	<u>1,793</u>	<u>4,677</u>

Notes to the Financial Statements for the year ended 31 August 2024 (continued)

2. Donations and capital grants (continued)

	Unrestricted Funds £000	Restricted Funds £000	Restricted Fixed Asset Funds £'000	Total 2023 £000
Capital grants	-	-	4,644	4,644
Donated fixed assets	-	-	-	-
Other donations	33	-	-	33
	<u>33</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>4,644</u>	<u>4,677</u>

3. Funding for the Academy Trust's educational operations

	Unrestricted Funds £000	Restricted Funds £000	Total 2024 £000	Total 2023 £000
DfE/ESFA grants				
General annual grant (GAG)	-	13,488	13,488	10,516
Other DfE/ESFA grants				
. UIFSM	-	274	274	55
. Pupil Premium	-	585	585	498
. Recovery Premium	-	286	286	265
. PE and Sports Grant	-	103	103	88
. Teachers Pay Grant	-	702	702	165
. Teachers Pension Grant	-	799	799	457
. Others	-	1,745	1,745	1,077
	<u>-</u>	<u>17,982</u>	<u>17,982</u>	<u>13,121</u>
Other Government grants				
Local authority grants	-	15,297	15,297	13,152
Arts Council Funding	-	379	379	382
	<u>-</u>	<u>15,676</u>	<u>15,676</u>	<u>13,534</u>
Other income from the academy trust's educational operations	5,633	-	5,633	4,382
	<u>5,633</u>	<u>33,658</u>	<u>39,291</u>	<u>31,037</u>

Notes to the Financial Statements for the year ended 31 August 2024 (continued)

3. Funding for the Academy Trust's educational operations (continued)

	<i>Unrestricted Funds £000</i>	<i>Restricted Funds £000</i>	<i>Total 2023 £000</i>
DfE/ESFA grants			
General annual grant (GAG)	-	10,516	10,516
<i>Other DfE/ESFA grants</i>			
. UIFSM	-	55	55
. Pupil Premium	-	498	498
. Recovery Premium	-	265	265
. PE and Sports Grant	-	88	88
. Teachers Pay Grant	-	165	165
. Teachers Pension Grant	-	457	457
. Others	-	1,077	1,077
	-	<u>13,121</u>	<u>13,121</u>
Other Government grants			
Local authority grants	-	13,152	13,152
Arts Council	-	382	382
	-	<u>13,534</u>	<u>13,534</u>
Other income from the academy trust's educational operations	4,382	-	4,382
	<u>4,382</u>	<u>26,655</u>	<u>31,037</u>

4. Investment income

	Unrestricted Funds £000	Restricted Funds £000	Total 2024 £000	Total 2023 £000
Interest receivable	374	-	<u>374</u>	169
	<u>374</u>	-	<u>374</u>	<u>169</u>

Notes to the Financial Statements for the year ended 31 August 2024 (continued)

5. Expenditure

	Non-Pay Expenditure			Total 2024 £000	Total 2023 £000
	Staff Costs £000	Premises £000	Other £000		
Academy's educational operations					
- Direct costs	26,754	-	6,615	33,369	26,490
- Allocated support costs	5,178	2,370	779	8,327	6,522
	31,932	2,370	7,394	41,696	33,012

	<i>Non-Pay Expenditure</i>			<i>Total 2023 £000</i>
	<i>Staff Costs £000</i>	<i>Premises £000</i>	<i>Other £000</i>	
<i>Academy's educational operations</i>				
<i>- Direct costs</i>	21,446	—	5,044	26,490
<i>- Allocated support costs</i>	3,783	2,026	713	6,522
	25,229	2,026	5,757	33,012

Net income/(expenditure) for the year includes:	2024 £000	2023 £000
Operating lease rentals	37	41
Depreciation	2,279	1,899
Fees payable to auditor for:		
- audit	30	29
- internal audit	29	-

Included with expenditure are the following transactions:

	Total £	Individual items above £5,000	
		Amount £	Reason
Compensation payments	21,712	5,000	Compensation Pay
		5,280	Compensation Pay
		7,387	Compensation Pay

Notes to the Financial Statements for the year ended 31 August 2024 (continued)

6. Charitable activities

	Total 2024 £000	Total 2023 £000
Direct costs – educational operations	33,369	26,490
Support costs – educational operations	8,327	6,522
Total direct and support costs	41,696	33,012
Analysis of support costs		
Support staff costs	5,178	3,783
Technology costs	407	425
Premises	2,370	2,026
Legal costs – other	24	6
Other support costs	289	253
Governance costs	59	29
Total support costs	8,327	6,522

7. Staff

a. Staff costs

Staff costs during the year were:

	Total 2024 £000	Total 2023 £000
Wages and salaries	22,055	17,147
Social security costs	2,294	1,790
Operating costs of defined benefit pension schemes	4,230	3,393
	28,579	22,330
Supply staff costs	3,216	2,825
Staff restructuring costs	137	74
	31,932	25,229
Staff restructuring costs comprise:		
Redundancy payments	23	-
Severance payments	114	74
	137	74

Notes to the Financial Statements for the year ended 31 August 2024 (continued)

7. Staff (continued)

a. Staff costs (continued)

Included in staff restructuring costs are non-statutory/non-contractual severance payments totaling £21,712 (2023: £22,678) in respect of 4 employees in the following bands:-

Band	No. of Employees
£1 - £25,000	4

Individually, the payments were: £7,387, £5,280, £5,000 and £4,045.

b. Staff numbers

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

Charitable activities	2024		2023	
	Average full-time equivalent	Average headcount	Average full-time equivalent	Average headcount
Teachers	202	296	173	262
Administration and support	316	410	261	320
Management	2	3	2	3
	520	709	436	585

c. Higher paid staff

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

	2024	2023
	No.	No.
£60,001 - £70,000	16	19
£70,001 - £80,000	14	7
£80,001 - £90,000	6	4
£90,001 - £100,000	3	2
£100,001 - £110,000	3	1
£130,001 - £140,000	1	-
£140,001 - £150,000	-	1
£150,001 - £160,000	1	-
	44	34

Notes to the Financial Statements for the year ended 31 August 2024 (continued)

7. Staff (continued)

The above employees participated in the Teachers' Pension Scheme, of which contributions amounted to £686,492 (2023: £463,718).

8. 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) received by key management personnel for their services to the academy trust was £522,588 (2023: £474,131).

9. Related Party Transactions – Trustees' remuneration and expenses

The Chief Executive Officer and other Trustees do not receive any remuneration in respect of services they provide in undertaking the roles as Trustees, but the Chief Executive Officer is remunerated for her role as CEO. No payments were made to Trustees during the year in connection with their roles as Trustees other than reimbursement of expenses incurred. During the year ended 31 August 2024, travel and subsistence expenses totalling £nil (2023: £426) were reimbursed. The remuneration for Dr S Parrett CBE in her role as CEO is as follows:-

Remuneration: £130,001 - £140,000 (2023: £90,001 - £100,000)

Employers Pension contributions: £30,000 - £35,000 (2023: £20,000 - £25,000)

The increase in the reported remuneration mainly relates to a change in the FTE for the postholder, where their costs are apportioned across the Academy Trust and College, rather than an increase in salary.

In addition to the total compensation due for the year above, the Chief Executive Officer was also paid an additional £53,538 in respect of a historic salary underpayment error covering a period of 5 years. This has not been included within the total compensation due for the year as this would not otherwise accurately show the actual values due for the financial year.

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 £10,000,000. It is not possible to quantify the Trustees and officers indemnity element from the overall cost of the RPA scheme.

Notes to the Financial Statements for the year ended 31 August 2024 (continued)

11. Tangible fixed assets

	Leasehold Land and Buildings £000	Assets under construction £'000	Furniture and Equipment £000	Motor Vehicles £000	Total £000
<u>Cost</u>					
At 1 September 2023	73,231	5,296	1,810	157	80,494
Transferred from academy, joining Trust	18,955	-	140	-	19,095
Additions	-	3,279	-	-	3,279
Transfers from AUC	1,430	(1,807)	339	38	-
Disposals	(169)	-	(236)	(28)	(433)
At 31 August 2024	<u>93,447</u>	<u>6,768</u>	<u>2,053</u>	<u>167</u>	<u>102,435</u>
<u>Depreciation</u>					
At 1 September 2023	7,271	-	868	47	8,186
Charged in year	1,903	-	330	46	2,279
Disposals	(88)	-	(119)	(20)	(227)
At 31 August 2024	<u>9,086</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>1,079</u>	<u>73</u>	<u>10,238</u>
<u>Net book values</u>					
At 31 August 2024	<u>84,361</u>	<u>6,768</u>	<u>974</u>	<u>94</u>	<u>92,197</u>
At 31 August 2023	<u>65,960</u>	<u>5,296</u>	<u>942</u>	<u>110</u>	<u>72,308</u>

12. Debtors

	2024 £000	2023 £000
Trade debtors	249	457
Capital debtors	508	573
VAT recoverable	196	46
Prepayments and accrued income	657	549
	<u>1,609</u>	<u>1,625</u>

Notes to the Financial Statements for the year ended 31 August 2024 (continued)

13. Creditors: amounts falling due within one year

	2024	2023
	£000	£000
Trade creditors	749	572
Taxation and social security	1,123	944
Accruals and deferred income	3,657	2,317
	5,529	3,833

14. Deferred income

	2024	2023
	£000	£000
Deferred income at 1 September 2023	279	342
Amounts released from previous years	(210)	(252)
Resources deferred in the year	1,546	189
Deferred income at 31 August 2024	1,615	279

At the balance sheet date, the Trust holds funding of £1,465,610 received in advance of 2024/25 and ring-fenced funds of £149,451.

Notes to the Financial Statements for the year ended 31 August 2024 (continued)

15. Funds

	Balance at 1 Sept 2023 £000	Income £000	Expenditure £000	Gains, losses and transfers £000	Balance at 31 Aug 2024 £000
Restricted general funds					
General Annual Grant (GAG)	-	13,488	(13,450)	(38)	-
UIFSM	-	274	(274)	-	-
Pupil Premium	-	585	(585)	-	-
Recovery Premium	-	286	(286)	-	-
PE and Sports Grant	-	103	(103)	-	-
Teachers Pay Grant	-	702	(702)	-	-
Teachers Pension Grant	-	799	(799)	-	-
Other grants	-	1,745	(1,745)	-	-
Local Authority Grants	-	15,297	(15,297)	-	-
Arts Council Funding	-	379	(379)	-	-
Donated current assets on acquisition	20	14	-	(20)	14
Pension reserve	(168)	-	465	(380)	(83)
	<u>(148)</u>	<u>33,672</u>	<u>(33,155)</u>	<u>(438)</u>	<u>(69)</u>
Restricted fixed asset funds					
Transferred from local authority	63,590	19,131	(1,928)	(36)	80,757
DfE/ESFA Capital grants	6,545	1,726	(386)	36	7,921
Capital expenditure from GAG	2,888	-	(170)	1,399	4,117
	<u>73,023</u>	<u>20,857</u>	<u>(2,484)</u>	<u>1,399</u>	<u>92,795</u>
Total unrestricted funds	5,036	6,074	(6,057)	(1,341)	3,712
Total funds	<u>77,911</u>	<u>60,603</u>	<u>(41,696)</u>	<u>(380)</u>	<u>96,438</u>

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 2024.

Notes to the Financial Statements for the year ended 31 August 2024 (continued)

15. Funds (continued)

Restricted general funds

Restricted general funds represent the balance of funds available from revenue grants received from local/central government and other donors, the application of which is limited to the conditions imposed by the grantor/donor. The principal funding received from the government is the General Annual Grant (GAG) provided by the Education and Skills Funding Agency. Under the funding agreements with the Secretary of State, the Trust was not subject to a limit on the amount of GAG that it could carry forward at 31 August 2024.

Restricted fixed asset funds

The fund equates to the net book value of the Trust's tangible fixed assets plus any capital funding received from central/local government and other donors, which has not been expended by the balance sheet date. The capital funding may be used to complete capital projects or undertaken for maintenance works on existing tangible fixed assets.

The fund balances include the carrying value of school buildings (and other tangible fixed assets) inherited by the Trust where a school has converted or joined the Trust from another Academy Trust and the carrying value of all other assets donated to the Trust.

Unrestricted funds

The unrestricted general funds represent monies which may be applied for any purpose within London South East Academies Trust's objects.

Transfers between funds

Transfers from either restricted general funds or unrestricted funds to restricted fixed asset funds are made, where revenue reserves are required to finance the purchase of tangible fixed assets. Transfers from restricted fixed assets fund to either restricted general funds or unrestricted funds are made where capital income has been spent on repairs and maintenance of existing fixed assets.

Notes to the Financial Statements for the year ended 31 August 2024 (continued)

15. Funds (continued)

Total funds analysis by academy

Fund balances at 31 August 2024 were allocated as follows:

	Total 2024 £000	Total 2023 £000
Bromley Trust Academy	945	1,310
Bromley Beacon Academy	932	1,347
Bramley Oak Academy	347	342
Heron Academy	195	6
Endeavour Academy Bexley	111	233
Horizons Academy Bexley	795	1,043
Aspire Academy Bexley	152	168
Belmont Academy	(92)	(87)
Woodside Academy	385	422
Warren Road Primary School	10	-
Bexley Music Hub	35	73
Central services	(89)	199
Total before fixed assets and pension reserve	<u>3,726</u>	<u>5,056</u>
Restricted fixed asset fund	92,795	73,023
Pension reserve	(83)	(168)
Total	<u>96,438</u>	<u>77,911</u>

The deficit at Belmont Academy was inherited on conversion from the local authority. The academy has increased its deficit from £87k to £92k during this academic year due to incurring a small in-year deficit. The academy is aiming to reduce the deficit by 31 August 2025.

Notes to the Financial Statements for the year ended 31 August 2024 (continued)

15. Funds (continued)

Total cost analysis by academy

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

	Teaching and education support staff costs £000	Other support staff costs £000	Educational supplies £000	Other costs (excluding depreciation) £000	Total 2024 £000	Total 2023 £000
Bromley Trust Academy	3,578	532	442	334	4,886	4,392
Bromley Beacon Academy	3,765	545	952	504	5,766	5,676
Bramley Oak Academy	1,672	165	317	194	2,348	2,279
Heron Academy	2,703	260	230	381	3,574	1,843
Endeavour Academy Bexley	2,003	220	271	285	2,779	2,677
Horizons Academy Bexley	2,588	147	252	270	3,257	3,043
Aspire Academy Bexley	1,265	172	156	189	1,782	1,367
Belmont Academy	1,973	310	273	211	2,767	2,606
Woodside Academy	4,004	446	274	311	5,035	4,822
Warren Road Primary School	2,543	326	510	186	3,565	-
Bexley Music Hub	720	76	117	128	1,041	894
London South East Academies Trust	(60)	1,979	337	156	2,412	1,513
	26,754	5,178	4,131	3,149	39,212	31,113

Notes to the Financial Statements for the year ended 31 August 2024 (continued)

15. Funds (continued)

Comparative information

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

	Balance at 1 Sept 2022 £000	Income £000	Expenditure £000	Gains, losses and transfers £000	Balance at 31 Aug 2023 £000
Restricted general funds					
General Annual Grant (GAG)	-	10,517	(10,464)	(53)	-
Pupil Premium	-	498	(498)	-	-
UIFSM	-	55	(55)	-	-
Recovery Premium	-	265	(265)	-	-
School-led tutoring grant	-	113	(113)	-	-
Donated current assets on acquisition	20	-	-	-	20
Pension reserve	(1,240)	(304)	(73)	1,449	(168)
Other grants	-	1,673	(1,673)	-	-
	<u>(1,220)</u>	<u>12,817</u>	<u>(13,141)</u>	<u>1,396</u>	<u>(148)</u>
Other restricted funds					
Local authority grants	-	13,152	(13,152)	-	-
Arts Council Funding	-	382	(382)	-	-
	<u>-</u>	<u>13,534</u>	<u>(13,534)</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>
Restricted fixed asset funds					
Transferred from local authority	47,600	17,525	(1,535)	-	63,590
DfE/ESFA Capital grants	2,079	4,644	(178)	-	6,545
Capital expenditure from GAG	2,193	-	(186)	881	2,888
	<u>51,872</u>	<u>22,169</u>	<u>(1,899)</u>	<u>881</u>	<u>73,023</u>
Total unrestricted funds	<u>5,718</u>	<u>4,584</u>	<u>(4,438)</u>	<u>(828)</u>	<u>5,036</u>
Total funds	<u>56,370</u>	<u>53,104</u>	<u>(33,012)</u>	<u>1,449</u>	<u>77,911</u>

Notes to the Financial Statements for the year ended 31 August 2024 (continued)

16. Analysis of net assets between funds

Fund balances at 31 August 2024 are represented by:

	Unrestricted Funds £000	Restricted General Funds £000	Restricted Fixed Asset Funds £000	2024 Total Funds £000
Tangible fixed assets	-	-	92,197	92,197
Current assets	3,712	5,543	598	9,853
Current liabilities	-	(5,529)	-	(5,529)
Pension scheme liability	-	(83)	-	(83)
Total net assets	3,712	(69)	92,795	96,438

	<i>Unrestricted Funds £000</i>	<i>Restricted General Funds £000</i>	<i>Restricted Fixed Asset Funds £000</i>	<i>2023 Total Funds £000</i>
<i>Tangible fixed assets</i>	-	-	72,308	72,308
<i>Current assets</i>	5,036	3,853	715	9,604
<i>Current liabilities</i>	-	(3,833)	-	(3,833)-
<i>Pension scheme liability</i>	-	(168)	-	(168)-
<i>Total net assets</i>	<i>5,036</i>	<i>(148)</i>	<i>73,023</i>	<i>77,911</i>

17. Capital commitments

At 31 August 2024, the Trust is committed to £1.12m expenditure in respect of major remodelling works (2023: £0.77m).

18. Commitments under operating leases

Operating leases

At 31 August 2024, the total of the Academy Trust's future minimum lease payments under non-cancellable operating leases for equipment was:

	2024 £000	2023 £000
Amounts due within one year	39	49
Amounts due between one and five years	157	196
	196	245

Notes to the Financial Statements for the year ended 31 August 2024 (continued)

19. Reconciliation of net income to net cash flows from operating activities

	2024	2023
	£000	£000
Net income for the reporting period (as per the statement of financial activities)	18,907	20,092
Depreciation (note 11)	2,279	1,899
Inherited pension deficit	-	304
Inherited fixed assets	(19,095)	(17,525)
Capital grants from DfE/ESFA and other capital income	(1,726)	(4,644)
Loss on disposal of fixed assets	206	-
Interest receivable	374	169
Defined benefit pension scheme cost less contributions payable (note 24)	(382)	39
Defined benefit pension scheme interest (note 24)	(83)	34
Defined benefit pension scheme obligation inherited	-	-
Decrease/(Increase) in debtors	16	(179)
(Decrease)/increase in creditors	1,696	377
Net cash provided by operating activities	2,192	566

20. Cash flows from investing activities

	2024	2023
	£000	£000
Purchase of tangible fixed assets	(3,279)	(4,907)
Capital grants from DfE/ESFA	1,726	4,644
Interests from investments	(374)	(169)
Net cash used in investing activities	(1,927)	(432)

21. Analysis of change in net funds

	At 1 September 2023 £000	Cash flows £000	At 31 August 2024 £000
Cash in hand and at bank	7,979	265	8,244
Total cash and cash equivalents	7,979	265	8,244

Notes to the Financial Statements for the year ended 31 August 2024 (continued)

22. Contingent liabilities

There are no contingent liabilities at the balance sheet date (2023: £nil).

23. Members liability

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

24. Pension and similar obligations

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

The pension costs are assessed in accordance with the advice of independent qualified actuaries. Prior to 31 August 2024, the latest actuarial valuation of the TPS related to the period ended 31 March 2020 and of the LGPS 31 March 2022.

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

Teachers' Pension Scheme

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

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

Valuation of the Teachers' Pension Scheme

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

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

Notes to the Financial Statements for the year ended 31 August 2024 (continued)

24. Pension and similar obligations (continued)

Valuation of the Teachers' Pension Scheme (continued)

- ♦ employer contribution rates set at 28.68% of pensionable pay (including a 0.08% administration levy). This is an increase of 5% in employer contributions, and the cost control result is such that no change in member benefits is needed.
- ♦ total scheme liabilities (pensions currently in payment and the estimated cost of future benefits) for service to the effective date of £262 billion and notional assets (estimated future contributions together with the notional investments held at the valuation date) of £222 billion, giving a notional past service deficit of £40 billion.

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

The employer's pension costs paid to TPS in the period amounted to £2,559,432 (2023: £1,820,374).

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

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

Local Government Pension Scheme

The LGPS is a funded defined benefit pension scheme, with the assets held in separate trustee-administered funds. The total contribution made for the year ended 31 August 2024 was £2,594,743 (2023: £2,159,060), of which employer's contributions totalled £1,987,133 (2023: £1,704,515) and employees' contributions totalled £607,609 (2023: £454,545). The current employer contribution rates varies for each Academy and ranges between 16.1% and 23.8%, with the employee contribution rates varying between 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](https://www.gov.uk).

Notes to the Financial Statements for the year ended 31 August 2024 (continued)

24. Pension and similar obligations (continued)

Local Government Pension Scheme (continued)

Principal actuarial assumptions	At 31 August 2024	At 31 August 2023
Rate of increase in salaries	4.0%	4.2%
Rate of increase for pensions in payment/inflation	2.7%	2.9%
Discount rate for scheme liabilities	5.0%	5.2%
Inflation assumption (CPI)	2.6%	2.8%
Commutation of pensions to lump sums	50%	50%

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

	At 31 August 2024	At 31 August 2023
<i>Retiring today</i>		
Males	21.5	21.6
Females	23.9	24.0
<i>Retiring in 20 years</i>		
Males	22.4	22.6
Females	25.5	25.7

Notes to the Financial Statements for the year ended 31 August 2024 (continued)

24. Pension and similar obligations (continued)

Principal actuarial assumptions (continued)

The actual return/(loss) on scheme assets was £2,116,000 (2023: (£653,000)).

Amounts recognised in the statement of financial activities:

	2024	2023
	£000	£000
Net service cost	(474)	32
Past service cost	-	-
Interest income	(1,070)	(610)
Interest cost	987	644
Admin expenses	92	71
Total amount recognised in the SOFA	(465)	73

Notes to the Financial Statements for the year ended 31 August 2024 (continued)

24. Pension and similar obligations (continued)

Principal actuarial assumptions (continued)

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

	2024	2023
	£000	£000
At 1 September	14,845	14,353
Opening balance adjustment	577	-
Current service cost	1,511	1,626
Interest cost	987	644
Employee contributions	609	436
Past Service cost	-	-
Actuarial loss/(gain)	108	(3,031)
Benefits paid	(373)	(136)
Inherited obligations	4,809	953
At 31 August	23,073	14,845

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

	2024	2023
	£000	£000
At 1 September	14,677	13,113
Opening balance adjustment	577	-
Interest income	1,070	610
Administrative expenses	(92)	(71)
Actuarial gain	(272)	(1,582)
Employer contributions	1,985	1,658
Employee contributions	609	436
Benefits paid	(373)	(136)
Inherited assets	4,809	649
At 31 August	22,990	14,677

The opening balance adjustment to the value of scheme assets and defined benefit obligations relates to our London Borough of Bromley schemes, where the actuarial reports were revised post-audit. The pension values for the year ended 31 August 2023 have not been restated as the impact was not material.

The estimated value of employer contributions for the year ended 31 August 2024 is £1,379,524 (2023: £940,329).

Notes to the Financial Statements for the year ended 31 August 2024 (continued)

25. Related party transactions

Owing to the nature of the Academy Trust's operations and the composition of the Board of Trustees being drawn from local public and private sector organisations, transactions may take place with organisations in which the Trust has an interest. All transactions involving such organisations are conducted at arm's length and in accordance with the Trust's financial regulations and normal procurement procedures. The following related party transaction took place in the period of account.

As part of its shared Group Central Services function, the Trust shares a number of back office systems and staff with its sponsor, Bromley College of Further and Higher Education, which trades under the brand of London South East Colleges. These shared systems include HR, Payroll, and Finance, together with a related service desk system. The related payment for the Trusts share of these systems was £65,583 and no charges were levied for any back office support services provided (2023: £Nil).

In addition, the Trust has worked in partnership with its sponsor and the London Borough of Bromley to deliver a 14-16 alternative provision programme for pupils in the borough at risk of exclusion. The programme was delivered at the Bromley College campus by teachers employed by the College. The Trust was charged £208,800 for the year (2023: £208,800), and this was declared with the ESFA.

At 31 August 2024, the balance owed by the College to London South East Academies Trust was £40,598 (2023: £21,000 owed to the College). This related to College expenditure which was invoiced to the Trust.

The academy trust conducted the above related party transactions in accordance with the requirements of the Academies Financial Handbook, including notifying the ESFA of all transactions made on or after 1 April 2019 and obtaining their approval where required, and with their financial regulations and procurement procedures. Where, for goods or services exceeding £2,500 cumulatively in the year, the element above £2,500 has been provided at no more than cost and this is supported by a statement of assurance from the related party.

26. Events after the end of the reporting period

On 1 September 2024, Barrington Primary School, Bedonwell Infant and Nursery School and Bedonwell Junior School joined the Trust. These three Academies were formerly part of the Ignis Academy Trust.

Notes to the Financial Statements for the year ended 31 August 2024 (continued)

27. Transfer of existing academies to the Trust

On 1 January 2024, Warren Road Primary School joined the Trust with the approval of the Department for Education. All the operations and assets and liabilities were transferred to London South East Academies Trust from the single academy Trust for £nil consideration.

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

	The value reported by transferring academy trust £000	Fair value adjustments £000	Transfer in recognised £000
Tangible fixed assets			
Leasehold land and buildings	9,957	8,998	18,955
Furniture and equipment	145	(5)	140
Current assets			
Cash at bank	367	-	367
Debtors due in less than one year	121	-	121
Liabilities			
Creditors due in less than one year	438	-	438
Pensions	-	-	-
Net assets	10,152	8,993	19,145

The fair value adjustment to the value of the inherited land and buildings was derived from the DfE's land and valuation certificate, which was published in the year prior to the transfer. The value reported by the transferring academy trust was from the DfE's previous certificate, which was published in 2016. The reduction to the inherited furniture and equipment value relates to computer software that was not transferred to the Trust.

The inherited net asset balance of £19.14m comprises fixed assets valued at £19.09m, unspent capital grants of £36k and surplus on revenue reserves of £14k.

Notes to the Financial Statements for the year ended 31 August 2024 (continued)

28. Comparative statement of financial activities for the year ended 31 August 2023

	Un- restricted Funds £000	Restricted General Funds £000	Restricted Fixed Asset Funds £000	Total 2023 £000
Income and endowments from:				
Donations and capital grants	33	-	4,644	4,677
Transferred from local authority on conversion	-	(304)	17,525	17,221
Charitable activities				
Funding for the academy trust's educational operations	4,382	26,655	-	31,037
Investments	169	-	-	169
Total	4,584	26,351	22,169	53,104
Expenditure on:				
Charitable activities				
Academy Trust educational operations	4,438	26,675	1,899	33,012
Total	4,438	26,675	1,899	33,012
Net income/(expenditure)	146	(324)	20,270	20,092
Transfers between funds	(828)	(53)	881	-
Other recognised gains and losses	-	1,449	-	1,449
Net movement in funds	(682)	1,072	21,151	21,541
Reconciliation of funds				
Total funds brought forward	5,718	(1,220)	51,872	56,370
Total funds carried forward	5,036	(148)	73,023	77,911