

Company Registration Number: 08401607 (England & Wales)

RAYLEIGH SCHOOLS TRUST
(A company limited by guarantee)

ANNUAL REPORT AND FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2024



RAYLEIGH SCHOOLS TRUST
(A company limited by guarantee)

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REFERENCE AND ADMINISTRATIVE DETAILS

Members	M Davis J Wincott K Hudson
Trustees	J Wincott, Chair of Trustees C Jones J Morgan K Dines, Chief Executive C Bliss S Brettle J Jacob (appointed 1 September 2023) F Brierley (appointed 15 December 2023) N Ramsay (appointed 22 May 2024)
Company registered number	08401607
Company name	Rayleigh Schools Trust
Principal and registered office	The Swayne Park School Sir Walter Raleigh Drive Rayleigh Essex SS6 9BZ
Company secretary	V Watson
Chief executive officer	K Dines
Senior management team	K Dines, CEO & Headteacher (Swayne Park School) J Edwards, Deputy Headteacher (Swayne Park School) N Welch, Deputy Headteacher (Swayne Park School) S Pemberton, Associate Deputy Headteacher (Swayne Park School) S Smith, Chief Finance Officer (Resigned 1 September 2024) A Robertson, Assistant Headteacher (Swayne Park School) R Bradley, Assistant Headteacher (Swayne Park School) M Shangolis, Assistant Headteacher (Swayne Park School) M Clarke, Headteacher (Glebe Primary School) H Coote, Deputy Headteacher (Glebe Primary School) V Watson, Chief Finance Officer (Appointed 1 September 2024) E O'Brien, Assistant Headteacher (Swayne Park School)
Independent auditors	MWS Chartered Accountants Registered Auditors Kingsridge House 601 London Road Westcliff-on-Sea Essex SS0 9PE

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

Bankers

Lloyds Bank
78 High Street
Rayleigh
Essex
SS6 7EB

Solicitors

Browne Jacobson LLP
PO Box 17157
Birmingham
B2 2XS

RAYLEIGH SCHOOLS TRUST
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TRUSTEES' REPORT
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2024

The Trustees present their annual report together with the financial statements and auditor's report of the charitable company for the year 1st September 2023 to 31 August 2024. The annual report serves the purposes of both a trustees' report, and a directors' report and strategic report under company law.

The Trust operates 2 academies for pupils aged 3 to 18 serving a catchment area in Rayleigh and its surrounds. It has a pupil capacity of (Nursery 30, Reception to Year 6, 420 and on roll 353) (Year 7 – 11, 1328 and on roll of 1252) (Year 12 – 13, 280 and a roll of 183) at 30th September 2024.

Structure, governance and management

a. Constitution

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

The charitable company's Trust deed is the primary governing document of the academy trust.

The Trustees of Rayleigh Schools Trust are also the directors of the charitable company for the purposes of company law.

The charitable company operates 2 schools, The Sweyne Park School and Glebe Primary Schools.

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

b. Members' liability

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

c. Trustees' indemnities

Trustees benefit from indemnity insurance to cover the liability of the Trustees which by virtue of any rule of law which would otherwise attach to them in respect of any negligence, default or breach of trust or breach of duty of which they may be guilty in relation to the Academy Trust. This cover is provided within the Risk Protection Arrangement (RPA) provided by the Department for Education.

d. Method of recruitment and appointment or election of Trustees

Trustees are selected on a skill, knowledge, and experience basis. The CEO will carry out due diligence prior to the Members appointing by ordinary resolution up to 6 Trustees to satisfy the objectives of the Trust.

The Trustees will appoint a Local Governing body for each school within the MAT. Staff representatives will sit on the LGB of each school. Parent governors sit on the Local Governing body of the respective schools within the MAT and are appointed in accordance with the terms of reference determined by the Trustees. The method of appointment is set out within the MAT Articles.

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

Structure, governance and management (continued)

e. Policies adopted for the induction and training of Trustees

Prior to any appointment the CEO will conduct discussions and interviews during the appointment process to establish the profile of a prospective member. At the commencement of each academic year a skills audit of training needs will be reviewed. This informs training requirements during the year. The Governing Body of each school subscribes to a training package from Essex Governor Services. Trustees may attend internal and external sessions. Attendance at training sessions is recorded. Formal Safeguarding training is given to Trustees at the start of their term and is refreshed annually. An Induction Pack is provided to all new Trustees and Governors on appointment, this is discussed with them.

f. Organisational structure

Members - Will normally meet once a year at their AGM. There may be additional meeting should there be a requirement or to discharge duties covered within the Scheme of Delegation.

Trustees - Will meet 6 times a year. Additionally, the Assets committee will meet 6 times a year. The Trustees are the strategic decision-making body of the Trust. Their duties and responsibilities are set out in the Scheme of Delegation which they will agree each year.

The Assets committee is delegated to undertake examination of financial and audit matters and report to the Trustees.

The Scheme of Delegation sets out the Trustees role. Summarised by;

- Setting suitable aims and objectives.
- Agreeing policies, targets, and priorities.
- Monitoring and reviewing aims and objectives and whether the policies, targets and priorities are being achieved in order to hold the school to account.
- Setting and monitoring a balanced financial budget.

Ensuring the schools are a welcoming and safe place and providing a positive learning environment.

Local Governing Body (LGB)

Trustees will appoint an LGB to each of the Trust Schools. The LGB shall undertake the duties and responsibilities as set out in the Scheme of Delegation. The LGB is where representation shall sit from Staff and Parents.

The LGB administration shall comprise of a full LGB meeting each term and Resources committee and a Standards & curriculum committee meeting as determined by the LGB to discharge their duties.

CEO - The CEO shall always be the Headteacher of the lead school within the MAT (The Swayne Park School) and shall be responsible for the day-to-day running of the MAT and the lead school. They shall have the strategic lead in the delivery of education and administration of assets. They shall report to and deliver the policies of the Trustees. They shall also work closely with the LGB. The CEO will be the accounting officer.

Headteacher - A Headteacher who is not a CEO shall be responsible for the administration and oversight of the strategic direction for their school. Their role and responsibilities are set out in the Scheme of Delegation. They shall work closely with their LGB.

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

Structure, governance and management (continued)

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

The Trusts Key Management Personnel comprise of the CEO, Headteacher and their Leadership teams. All key personnel are paid according to the relevant national and Essex pay body recommendations. The Trustees are responsible for CEO/Headteacher performance and pay and changes to staffing structures that will influence pay.

The CEO/Headteachers implement a performance reviews that will inform pay decisions for all other staff.

Members receive no remuneration for undertaking their responsibilities.

Trustees receive no remuneration for undertaking their responsibilities.

The Local Governing Body members receive no remuneration for their responsibilities.

h. Trade union facility time

Trade Union facility time is purchased as part of the Essex County Council public duties fund that the Trust subscribes to. The cost equates to £1 per pupil. The Headteachers have regular meetings within directed time with Union representatives. Expenditure is less than 0.1% of the wage bill.

i. Related parties and other connected charities and organisations

Across the Trust, its schools are members of, or subscribes to, wider networks of schools that include close links with The Rayleigh Teaching School Alliance, The Benfleet Teaching School Alliance, Rochford District Schools Partnership Trust (LDG) and Castle Point & Rochford Association of Secondary Heads' Essex (ASHE), EnPro (an informal Trust of Essex Schools with a RBHIP), South Essex Teaching Institute (SETI), The South Essex Teaching School Alliance, The Deanes Schools Sports Partnership, Essex Primary Headteachers Association (EPHA), Castle Point and Rochford Senior schools Behaviour and Attendance Partnership (CPR BAP). Trustees have all completed a declaration of interest form along with senior staff.

Lynda Walker is a Director of Rochford District Schools Partnership Trust. Ceri Jones CEO of Inspires MAT who are a training provider to the Trust. Nicola Ramsay Consultancy Manager at Juniper Education to whom we purchase consultant support in relation to HR and Financial Systems.

j. Engagement with employees (including disabled persons)

The ethos of the Trust promotes a shared approach and joint responsibility. Employees are kept up to date with operational and strategic matters by way of regular briefings and weekly news letters. There are regular timetabled meeting with representatives of professional organisations. All levels of management have an informal "open door" policy to ensure that all issues can be raised. The management system allows for goals to be set for individuals, curriculum areas and schools as a whole. Examples of positive practice include, staff use of "hearing dogs" and the high level of acoustic treatment within the school for deaf staff and pupils.

Disability and all matters related to employment is managed as determined in law without discrimination.

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

Structure, governance and management (continued)

k. Engagement with suppliers, customers and others in a business relationship with the academy trust

Rayleigh Schools Trust endeavours to build and maintain a strong working relationship with all stakeholders including suppliers, customers, parents, governors/trustees, local residents. This is facilitated through, staff who are given specific responsibilities. Also, regular meetings and appropriate reporting take place. The Trust further maintains its presence in the local community with extensive use of its facilities by local groups and organisations.

Objectives and activities

The Trust's object is specifically restricted to the advancement, for the public benefit, of education in the United Kingdom, in particular but without prejudice to the generality of the foregoing by establishing, maintaining, carrying on, managing and developing schools offering a broad and balanced curriculum to ensure the highest possible educational standards.

The principal aim of the Trust is to provide high quality learning that helps all students to fulfil their intellectual potential and become good citizens and emotionally well-balanced young people.

a. Objects and aims

The Trustees have complied with their duty under section 4 of the Charities Act 2011 to have due regard to public benefit guidance published by the Charity Commission and the Trustees have paid due regard to this guidance in deciding what activities the charitable company should undertake.

The Trustees have given consideration to the Charity Commission's general guidance on public benefit and in particular to its supplementary public benefit guidance on advancing education.

The Trust provides education to children and young people that is:

- 1) balanced and broadly based.
- 2) promotes the spiritual, moral, cultural, mental and physical development of students at the school and society.
- 3) prepares students at the school for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of later life.
- 4) promotes, sustains and increases individual and collective knowledge and understanding of specific areas of study, skills and expertise.

The Trust operates 2 schools and serves pupils within Rayleigh and its surroundings. It is subject to the current statutory arrangements as laid down in the national Admissions Code. Current arrangements for entry to the schools are available in the section of the respective school websites dealing with admission arrangements.

b. Objectives, strategies and activities

Key influences on the Trust Development Plans for the period under review were the Ofsted inspection results, the recovery programme, pupils with additional needs and review and transition of pupil numbers.

Achievements in Teaching and Learning, Leadership, Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural, Behaviour, Safety and Child Protection priorities as identified via the school's Self-Evaluation Form and legislation.

Key activities and targets are set out in the school Development Plan for Swayne Park and are available on request, the key priorities are set out on the website, www.swaynepark.com. Glebe Primary continues to receive assistance in many operational areas and has strong links with Chipping Hill Primary. (in the reporting period) Key activities and targets are set with the MAT and are presented within the School Development Plan. This is available on request.

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

Objectives and activities (continued)

c. Public benefit

In setting our objective and planning out activities the trustees have carefully considered the Charity Commission's general guidance on public benefit. A full range of activities have resumed during the reporting period. The MAT supports numerous community activities and has sought to build a high public profile within its local community.

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

Strategic report

Achievements and performance

Trust finances continue to be in a strong position which has allowed for investments in infrastructure specifically change in use across both schools (The Gateway at Swayne Park & Wraparound provision at Glebe). The Trust has been administering payroll in house for just under a year and successfully filled the position of Payroll Assistant. Whilst the initial implementation was challenging the new process is now operating effectively. The position of CFO has now been filled and full hand over complete.

There has been a reduction in September 2024 pupil intake across both schools. Significant focus and strategy development during 24/25 needs to happen in order to manage the reduction in funding caused by the reducing pupil numbers.

Swayne Park School

Our whole school priorities for the year 2023-2024 were to secure the ongoing success of the school in light of the damaging Ofsted report in February 2023, through:

1. continuing to address the findings of the **Ofsted Inspection in February 2023** by targeting the **behaviour** and **attendance** of a minority cohort of pupils.
2. continuing to embed the **Cornerstones of Teaching and Learning** to ensure Quality First Teaching across the curriculum for all.
3. developing **Character Education**.
4. auditing and reviewing the broader **Sixth Form** curriculum offer such that it fully meets the needs of our post-16 community and our target for recruitment.

Following the Ofsted inspection, and the overall judgement of 'Requires Improvement', we continued to focus on the additional priorities set out within our Rapid Improvement Plan. These were to:

1. improve consistency in the implementation of the Behaviour Policy;
2. improve attendance (including punctuality);
3. improve our monitoring systems to ensure the efficacy of our actions around behaviour and attendance.

The positive impact of the work on these priorities can be seen from our internal data.

In terms of behaviour, ongoing training has taken place with staff to ensure that the policy is being consistently applied and that a common language is being used when pupils are in breach of the policy. The introduction of a Centralised Detention system has been effective in reducing the number of pupils removed from lessons, truanting, misusing the toilets and in addressing specific uniform infringements. The data shows that the number of room removals has reduced by a third over the course of the year. Failure to attend a Centralised Detention results in an Internal Isolation on the following day. Over a third of the number of isolations issued are for this reason. Furthermore, the data shows that the number of pupils suspended (previously known as excluded) from school has also reduced. For the same period in the previous this year, the number was 61 compared to 43 in this reporting year. Suspension really is now the sanction of the last resort and only used in extreme circumstances such as premeditated physical assault and/or behaviour which is uncontrollable and/or dangerous. We do, however, still have a small nucleus of pupils who have been issued with repeated suspensions. There is a range of interventions in place to support their behaviour including Pastoral Support Plans and directions off-site to other local schools.

To improve punctuality, the change to the school day by swapping Period 1 and Tutor Time has been a huge success. The data has shown a 75% reduction in lateness to school. In addition, the figures around attendance and Persistent Absence are better than for the same period last year and above the National Average for the same reporting period. This can be attributed to making parents/carers more accountable for their child's

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

Strategic report (continued)

Achievements and performance (continued)

attendance, increasing the profile of the importance of attendance through assemblies and the Tutor Time sessions and incentivising attendance.

In terms of Priority number 3, we are satisfied that the monitoring systems are now being used effectively to monitor trends and ensure interventions are in place to address any identified issues arising.

In spite of our progress made and our increased marketing of the school, our pupil numbers for September 2024 were incredibly disappointing and more than 50 below that of our PAN. The impact of this will be felt financially from September 2025. In readiness for this year, we were able to adapt our curriculum model and reduce the number of tutor groups and, thus, the number of teaching groups for Year 7. Where possible, we avoided the replacement of teachers leaving the school and, where necessary, appointed Early Careers Teachers to replace more expensive, experienced staff. Furthermore, the school is now fully staffed with qualified teachers and will not be relying on agency staff, which incur huge costs and significant finders' fees, to fill any temporary vacancies. In terms of recruitment of Sixth Form students, numbers remain relatively static at 95. The full review of this provision, using the Integrated Curriculum Financial Planning (ICFP) tool was undertaken during the year to assess the ongoing viability of the Sixth Form. This exercise served to disprove our belief that the main school had been subsidising the Sixth Form for a number of years. Moving forward, we will retain this provision, which we believe is an asset to the school and key to the retention of high-quality teachers.

The additional central funding for pupils with High Needs continues to be insufficient to meet the increased need, post-pandemic. As well as pupils joining the school who are not secondary school-ready and requiring additional support in terms of learning, there has been a five-fold increase in those presenting with social and/or mental health issues. Both of these issues are in addition to pupils who are unable to self-regulate their behaviour and access the mainstream curriculum. For these pupils, the investment was made last year to create an on-site Alternative Provision (AP). This was only possible through the use of Reserves, and an input of £120 – 130K as a set-up cost. Whilst this has had a positive impact on the main school and is better meeting the needs of this small number of pupils, there will be an ongoing revenue cost to staff this provision.

The restructure of the Finance/HR team has provided greater efficiency and a centralised function for the Trust and a payroll officer has been appointed to administer payroll in-house. In addition, we were successful in appointing an experienced Chief Financial Officer to replace our retiring colleague. She has a clear vision as to where further improvements can be made to deliver greater efficiencies for the Trust, including physically centralising the team in one location and using more of the features available within PS Financials to provide more accurate budgetary reporting to Trustees.

The outcomes in Year 13 were particularly pleasing with the average A Level grade improving by over a grade to a B-. The overall pass rate was 99% with 24% of grades at A*-A, 53% at A*-B and 76% at A*-C. The average grade for Vocational subjects was a Distinction-. Many students gained places at prestigious universities, including two who have successfully secured entry to the University of Cambridge. Many others were offered apprenticeships in a range of different companies.

The GCSE outcomes were disappointing overall. Whilst the number of pupils gaining a grade 4 or above in English was 73% and in Maths, 64%, the combined 'Basics' measure (achieving both English and Maths), which is externally reported was down on last year's. 33% of pupils gained Basics at grade 5+ and 58% at 4+, compared to 41% and 63% respectively. The Attainment 8 score was 4.00 and the Ebacc entry was at 48%, which remains above the national average. I would attribute this decline to the capacity required to improve behaviour and an inadequate focus on this key cohort of borderline pupils in either English and Maths. This has been added to our whole school priorities for the new Academic year.

The Trustees, with assistance from the LGB, continue to monitor and scrutinise all aspects of financial performance and benchmark against data that is centrally produced. In addition, external trends and influences are closely monitored and reflected in the agendas and minutes of the Board meetings. External advice and guidance are provided by our Auditors.

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

Strategic report (continued)

Achievements and performance (continued)

Glebe Primary School

The school's focus for 2023/24 was centred on achieving OFSETD Success which during the Autumn term of 2024/25 had been achieved. A significant portion of our resources was dedicated to enhancing the quality of education, upskilling our staff, and seeking external validation, resulting in a positive outcome with "Good" ratings across all areas. Additionally, in response to valuable parent feedback, we made a substantial investment in expanding our Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS), including the creation of a custom-made space for extended wraparound services. This has led to a notable increase in uptake. The expansion of our Nursery will see us double our capacity in January 2025, positioning us for a fuller roll and positively impacting our school funding moving forward.

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

Strategic report (continued)

Achievements and performance (continued)

a. Key performance indicators

The Statutory Assessment data for 2023-2024:

Statutory Assessment Data July 2024 - Overview

- Phonics screening was 5% above National in Year 1, with 90% achieving phonics by the end of Year 2.
- GLD was above the national average despite 13% of pupils accessing SEN Support (broadly national) and 17.4% having EHCPs; well above the 3% national average. Overall 30% of the cohort are on the SEN register, compared to 17% nationally. The main areas of need include: 15% of pupils with HI (7 pupils) and 11% (5 pupils) who are diagnosed as having ASD.

KS1 End of Key Stage Results

25% of the cohort are SEND. They entered Year 2 with low attainment. They made progress against starting points, however data, particularly writing, remains low.

Multiplication Results

- In the MTC result, the average score was 18.7 compared to 20.2 nationally. Multiplication and Maths continue to be a focus on the school development plan. 8 pupils are on the SEN register. This means that 18% of the cohort have additional needs. 11% (5 pupils) of this cohort are on the register for SEMH needs. Speech and language and HI also significantly impact pupil attainment in this year group. This equates to an additional 5 children in the cohort.

End of Key Stage 2 Results

- KS2 Results were broadly in line with National. As you can see, 60% achieved combined R/W/M compared to 61% of pupils nationally. 7% achieved GPS standard compared to 8% nationally.
- In all but GPS, our scores were broadly in line with national. Our standard achieving Greater Depth was below national, as a result of a strategic decision to help children 'keep up and catch up', ensuring that we supported children to tip over the line into expected. Given our knowledge of starting points we are celebrating results as a result of this strategy.
- In Year 6 (2023-24) there was a clear cross over between the number of disadvantaged pupils and those with SEND, this is not a pattern that is typical across the school. Of the 9 pupils with SEND one child passed Maths and five were scaled score of 96+. There was positive in year progress and the average SEN score in Maths was 98.

Attendance

- We are pleased that during 2023/24 the school was broadly in line with the national average. Current attendance is running slightly above national at 95%.
- YTD attendance for disadvantaged pupils is 91% vs 96% non-disadvantaged.
- Attendance for all SEND pupils is 91%, those with EHCPs is 90%, 96% for non SEND.
- The hard work and robustness around attendance is paying dividends as the school remains significantly below the national average for persistent absence. Historically, this was an issue for the school. We are seeing year on year improvement. Two years ago PA was 21%, End of year it is 14.6%, currently it is 17.5%. This is below the last published national figure, in Summer 2024. This comes with the caveat that we are only four weeks in and the school has been hit with the spread of COVID and a sickness bug. Please see analysis:
- 57 pupils are persistently absent.
- Currently 2 pupils meet the DfE threshold of 10 unauthorised absences in ten school days.
- Of the 57 pupils with attendance below 90% - 15 of these are eligible for pupil premium funding.
- Of the 57 pupils below 90%, 19 of these are also on the SEND register.

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

Strategic report (continued)

Achievements and performance (continued)

- 7 of the pupil premium children with attendance below 90% are also SEND.
- 12 of the 57 pupils, live out of area, including areas such as: Hockley, Leigh on Sea, Chelmsford and Hullbridge.
- 1 pupil who lives out of area meets the threshold for 10 sessions in 10 days of unauthorised absence.
- Currently, all absence rates are below the last recorded national data.
- Current YTD attendance is roughly 3% above nationally recorded data for Primary schools and 6% above nationally recorded data for all schools

b. Going concern

The running budget for 2024/25 has been set as a balanced budget with discreet reserves spends across both schools which will show as a deficit (SPS -£35k & GPS -£90k).

As with previous years additional grants received provide flexibility to the budget as the year progresses. With stability in energy prices and the new boiler system in place at Sweyne Park School we hope to see continued efficiencies. Reserves remain available to cover an in-year deficit. However, after making appropriate enquiries and consideration of previous performance, the Board of Trustees has a reasonable expectation that the Trust has adequate resources and skill 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.

c. Promoting the success of the company

The governance structure of the trust is designed to ensure the trustees have regard to the following:

- Strategic medium and long term visioning of the Trust position with challenges.
- The interests of the company's employees through challenge and oversight of the Personnel & Pay.
- The need to foster the company's business relationships with suppliers, customers and others as described in the Structure, Governance and Management section of this report.
- The impact of the trust's operations in the community and the environment through reports submitted from in the Structure, Governance and Management section of this report.
- The desirability of the Trust to maintain and further build its reputation for high standards of business conduct.
- Maintaining its business continuity plan and other Policies. This is complimented with registers and declarations on interests from Trustees, Governors and key staff.

Financial review

The Trustees have established a system of strategic overview for Trust finances. Monthly financial management reports will be produced by the CFO and circulated accordingly. These also benefit from the examination of detail by the LGBs of the respective schools. The Trust purchased an internal scrutiny review in line with the Academies Handbook requirement.

Reports were presented to Trustees. The Trust's accountants attend (at Partner level) key strategic meetings. The Trust has established strong support links with Glebe Primary to ensure financial stability. Staff within the Finance team support the whole MAT. Trustees have also given due consideration to the risk associated with financial mismanagement and / or compliance failures.

The Sweyne Park School and Glebe Primary continue to operate in an environment of financial pressure and constraints. The CFO will focus on financial planning and strategic development to ensure the MAT can confidently navigate future conditions & challenges. Pupil intake and projections will be at the forefront of any financial decisions in the coming years.

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TRUSTEES' REPORT (CONTINUED)
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Strategic report (continued)

The principal funding for the operation of the school is provided by the DfE. A formal funding agreement is in place for this. Other funding is provided by Essex County Council and other local authorities who receive invoices for education provided for pupils who live in their administrative area. The School's governance arrangements ensure that financial performance is reviewed on a half termly basis.

Monthly accounts are produced, and a financial review is carried out with results circulated to the Trustee Finance Committee.

Early budget consideration will start in December, when school applications have been submitted and selection data is released.

All sources of income, especially those around pupils' numbers are examined for robustness and sustainability. Support is provided by our auditors at key points. The day-to-day management of financial matters is handled on-site by a skilled team. This should further enhance the robustness of financial understanding. The Finance team has also been further enhanced with the introduction of the in-house payroll service. Skill level continues to develop in the use of finance software.

During the period covered by the report, designated funds were used for infrastructure projects. There are further plans to use funds to provide additional nursery places, upgrade for specialist teaching areas plus capital CIF bids. During the year some additional income streams were received, this included a pay and pension grant. This additional funding offset some of the in year reserve spending. Additional income also helped cashflow at all periods of the year. Some short-term low risk investment are now taking, capitalising on higher interest rates. The policies of the New Government have not yet been fully communicated, however the October budget announcement did indicate an increase in Employers NI contribution from April 2024, which if not supported by the Government will have a significant impact. It should be noted that Trustees are aware and continue to monitor the financial environment.

CIF(Condition Improvement Fund) 23/24 SPS was successful in its CIF Bid which resulted in the boiler replacement project taking place. This will result in more energy efficient operations.

Pupil numbers across schools continue to be a concern going forward. As highlighted in previous reports a demographic area wide dip in pupil numbers in Reception Years 1,3 & 4. Recruitment of pupils into Yr12 September 24 continues to be disappointing despite a significant recruitment drive. Forward planning of the feasibility of the 6th form needs to be reviewed.

SPS remain in the Ofsted window. GPS underwent an Ofsted Inspection in October 2024 with the report now published, receiving a rating of Good in inspection areas. The impact of the reports will be significant and have the potential to influence pupil numbers going forward.

The Trust have been successful in replacing the CFOO with a candidate from a formal accounting background. A hand over period took place during the latter part of the academic year. The previous CFOO will continue to provide support to the trust, using his experience to project manage large infrastructure projects.

During the year 2, Trustees were appointed which has further enhanced the skill set of the Trustees. The Trustees understand their duties and carry out roles as detailed in the Academies Trust Handbook.

Premises and Estate factors including RAAC

The MAT continues to manage its estate on a day-to-day basis with its premises team and the engagement of contractors for service works. A large spend register is maintained for significant items to aid the planning of replacements. 2023/24 Swayne Park school was successful in its CIF bid which resulted in the main schools and sports hall boilers and associated plant being replaced, total value £450k. Further bids will be made focusing on roofing replacement and a new heating controls system both at SPS. Glebe primary school the bid will focus on Flood mitigating measures. The financial demands for capital spend are starting to build, greater financial provision may be needed to be made in 24/25.

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

Strategic report (continued)

Work continues in converting to LED lighting across the estate.

It has been formally confirmed that there is no Reinforced autoclave aerated concrete (RAAC) present across both schools. The school will look to continue its on going maintenance and site improvements to ensure that the facilities are best suited to deliver school's curriculum.

a. Reserves policy

The MAT as a whole, holds reserves to deal with strategic issues. Schools may make requests to access these funds for a specific purpose. They should not be used to maintain on going revenue costs. The Trustees have overall control of the use of reserves in consultation with Headteachers and LGB's. There is no plan to specifically not spend all funds allocated for the education of pupils to build reserves. Capital funds need to be built up to allow for larger spend items that will occur on a periodic basis.

At 31 August 2024 the total funds comprised:

Unrestricted	£1,156,070
Restricted: Fixed asset funds	£19,261,468
Pension reserve	£ -
Other	£289,163

	£20,706,701

b. Investment policy

The Trust will to continue invest reserves within a low-risk environment of a commercial high street bank. 2023/24 the Trust was able to gain higher returns from its investments due to the higher market interest rates and by adopting robust internal procedures to ensure returns are maximised.

RAYLEIGH SCHOOLS TRUST
(A company limited by guarantee)

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

c. Principal risks and uncertainties

The principal risks facing the Trust are set out in the Academy's Risk Management policy and Risk Register which is reviewed annually by the Trustees. The Trustees and LGB's accept that risk management is an inevitable part of its operations but maintains an objective not to run unacceptable levels of risk in any area. The subjective nature of this process requires major risks to be resolved by the Trustees and LGB's, whilst more minor risks are dealt with by senior staff. Principle risks is are a regular agenda item for Trustees.

Trustees have identified the following principal risks and uncertainties facing the MAT:

The MAT is operating in a period of considerable financial uncertainty with regard to public funding. Financial planning is focused on maintaining the breadth and quality of future work in the context of potential diminishing budgets. Trustees have given due consideration to the risk associated with financial mismanagement and / or compliance failures. Trustees continue to review and ensure that appropriate measures are in place to mitigate these risks. Regular and detailed monitoring gives opportunity for timely examination and intervention.

The direction of travel for national education funding is often difficult to predict. The overall view is taken that the strength of argument in support of increased funding may at best result in neutral funding in real terms. Continued reduction in pupil numbers would cause a significant impact on long term finances. Value for money checks take place during the year. DfE benchmarking data is used for comparison with other and similar schools/MATs.

The monthly financial management reporting aims to be accurate to the end of year position and provide clear understanding of direction of travel. If flawed this could lead to misrepresentation of a mid-year financial position on which management and future budget decisions could be made. As always ongoing efforts to mitigate this risk are applied.

Sweyne Park School and Glebe depends on maintaining the highest educational standards in order to continue to attract applicants in sufficient numbers. Trustees are clearly focused on monitoring and reviewing the achievement and success of students. Ofsted judgements can have a wide-ranging impact and any impact on pupil numbers will be closely monitored. Trustees continue to give due consideration to other aspects of the school's activities where there could be a reputational risk, including discipline, safeguarding, Health and Safety etc., with policies reviewed regularly.

Safeguarding and Child Protection Risks

Trustees continue to ensure that the highest standards are maintained in the selection and monitoring of staff and volunteers. Governors also independently scrutinises the school's Single Central Record, the operation of child protection policies of the school, the training and support, to protect the young people in its care. There are staff specifically appointed with Child protection responsibilities. All staff receive refresher training annually. The vice Chair on each LGB is also the safeguarding Governor.

Significant Changes in Staff

Trustees continue to review and monitor arrangements for recruitment and the development of existing staff to minimise the risk resulting from major changes in key staff. Staff training and development has consistently provided opportunity for internal promotions. Staff are requested to advise of upcoming plans in advance.

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

Fundraising

Both schools within the MAT have Parent Associations who carry out fundraising activities for the benefit the respective schools. Glebe have a strong working relationship with the Parent Association 'Friends of Glebe' with regular communication and collaboration. Support from the Parent Association linked to Sweyne Park is minimum. A member of staff from each school acts as a liaison. Sweyne Park School is used by a large number of local groups and clubs who pay for the use of facilities. This use provides a significant additional income stream and also further develops its links with the local Community. There is also some use of Glebe for this. Voluntary contributions to wider school life are sought from parents in Yr7. The Trust does not use any external fundraisers.

Streamlined energy and carbon reporting

The academy trust's greenhouse gas emissions and energy consumption are as follows:

	2024
Energy consumption used to calculate emissions (kWh)	1,920,767
Scope 1 emissions (in tonnes of CO2 equivalent):	
Gas consumption	328
Total scope 1	328
Scope 2 emissions (in tonnes of CO2 equivalent):	
Purchased electricity	62
Scope 3 emissions (in tonnes of CO2 equivalent):	
Business travel in employee-owned or rental vehicles	1
Total gross emissions (in tonnes of CO2 equivalent):	391
Intensity ratio:	
Tonnes of CO2 equivalent per pupil	0.27

The academy trust has followed and used the following quantification and reporting methodologies:

- the 2019 HM Government Environmental Reporting Guidelines;
- the GHG Reporting Protocol - Corporate Standard; and
- the 2022 UK Government's Conversion Factors for Company Reporting.

The chosen intensity ratio is total gross emissions in tonnes of CO2 equivalent per pupil, the recommended ratio for the sector.

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

Plans for future periods

The Trustees remain open to further expansion of the MAT and has undertaken information gather discussions but accepts that this needs to be supported with a clear Government direction of travel. Ofsted gradings mean that any plans must be paused until Ofsted gradings are raised. 6th form uptake will need to be reviewed annually to ensure it is continues to be financially viable. Nursery provision at Glebe is set to be expanded raising the capacity from 26 to 52. This will help to bolster reception intake numbers and strength the early years at the school. The Trust will continue to make CIF bids to help maintain the fabric of its schools. The Trust will continue to develop the quality of its Teaching and Learning at all levels and specifically address Ofsted gradings.

Funds held as custodian on behalf of others

The MAT does not hold any funds on behalf of other parties. It acts as an agent of the ESFA to distribute 6th form Bursary funds.

Disclosure of information to auditors

Insofar as the Trustees are aware:

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

The Trustees' report, incorporating a strategic report, was approved by order of the Board of Trustees, as the company directors, on 13 December 2024 and signed on its behalf by:

Jo Wincott - Chair of Trustee

.....
J Wincott
Chair of Trustees

RAYLEIGH SCHOOLS TRUST
(A company limited by guarantee)

GOVERNANCE STATEMENT

Scope of responsibility

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

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

The Board of Trustees has delegated the day-to-day responsibility to the CEO/Headteacher, 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 Rayleigh Schools 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.

RAYLEIGH SCHOOLS TRUST
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GOVERNANCE STATEMENT (CONTINUED)

Governance

The information on governance included here supplements that described in the Trustees' report and in the Statement of trustees' responsibilities. The Board of Trustees has formally met 6 times during the year.

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

Trustee	Meetings attended	Out of a possible
J Wincott, Chair of Trustees	5	6
K Dines, Chief Executive	6	6
C Jones	4	6
J Morgan	6	6
C Bliss	6	6
S Brettle	5	6
F Brierley	5	5
J Jacob	5	6
N Ramsay	2	2

Trustees take the strategic overview of school operation and performance and inform the decision making process. Their skills profile is used to provide rigour and challenge. Two new Trustees were appointed during the reporting period.

The Scheme of Delegation sets out the responsibilities at the different levels of Trust management and administration. This is reviewed annually. There have been no changes in the last year.

Conflicts of interest

Conflicts of interest are declared and refreshed each year for both Trustees senior budget holders and members of the LGB. Each meeting also covers Conflict of interest as a standing agenda item. There are no formally registered interests at present.

The LGB continue to take an active part in the development of the school's and the formation of the MAT. Governor visits to the school take place on a regular basis. They inform the decision-making process. Attendance is good and skill levels have been increasing with a greater ability to scrutinise and analyse information and statistics that are presented covering all aspects of the school operation. It should be noted that at Glebe primary there has been a number of newly recruited Governors. At all levels of Governance, an annual audit is carried out of skills and training requirements. LGB support packages are purchased. Professional clerking is provided to all formal meetings. Each school has an LGB Committee that will focus on Finance and examination of all finance matters below the strategic view of the Trustees.

Data to inform Trustee and LGB considerations is provided by the staff within schools but external benchmarking is considered along with our independent Auditor opinion.

Trustee Assets Finance, Scrutiny and Audit Committee is a sub-committee of the main Board of Trustees. It meets six times a year. Its purpose is to: monitor, evaluate and review school policy and practice in relation to financial planning and monitoring; to decide how to spend the General Annual Grant and other funds under the control of Trustees for the purposes of the Trust; to monitor and ensure compliance with DfE, EFA, Charity Commission and other relevant bodies and all relevant legal requirements in relation to the proper financial management of Trust; to agree limits of financial delegation; to ensure that full accounts are kept; to ensure appropriate insurance cover is in place; to receive monthly reports from the Chief Financial Officer, to report the Trust's financial position to the full Trustee Board each half term. The Trustee Assets Committee assumes the role of an Audit Committee. This role is further supported by regularity visits from the school's auditors. A teaching and learning group is run by the CEO with Trustees to deliver specific education based scrutiny to the running of Glebe Primary School. Education based scrutiny at Swayne Park School is undertaken by external education professionals.

Attendance during the year at meetings was as follows:

RAYLEIGH SCHOOLS TRUST
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GOVERNANCE STATEMENT (CONTINUED)

Governance (continued)

Trustee	Meetings attended	Out of a possible
J Morgan	5	6
C Bliss	6	6
S Brettle	5	6
K Dines	6	6
J Wincott	4	6
N Ramsay	1	1

The CEO Teaching and Learning Group had 6 meetings during the year. Reports from these meetings feature in CEO and headteachers reports.

Review of value for money

As accounting officer, the CEO/Headteacher has responsibility for ensuring that the academy trust delivers good value in the use of public resources. The accounting officer understands that value for money refers to the educational and wider societal outcomes achieved in return for the taxpayer resources received.

The accounting officer considers how the Academy Trust's use of its resources has provided good value for money during each academic year, and reports to the board of trustees where value for money can be improved, including the use of benchmarking data where appropriate. The accounting officer for the Academy Trust has delivered improved value for money during the year by:

- Recruited new Trustees and LGB members.
- Centralised Finance team to provide improved economies of scale across the Trust
- Appointed a new and highly qualified Chief Financial Officer
- Maintained a non-replacement of staff model, where possible in light of reduced numbers in some year groups at both schools.
- Made MAT savings by using SPS premises team to undertake refurbishment projects at Glebe .
- Undertook a full review of the curriculum at Swayne Park using the DfE Integrated Curriculum and Finance Planning Tool.
- Remodelled the curriculum at Swayne Park in Year 7 to align with lower intake and to make savings.
- Made CIF bids for larger capital projects, (which resulted in a new boiler system at SPS).
- Continued sourcing of ICT support and equipment within the Trust.
- Reported and reviewed the financial position on a monthly basis.
- Maintained links with other schools and agencies so the good practice can be shared.
- Maximised use of the schools for lettings.
- Reviewed key performance indicators and benchmarked for education and administrative functions

The purpose of the system of internal control

The system of internal control is designed to manage risk to a reasonable level rather than to eliminate all risk of failure to achieve policies, aims and objectives. It can, therefore, only provide reasonable and not absolute assurance of effectiveness. The system of internal control is based on an on-going process designed to identify and prioritise the risks to the achievement of MAT 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 Rayleigh Schools Trust for the period, 1st September 2023 to 31st August 2024 and up to the date of approval of the annual report and financial statements.

RAYLEIGH SCHOOLS TRUST
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GOVERNANCE STATEMENT (CONTINUED)

Capacity to handle risk

The board of trustees has reviewed the key risks to which the Academy Trust is exposed together with the operating, financial and compliance controls that have been implemented to mitigate those risks. The board of trustees is of the view that there is a formal on-going process for identifying, evaluating and managing the Academy Trust's significant risks that has been in place for the period 1st September 2023 to 31st August 2024 and up to the date of approval of the annual report and financial statements. This process is regularly reviewed by the board of trustees.

The risk and control framework

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

- comprehensive budgeting and monitoring systems with an annual budget and periodic financial reports which are reviewed and agreed by the board of Trustees.
- regular reviews by the finance and general purposes committee of reports which indicate financial performance against the forecasts and of major purchase plans, capital works and expenditure programmes.
- setting targets to measure financial and other performance.
- clearly defined purchasing (asset purchase or capital investment) guidelines.
- identification and management of risks.

The Board of Trustees has decided to buy-in an internal audit service from SBM Services Limited.

The Trustees have previously considered the need for a specific internal audit function and decided not to appoint an internal auditor. However, the Trustees engaged SBM, an independent school's finance services provider to perform focused checks on specific areas according to the Academies financial handbook. Their findings were presented to Trustees. This is supplemented by the work of the Trustees Assets committee and LGB's resources committees and at SPS the Finance working party.

The revised FRC Ethical Standard for auditors states that a firm providing external audit to an entity shall not also provide internal audit services to it, subject to transitional arrangements which permit existing audit engagements at 15 March 2020 to conclude. Where applicable, the trust should also describe how its internal scrutiny arrangements have been affected by the requirements of the FRC Ethical Standard for auditors.

Further guidance on the internal scrutiny arrangements is available in the Academies Financial Handbook and in ESFA's good practice guide.

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

- Income & Debtors
- Lettings

On an annual basis SBM prepare a summary report to the Trustees outlining the areas reviewed, key findings, recommendations and conclusions to help the committee consider actions and assess year on year progress.

RAYLEIGH SCHOOLS TRUST
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GOVERNANCE STATEMENT (CONTINUED)

Review of effectiveness

As accounting officer, the CEO/Headteacher has responsibility for reviewing the effectiveness of the system of internal control. During the year in question the review has been informed by:

- the work of the SBM Services;
- the financial management and governance self-assessment process;
- the work of the executive managers within the academy trust who have responsibility for the development and maintenance of the internal control framework.
- the work of the external auditors;
- the work with the SRMA.

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

Conclusion

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

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

Jo Wincott - Chair of Trustee
.....
J Wincott
Chair of Trustees

Katharine Dines
.....
K Dines
Accounting Officer

Date: 13 December 2024

RAYLEIGH SCHOOLS TRUST
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STATEMENT OF REGULARITY, PROPRIETY AND COMPLIANCE

As accounting officer of Rayleigh Schools Trust, I have considered my responsibility to notify the Academy Trust board of trustees and the Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA) of material irregularity, impropriety and non-compliance with terms and conditions of all funding received by the Academy Trust, 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 Academy Trust Handbook 2023

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

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

Katharine Dines

K Dines
Accounting Officer
Date: 13 December 2024

RAYLEIGH SCHOOLS TRUST
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STATEMENT OF TRUSTEES' RESPONSIBILITIES
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2024

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

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

- select suitable accounting policies and then apply them consistently;
- observe the methods and principles of the Charities SORP 2019 and the Academies Accounts Direction 2023 to 2024;
- make judgments and accounting estimates that are reasonable and prudent;
- state whether applicable UK Accounting Standards have been followed, subject to any material departures disclosed and explained in the financial statements;
- prepare the financial statements on the going concern basis unless it is inappropriate to presume that the charitable company will continue in business.

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

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

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

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


.....
J Wincott
Chair of Trustees

Date: 13 December 2024

RAYLEIGH SCHOOLS TRUST
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**INDEPENDENT AUDITORS' REPORT ON THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS TO THE MEMBERS OF
RAYLEIGH SCHOOLS TRUST**

Opinion

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

In our opinion the financial statements:

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

Basis for opinion

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

Conclusions relating to going concern

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

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

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

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

Other information

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

We have nothing to report in this regard.

Opinion on other matters prescribed by the Companies Act 2006

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

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

Matters on which we are required to report by exception

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

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

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

Responsibilities of trustees

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

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

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

Auditors' responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements

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

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

We obtained an understanding of the legal and regulatory frameworks applicable to the Academy Trust and the industry in which it operates. We determined that the following laws and regulations were most significant:

The Companies Act 2006, Safeguarding (including statutory guidance Keeping Children Safe in Education), employment law and public sector pay and conditions. We enquired of management to obtain an understanding of how the Academy Trust is complying with those legal and regulatory frameworks and whether they had any knowledge of actual or suspected fraud. We corroborated the results of our enquiries through our review of the board minutes for the year. We did not identify any matters relating to material non compliance with laws and regulation or matters in relation to fraud;

- We obtained an understanding of how the Company is complying with those legal and regulatory frameworks by making inquiries of management and those responsible for legal and compliance procedures;
- In assessing the potential risks of material misstatement, we obtained an understanding of the Company's operations, including its objectives and strategies to understand the expected financial statement disclosures and business risks that may result in risks of material misstatement;
- In assessing the appropriateness of the collective competence and capabilities of the engagement team, the engagement partner considered the engagement team's:
 - understanding of, and practical experience with, audit engagements of a similar nature and complexity through appropriate training and participation
 - the specialist skills required and
 - knowledge of the industry in which the client operates.
- We assessed the susceptibility of the Company's financial statements to material misstatement, including how fraud might occur. Audit procedures performed by the engagement team included:
 - assessing the design effectiveness of controls management has in place to prevent and detect fraud;
 - challenging assumptions and judgements made by management in its significant accounting estimates;
 - identifying and testing journal entries, in particular manual journal entries made at year end for financial statement preparation; and
 - assessing the extent of compliance with the relevant laws and regulations as part of our procedures on the related financial statement item.

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

A further description of our responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements is located on the Financial

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

Reporting Council's website at: www.frc.org.uk/auditorsresponsibilities. This description forms part of our Auditors' report.

Use of our report

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

Jason Lamont

Jason Lamont ACA (Senior statutory auditor)

for and on behalf of

MWS

Chartered Accountants

Registered Auditors

Kingsridge House

601 London Road

Westcliff-on-Sea

Essex

SS0 9PE

Date: 19 December 2024

RAYLEIGH SCHOOLS TRUST
(A company limited by guarantee)

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

In accordance with the terms of our engagement letter dated 10 February 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 Rayleigh Schools 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 Rayleigh Schools Trust and ESFA in accordance with the terms of our engagement letter. Our work has been undertaken so that we might state to Rayleigh Schools Trust and ESFA those matters we are required to state in a report and for no other purpose. To the fullest extent permitted by law, we do not accept or assume responsibility to anyone other than Rayleigh Schools Trust and ESFA, for our work, for this report, or for the conclusion we have formed.

Respective responsibilities of Rayleigh Schools Trust's accounting officer and the reporting accountant

The accounting officer is responsible, under the requirements of Rayleigh Schools Trust's funding agreement with the Secretary of State for Education dated 27 March 2013 and the Academy Trust Handbook, extant from 1 September 2023, for ensuring that expenditure disbursed and income received is applied for the purposes intended by Parliament and the financial transactions conform to the authorities which govern them.

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

RAYLEIGH SCHOOLS TRUST
(A company limited by guarantee)

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

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:

- Assessing the risk of material irregularity in the Academy Trust
- Commissioning a self-assessment review of the Trustees' governance arrangements and consideration of any material non-compliance with the Academies Financial Handbook
- Investigating any areas of significant risk identified
- Consideration of the work performed under our audit engagement and any impact this may have on our regularity conclusion or regularity risk assessment
- A review of the internal controls and internal audit procedures for areas of significant risk and performing further substantive testing where necessary.

In line with the Framework and guide for external auditors and reporting accountants of academy trusts issued April 2023, we have not performed any additional procedures regarding the Trust's compliance with safeguarding, health and safety and estates management.

Conclusion

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

MWS

Reporting Accountant
MWS
Chartered Accountants

19 December 2024
Date:

RAYLEIGH SCHOOLS TRUST
(A company limited by guarantee)

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

	Note	Unrestricted funds 2024 £	Restricted funds 2024 £	Restricted fixed asset funds 2024 £	Total funds 2024 £	Total funds 2023 £
Income from:						
Donations and capital grants	4	35,698	-	475,833	511,531	159,723
Other trading activities		268,783	-	-	268,783	247,606
Investments	7	33,822	10,000	-	43,822	6,776
Charitable activities		5,752	12,949,462	-	12,955,214	12,295,017
Total income		344,055	12,959,462	475,833	13,779,350	12,709,122
Expenditure on:						
Charitable activities	9	-	13,049,883	341,573	13,391,456	12,465,504
Total expenditure		-	13,049,883	341,573	13,391,456	12,465,504
Net income/(expenditure)		344,055	(90,421)	134,260	387,894	243,618
Transfers between funds	19	-	(177,653)	177,653	-	-
Net movement in funds before other recognised gains/(losses)		344,055	(268,074)	311,913	387,894	243,618
Other recognised gains/(losses):						
Actuarial (losses)/gains on defined benefit pension schemes	26	-	(64,000)	-	(64,000)	1,080,000
Net movement in funds		344,055	(332,074)	311,913	323,894	1,323,618
Reconciliation of funds:						
Total funds brought forward		812,014	621,237	18,949,555	20,382,806	19,059,188
Net movement in funds		344,055	(332,074)	311,913	323,894	1,323,618
Total funds carried forward		1,156,069	289,163	19,261,468	20,706,700	20,382,806

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

The notes on pages 35 to 62 form part of these financial statements.

RAYLEIGH SCHOOLS TRUST
(A company limited by guarantee)
REGISTERED NUMBER: 08401607

BALANCE SHEET
AS AT 31 AUGUST 2024

	Note	2024 £	2023 £
Fixed assets			
Tangible assets	16	19,112,002	18,822,666
		<u>19,112,002</u>	<u>18,822,666</u>
Current assets			
Debtors	17	471,458	132,549
Cash at bank and in hand		1,862,848	2,150,914
		<u>2,334,306</u>	<u>2,283,463</u>
Creditors: amounts falling due within one year	18	(739,607)	(684,323)
Net current assets		<u>1,594,699</u>	<u>1,599,140</u>
Total assets less current liabilities		<u>20,706,701</u>	<u>20,421,806</u>
Net assets excluding pension asset / liability		<u>20,706,701</u>	<u>20,421,806</u>
Defined benefit pension scheme asset / liability	26	-	(39,000)
Total net assets		<u><u>20,706,701</u></u>	<u><u>20,382,806</u></u>
Funds of the academy trust			
Restricted funds:			
Fixed asset funds	19	19,261,468	18,949,555
Restricted income funds	19	289,163	660,237
		<u>19,550,631</u>	<u>19,609,792</u>
Restricted funds excluding pension asset	19	19,550,631	19,609,792
Pension reserve	19	-	(39,000)
Total restricted funds	19	<u>19,550,631</u>	<u>19,570,792</u>
Unrestricted income funds	19	<u>1,156,070</u>	<u>812,014</u>
Total funds		<u><u>20,706,701</u></u>	<u><u>20,382,806</u></u>

The financial statements on pages 31 to 62 were approved and authorised for issue by the Trustees and are signed on their behalf, by:

RAYLEIGH SCHOOLS TRUST
(A company limited by guarantee)
REGISTERED NUMBER: 08401607

BALANCE SHEET (CONTINUED)
AS AT 31 AUGUST 2024

Jo Wincott - Chair of Trustee

Katharine Dines

.....
J Wincott
Chair of Trustees

.....
K Dines
Chief Executive Officer

Date: 13 December 2024

The notes on pages 35 to 62 form part of these financial statements.

RAYLEIGH SCHOOLS TRUST
(A company limited by guarantee)

STATEMENT OF CASH FLOWS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2024

	Note	2024 £	2023 £
Cash flows from operating activities			
Net cash (used in)/provided by operating activities	21	(166,813)	627,234
Cash flows from investing activities	22	(121,254)	8,666
Change in cash and cash equivalents in the year		(288,067)	635,900
Cash and cash equivalents at the beginning of the year		2,150,914	1,515,014
Cash and cash equivalents at the end of the year	23, 24	<u><u>1,862,847</u></u>	<u><u>2,150,914</u></u>

The notes on pages 35 to 62 form part of these financial statements

RAYLEIGH SCHOOLS TRUST
(A company limited by guarantee)

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

1. General information

Rayleigh Schools Trust is a company limited by guarantee, incorporated in England and Wales.

The address of the registered office and principal place of operation is detailed on page 1.

The nature of the Trust's operations and principal activity are detailed in the Trustees' Report.

2. Accounting policies

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

2.1 Basis of preparation of financial statements

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

2.2 Going concern

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

RAYLEIGH SCHOOLS TRUST
(A company limited by guarantee)

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

2. Accounting policies (continued)

2.3 Income

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

• **Grants**

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

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

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

• **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.

2.4 Expenditure

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

• **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.

2.5 Government grants

Government grants relating to tangible fixed assets are treated as deferred income and released to the Statement of financial activities over the expected useful lives of the assets concerned. Other grants are credited to the Statement of financial activities as the related expenditure is incurred.

RAYLEIGH SCHOOLS TRUST
(A company limited by guarantee)

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

2. Accounting policies (continued)

2.6 Interest receivable

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

2.7 Tangible fixed assets

Assets costing £1,500 or more are capitalised as tangible fixed assets and are carried at cost, net of depreciation and any provision for impairment.

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

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

Depreciation is provided on the following bases:

Long-term leasehold property	- 14-50 years
Furniture and equipment	- 5-125 years
Computer equipment	- 5 years
Motor vehicles	- 5-10 years

Assets in the course of construction are included at cost. Depreciation on these assets is not charged until they are brought into use and reclassified to freehold or leasehold land and buildings.

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.

2.8 Debtors

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

2.9 Cash at bank and in hand

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

RAYLEIGH SCHOOLS TRUST
(A company limited by guarantee)

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

2. Accounting policies (continued)

2.10 Liabilities

Liabilities are recognised when there is an obligation at the Balance sheet date as a result of a past event, it is probable that a transfer of economic benefit will be required in settlement, and the amount of the settlement can be estimated reliably. Liabilities are recognised at the amount that the 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.

2.11 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 bases are as follows:

Financial assets - trade and other debtors are basic financial instruments and are debt instruments measured at amortised cost as detailed in note 17. Prepayments are not financial instruments.

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

Financial liabilities - trade creditors, accruals and other creditors are financial instruments, and are measured at amortised cost as detailed in note 18. 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.

2.12 Operating leases

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

RAYLEIGH SCHOOLS TRUST
(A company limited by guarantee)

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

2. Accounting policies (continued)

2.13 Pensions

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

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

The LGPS is a funded multi-employer scheme and the assets are held separately from those of the academy trust in separate trustee administered funds. Pension scheme assets are measured at fair value and liabilities are measured on an actuarial basis using the projected unit credit method and discounted at a rate equivalent to the current rate of return on a high quality corporate bond of equivalent term and currency to the liabilities. The actuarial valuations are obtained at least triennially and are updated at each Balance sheet date. The amounts charged to operating surplus are the current service costs and the costs of scheme introductions, benefit changes, settlements and curtailments. They are included as part of staff costs as incurred. Net interest on the net defined benefit liability/asset is also recognised in the Statement of financial activities and comprises the interest cost on the defined benefit obligation and interest income on the scheme assets, calculated by multiplying the fair value of the scheme assets at the beginning of the period by the rate used to discount the benefit obligations. The difference between the interest income on the scheme assets and the actual return on the scheme assets is recognised in other recognised gains and losses.

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

2.14 Agency arrangements

The Trust acts as an agent in distributing 16-19 Bursary Funds from the ESFA. Payments received from the ESFA and subsequent disbursements to students are excluded from the Statement of Financial Activities as the Trust does not have control over the charitable application of the funds. The Trust can use up to 5% of the allocation towards administration costs and this is recognised in the Statement of Financial Activities. Where funds have not been fully applied in the accounting period then the amounts due to the ESFA will be included within, Creditors: Amounts falling due within one year.

2.15 Fund accounting

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

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

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

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

RAYLEIGH SCHOOLS TRUST
(A company limited by guarantee)

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

3. Critical accounting estimates and areas of judgment

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

Critical accounting estimates and assumptions:

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

The present value of the Local Government Pension Scheme defined benefit liability depends on a number of factors that are determined on an actuarial basis using a variety of assumptions. The assumptions used in determining the net cost or income for pensions include the discount rate. Any changes in these assumptions, which are disclosed in note 26, will impact the carrying amount of the pension liability. Furthermore a roll forward approach which projects results from the latest full actuarial valuation performed at 31 March 2022 has been used by the actuary in valuing the pensions liability at 31 August 2024. Any differences between the figures derived from the roll forward approach and a full actuarial valuation would impact on the carrying amount of the pension liability.

Critical areas of judgment:

At the reporting date the Academy Trust's estimated fair value of LGPS scheme assets exceeded the estimated liabilities. The Trust have judged that the value of the asset should be reduced to £nil, in line with the valuation of the actuary, with the expectation that future contributions will not reduce, nor will the Trust receive any refund of contributions already made.

4. Income from donations and capital grants

	Unrestricted funds 2024 £	Restricted fixed asset funds 2024 £	Total funds 2024 £	Total funds 2023 £
Donations				
Donations	35,698	-	35,698	45,080
	35,698	-	35,698	45,080
Capital grants	-	475,833	475,833	114,643
	-	475,833	475,833	114,643
	35,698	475,833	511,531	159,723
Total 2023	45,080	114,643	159,723	

RAYLEIGH SCHOOLS TRUST
(A company limited by guarantee)

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

5. Funding for the academy trust's charitable activities

	Unrestricted funds 2024 £	Restricted funds 2024 £	Total funds 2024 £	Total funds 2023 £
Educational Operations				
DfE/ESFA grants				
General Annual Grant (GAG)	-	10,726,398	10,726,398	10,258,131
Other DfE/ESFA grants				
Pupil Premium	-	379,777	379,777	363,165
Schools Supplementary Grant	-	-	-	273,916
Mainstream Schools Additional Grant	-	327,780	327,780	136,575
Universal Infant Free School Meals	-	62,011	62,011	59,299
Rates Reclaim	-	60,617	60,617	50,933
Teachers' Pension Grant	-	140,671	140,671	43,684
Teachers' Pay Grant	-	173,370	173,370	25,659
PE Sports Grant	-	19,250	19,250	19,240
Others	-	32,791	32,791	42,472
	-	11,922,665	11,922,665	11,273,074
Other Government grants				
Local Authority revenue grants	-	860,086	860,086	855,756
	-	860,086	860,086	855,756
Other income from the academy trust's educational operations	5,752	77,010	82,762	94,726
COVID-19 additional funding (DfE/ESFA)				
Catch-up Premium	-	89,701	89,701	71,461
	-	89,701	89,701	71,461
Total Educational Operations	5,752	12,949,462	12,955,214	12,295,017
Total 2024	5,752	12,949,462	12,955,214	12,295,017
Total 2023	16,519	12,278,498	12,295,017	

RAYLEIGH SCHOOLS TRUST
(A company limited by guarantee)

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

6. Income from other trading activities

	Unrestricted funds 2024 £	Total funds 2024 £	Total funds 2023 £
Lettings income	196,006	196,006	184,153
Risk protection arrangement claims	4,825	4,825	-
Income from services provided	51,199	51,199	48,913
Shop income	16,753	16,753	14,540
	<u>268,783</u>	<u>268,783</u>	<u>247,606</u>
<i>Total 2023</i>	<u>247,606</u>	<u>247,606</u>	

7. Investment income

	Unrestricted funds 2024 £	Restricted funds 2024 £	Total funds 2024 £	Total funds 2023 £
Bank interest receivable	33,822	-	33,822	6,776
Pension income	-	10,000	10,000	-
	<u>33,822</u>	<u>10,000</u>	<u>43,822</u>	<u>6,776</u>
<i>Total 2023</i>	<u>6,776</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>6,776</u>	

RAYLEIGH SCHOOLS TRUST
(A company limited by guarantee)

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

8. Expenditure

	Staff Costs 2024 £	Premises 2024 £	Other 2024 £	Total 2024 £	<i>Total 2023 £</i>
Educational Operations:					
Direct costs	9,495,256	-	775,037	10,270,293	9,576,340
Allocated support costs	1,100,568	1,122,606	897,989	3,121,163	2,889,164
	<u>10,595,824</u>	<u>1,122,606</u>	<u>1,673,026</u>	<u>13,391,456</u>	<u>12,465,504</u>
<i>Total 2023</i>	<u>9,933,244</u>	<u>1,030,592</u>	<u>1,501,668</u>	<u>12,465,504</u>	

9. Analysis of expenditure on charitable activities

Summary by fund type

	Restricted funds 2024 £	Total 2024 £	<i>Total 2023 £</i>
Educational Operations	<u>13,391,456</u>	<u>13,391,456</u>	<u>12,465,504</u>
<i>Total 2023</i>	<u>12,465,504</u>	<u>12,465,504</u>	

10. Analysis of expenditure by activities

	Activities undertaken directly 2024 £	Support costs 2024 £	Total funds 2024 £	<i>Total funds 2023 £</i>
Educational Operations	<u>10,270,293</u>	<u>3,121,163</u>	<u>13,391,456</u>	<u>12,465,504</u>
<i>Total 2023</i>	<u>9,576,340</u>	<u>2,889,164</u>	<u>12,465,504</u>	

Analysis of support costs

RAYLEIGH SCHOOLS TRUST
(A company limited by guarantee)

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

10. Analysis of expenditure by activities (continued)

Analysis of support costs (continued)

	Total funds 2024 £	Total funds 2023 £
Pension finance costs	-	35,000
Staff costs	1,100,568	1,108,487
Depreciation	341,573	306,990
Technology costs	90,153	23,288
Premises costs	1,117,462	1,030,592
Other costs	458,007	367,807
Governance costs	13,400	17,000
	<u>3,121,163</u>	<u>2,889,164</u>

11. Net income/(expenditure)

Net income/(expenditure) for the year includes:

	2024 £	2023 £
Operating lease rentals	95,565	99,858
Depreciation of tangible fixed assets	341,572	306,990
Fees paid to auditors for:		
- audit	11,100	10,200
- other services	7,400	6,800
	<u>455,637</u>	<u>423,848</u>

12. Staff

a. Staff costs and employee benefits

RAYLEIGH SCHOOLS TRUST
(A company limited by guarantee)

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

12. Staff (continued)

Staff costs during the year were as follows:

	2024 £	2023 £
Wages and salaries	7,552,806	7,232,271
Social security costs	772,787	698,071
Pension costs	1,781,151	1,694,139
Defined benefit pension scheme finance cost	-	38,000
	<u>10,106,744</u>	<u>9,662,481</u>
Agency staff costs	489,080	270,763
	<u><u>10,595,824</u></u>	<u><u>9,933,244</u></u>

b. Staff numbers

The average number of persons employed by the academy trust during the year was as follows:

	2024 No.	2023 No.
Management	10	10
Teachers	133	130
Administration and support	157	120
	<u>300</u>	<u>260</u>

RAYLEIGH SCHOOLS TRUST
(A company limited by guarantee)

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

12. Staff (continued)

c. Higher paid staff

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

	2024 No.	2023 No.
In the band £60,001 - £70,000	8	4
In the band £70,001 - £80,000	1	2
In the band £80,001 - £90,000	1	-
In the band £90,001 - £100,000	1	-
In the band £100,001 - £110,000	-	1
In the band £120,001 - £130,000	1	-

The above employees participated in both the Teachers' Pension Scheme and the Local Government Pension Scheme. During the year ended 31 August 2024 pension contributions for these staff members amounted to £227,796 (2023 - £133,571).

d. Key management personnel

The key management personnel of the academy trust comprise the Trustees and the senior management team as listed on page 1. The total amount of key management personnel benefits (including employer pension contributions and employer national insurance contributions) received by key management personnel for their services to the academy trust was £949,608 (2023 - £727,067).

13. Central services

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

- ICT support services
- Premises team support
- HR support
- Finance support

The academy trust charges for these services on the following basis:

Rayleigh Schools Trust charge Glebe Primary School an annual levy of 4.5% of expenditure at the time of budget setting for the forthcoming year. This charge is collected on a monthly basis.

The actual amounts charged during the year were as follows:

	2024 £	2023 £
Glebe Primary School	108,999	108,999

RAYLEIGH SCHOOLS TRUST
(A company limited by guarantee)

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

14. Trustees' remuneration and expenses

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

		2024	2023
		£	£
K Dines, Chief Executive	Remuneration	120,000 -	105,000 -
		125,000	110,000
	Pension contributions paid	30,000 -	25,000 -
		35,000	30,000

During the year, retirement benefits were accruing to 1 Trustees (2023 - 1) in respect of defined benefit pension schemes.

During the year ended 31 August 2024, no Trustee expenses have been incurred (2023 - £NIL).

15. 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 membership.

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

16. Tangible fixed assets

	Long-term leasehold property £	Furniture and equipment £	Computer equipment £	Motor vehicles £	Total £
Cost or valuation					
At 1 September 2023	20,920,100	128,016	164,736	10,558	21,223,410
Additions	449,603	35,187	146,119	-	630,909
At 31 August 2024	<u>21,369,703</u>	<u>163,203</u>	<u>310,855</u>	<u>10,558</u>	<u>21,854,319</u>
Depreciation					
At 1 September 2023	2,235,070	81,836	74,112	9,726	2,400,744
Charge for the year	294,833	11,656	34,252	832	341,573
At 31 August 2024	<u>2,529,903</u>	<u>93,492</u>	<u>108,364</u>	<u>10,558</u>	<u>2,742,317</u>
Net book value					
At 31 August 2024	<u>18,839,800</u>	<u>69,711</u>	<u>202,491</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>19,112,002</u>
At 31 August 2023	<u>18,685,030</u>	<u>46,180</u>	<u>90,624</u>	<u>832</u>	<u>18,822,666</u>

Included in long-term leasehold property is land at valuation of £6,334,000 (2023 - £6,334,000) which is not depreciated. The land valuation is comprised of land at Swayne Park School of £4,084,000 (2023 - £4,084,000) and land at Glebe Primary School of £2,250,000 (2023 - £2,250,000).

The leasehold property at the Swayne Park School site was valued as at 31 March 2014 by Mouchel, a RICS registered valuer using the Depreciated Replacement Cost Method. The leasehold property at the Glebe Primary School site was valued as at 31 August 2018 by Montagu Evans, a RICS registered valuer using the Depreciated Replacement Cost Method.

The freehold relating to the above leasehold property is held by Essex County Council. The Trust holds a 125 year lease on a peppercorn rent from 1 April 2013 at Swayne Park School and 1 October 2017 at Glebe Primary School.

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17. Debtors

	2024 £	2023 £
Due within one year		
Trade debtors	-	138
Other debtors	154,915	5,647
Prepayments and accrued income	316,543	126,764
	<u>471,458</u>	<u>132,549</u>

18. Creditors: Amounts falling due within one year

	2024 £	2023 £
Trade creditors	106,853	50,783
Other taxation and social security	171,505	164,498
Other creditors	290,066	187,530
Accruals and deferred income	171,183	281,512
	<u>739,607</u>	<u>684,323</u>

	2024 £	2023 £
Deferred income at 1 September 2023	170,349	85,378
Resources deferred during the year	103,028	170,349
Amounts released from previous periods	(170,349)	(85,378)
	<u>103,028</u>	<u>170,349</u>

At the Balance Sheet date the Trust was holding funds received in advance of entitlement as follows:

- Funds received in advance from the ESFA for the 2024/25 academic year £72,865.
- Funds received in advance for school trips and academic materials in the 2024/25 academic year £30,163.

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**NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
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19. Statement of funds

	Balance at 1 September 2023 £	Income £	Expenditure £	Transfers in/out £	Gains/ (Losses) £	Balance at 31 August 2024 £
Unrestricted funds						
General funds	812,014	344,056	-	-	-	1,156,070
Restricted general funds						
General Annual Grant (GAG)	660,237	10,726,398	(10,455,819)	(641,653)	-	289,163
Pupil Premium	-	379,777	(379,777)	-	-	-
Other DfE / ESFA revenue grants	-	816,489	(816,489)	-	-	-
Local Authority revenue grants	-	860,086	(860,086)	-	-	-
Other educational income	-	77,010	(77,010)	-	-	-
Exceptional Government funding	-	89,702	(89,702)	-	-	-
Pension reserve	(39,000)	10,000	(371,000)	464,000	(64,000)	-
	621,237	12,959,462	(13,049,883)	(177,653)	(64,000)	289,163
Restricted fixed asset funds						
NBV of fixed assets	18,822,665	-	(341,573)	630,909	-	19,112,001
DfE / ESFA capital grants	126,890	475,833	-	(453,256)	-	149,467
	18,949,555	475,833	(341,573)	177,653	-	19,261,468
Total Restricted funds	19,570,792	13,435,295	(13,391,456)	-	(64,000)	19,550,631
Total funds	20,382,806	13,779,351	(13,391,456)	-	(64,000)	20,706,701

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

The General fund has been created to recognise the incoming and outgoing resources in respect of

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

19. Statement of funds (continued)

activities undertaken by the Trust which fall outside the scope of its core activities.

The General Annual Grant (GAG) represents the core funding for the educational activities of the school that has been provided to the Trust via the Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA) by the Department for Education (DfE). The GAG fund has been set up because the GAG must be used for the normal running costs of the Trust.

The Pupil Premium fund has been established to recognise the restricted funding from the ESFA to raise the attainment of disadvantaged pupils and close the gap between them and their peers.

The Other DfE / ESFA revenue grants fund represents a variety of other grant incomes that are received from the ESFA that fall outside of the core funding of the Trust.

The Local Authority revenue grants fund has been set up to recognise the income received from Essex County Council or other Local Education Authorities as a contribution towards the cost of the Trust's revenue expenditure.

The Other Government grants fund has been established to recognise grants from Government bodies other than the DfE/ESFA and Local Authorities that fall outside the scope of core funding.

The Other Educational income fund has been established to recognise all other restricted funding that cannot be classified above but fall outside the scope of its core activities.

The Exceptional Government funding has been set up in response to the COVID-19 pandemic.

The LGPS deficit (pension reserve) fund has been created to separately identify the pension deficit inherited from the Local Authority upon conversion to Academy Trust status, and through which all the pension scheme movements are recognised.

The NBV of fixed assets fund has been set up to recognise the tangible assets held by the Trust and is equivalent to the net book value of tangible fixed assets. Depreciation of tangible fixed assets is allocated to this fund. As tangible fixed assets are purchased from other funds, a transfer is made into this fund.

The DfE/ESFA capital grants fund has been created to recognise capital grants received from the ESFA and the DfE. Capital grants spent on capital expenditure are shown as a transfer within the Restricted fixed asset fund between the Capital grants fund and the NBV of fixed assets fund. Capital grants spent on revenue expenditure are shown as expenditure within the Capital grants fund. Capital grants received and receivable, but not yet spent, are held as current assets within the Restricted fixed assets fund.

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

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

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

	<i>Balance at 1 September 2022 £</i>	<i>Income £</i>	<i>Expenditure £</i>	<i>Transfers in/out £</i>	<i>Gains/ (Losses) £</i>	<i>Balance at 31 August 2023 £</i>
Unrestricted funds						
General funds	496,034	315,980	-	-	-	812,014
Restricted general funds						
General Annual Grant (GAG)	417,818	10,258,134	(9,594,715)	(421,000)	-	660,237
Pupil Premium	-	363,164	(363,164)	-	-	-
Other DfE / ESFA revenue grants	56,435	651,777	(708,212)	-	-	-
Local Authority revenue grants	-	855,756	(855,756)	-	-	-
Other educational income	-	78,207	(78,207)	-	-	-
Exceptional Government funding	-	71,460	(71,460)	-	-	-
Pension reserve	(1,053,000)	-	(487,000)	421,000	1,080,000	(39,000)
	(578,747)	12,278,498	(12,158,514)	-	1,080,000	621,237
Restricted fixed asset funds						
NBV of fixed assets	19,016,902	-	(306,990)	112,753	-	18,822,665
DfE / ESFA capital grants	125,000	114,643	-	(112,753)	-	126,890
	19,141,902	114,643	(306,990)	-	-	18,949,555
Total Restricted funds	18,563,155	12,393,141	(12,465,504)	-	1,080,000	19,570,792
Total funds	19,059,189	12,709,121	(12,465,504)	-	1,080,000	20,382,806

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

Total funds analysis by academy

Fund balances at 31 August 2024 were allocated as follows:

	2024	2023
	£	£
Sweyne Park School	919,898	948,019
Glebe Primary School	525,335	524,232
Total before fixed asset funds and pension reserve	1,445,233	1,472,251
Restricted fixed asset fund	19,261,468	18,949,555
Pension reserve	-	(39,000)
Total	20,706,701	20,382,806

Total cost analysis by academy

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

	Teaching and educational support staff costs £	Other support staff costs £	Educational supplies £	Other costs excluding depreciation £	Total 2024 £	Total 2023 £
Sweyne Park School	7,719,458	878,642	648,952	1,186,605	10,433,657	9,709,604
Glebe Primary School	1,775,796	221,925	126,087	492,418	2,616,226	2,448,910
Academy trust	9,495,254	1,100,567	775,039	1,679,023	13,049,883	12,158,514

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

20. Analysis of net assets between funds

Analysis of net assets between funds - current period

	Unrestricted funds 2024 £	Restricted funds 2024 £	Restricted fixed asset funds 2024 £	Total funds 2024 £
Tangible fixed assets	-	-	19,112,002	19,112,002
Current assets	1,156,070	995,672	182,564	2,334,306
Creditors due within one year	-	(706,509)	(33,098)	(739,607)
Total	<u>1,156,070</u>	<u>289,163</u>	<u>19,261,468</u>	<u>20,706,701</u>

Analysis of net assets between funds - prior period

	Unrestricted funds 2023 £	Restricted funds 2023 £	Restricted fixed asset funds 2023 £	Total funds 2023 £
Tangible fixed assets	-	-	18,822,666	18,822,666
Current assets	812,014	1,344,560	126,889	2,283,463
Creditors due within one year	-	(684,323)	-	(684,323)
Defined benefit pension scheme liability	-	(39,000)	-	(39,000)
Total	<u>812,014</u>	<u>621,237</u>	<u>18,949,555</u>	<u>20,382,806</u>

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

21. Reconciliation of net income to net cash flow from operating activities

	2024 £	2023 £
Net income for the period (as per Statement of financial activities)	387,894	243,618
Adjustments for:		
Depreciation	341,573	306,990
Capital grants from DfE and other capital income	(475,833)	(114,643)
Interest receivable	(33,822)	(6,776)
Defined benefit pension scheme cost less contributions payable	(98,000)	28,000
Defined benefit pension scheme finance cost	(5,000)	38,000
(Increase)/decrease in debtors	(338,910)	244,085
Increase/(decrease) in creditors	55,285	(112,040)
Net cash (used in)/provided by operating activities	(166,813)	627,234

22. Cash flows from investing activities

	2024 £	2023 £
Dividends, interest and rents from investments	33,822	6,776
Purchase of tangible fixed assets	(630,909)	(112,753)
Capital grants from DfE Group	475,833	114,643
Net cash (used in)/provided by investing activities	(121,254)	8,666

23. Analysis of cash and cash equivalents

	2024 £	2023 £
Cash in hand and at bank	1,862,847	2,150,914
Total cash and cash equivalents	1,862,847	2,150,914

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

24. Analysis of changes in net debt

	At 1 September 2023 £	Cash flows £	At 31 August 2024 £
Cash at bank and in hand	2,150,914	(288,066)	1,862,848
	<u>2,150,914</u>	<u>(288,066)</u>	<u>1,862,848</u>

25. Capital commitments

	2024 £	2023 £
Contracted for but not provided in these financial statements		
Acquisition of tangible fixed assets	<u>137,743</u>	<u>-</u>

26. Pension commitments

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

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

Contributions amounting to £219,032 were payable to the schemes at 31 August 2024 (2023 - £187,529) and are included within creditors.

Teachers' Pension Scheme

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

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

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NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
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26. Pension commitments (continued)

Valuation of the Teachers' Pension Scheme

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

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

- employer contribution rates set at 28.68% of pensionable pay (including a 0.08% administration levy)
- total scheme liabilities (pensions currently in payment and the estimated cost of future benefits) for service to the effective date of £262,000 million and notional assets (estimated future contributions together with the notional investments held at the valuation date) of £222,200 million, giving a notional past service deficit of £39,800 million

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

The employer's pension costs paid to TPS in the year amounted to £1,481,936 (2023 - £1,247,208).

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

Under the definitions set out in FRS 102, the TPS is an unfunded multi-employer pension scheme. The academy trust 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 £574,000 (2023 - £524,000), of which employer's contributions totalled £464,000 (2023 - £421,000) and employees' contributions totalled £110,000 (2023 - £103,000). The agreed contribution rates for future years are 25.0 per cent for employers and 5.5 to 12.5 per cent for employees.

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

Parliament has agreed, at the request of the Secretary of State for Education, to a guarantee that, in the event of academy closure, outstanding Local Government Pension Scheme liabilities would be met by the Department for Education. The guarantee came into force on 18 July 2013.

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**NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
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26. Pension commitments (continued)

Principal actuarial assumptions

	2024	2023
	%	%
Rate of increase in salaries	3.85	3.90
Rate of increase for pensions in payment/inflation	2.85	2.90
Discount rate for scheme liabilities	5.05	5.30

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

	2024	2023
	Years	Years
<i>Retiring today</i>		
Males	20.7	20.7
Females	23.3	23.2
<i>Retiring in 20 years</i>		
Males	22.0	22.0
Females	24.7	24.6

Sensitivity analysis

	2024	2023
	£000	£000
Discount rate +0.1%	(135)	(118)
Discount rate -0.1%	139	121
Mortality assumption - 1 year increase	222	184
Mortality assumption - 1 year decrease	(215)	(179)

Share of scheme assets

The academy trust's share of the assets in the scheme was:

	At 31 August 2024	At 31 August 2023
	£	£
Equities	4,493,000	3,949,000
Gilts	138,000	87,000
Property	562,000	531,000
Cash and other liquid assets	137,000	199,000
Alternative assets	1,195,000	1,074,000
Other managed funds	1,474,000	947,000
Total market value of assets	7,999,000	6,787,000

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**NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
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26. Pension commitments (continued)

The actual return on scheme assets was £806,000 (2023 - £278,000).

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

	2024 £	2023 £
Current service cost	(366,000)	(464,000)
Interest income	370,000	253,000
Interest cost	(360,000)	(288,000)
Benefit changes, gain/(loss) on curtailment and gain/(loss) on settlement	-	15,000
Administrative expenses	(5,000)	(3,000)
Total amount recognised in the Statement of financial activities	(361,000)	(487,000)

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

	2024 £	2023 £
At 1 September	6,826,000	6,890,000
Current service cost	366,000	464,000
Interest cost	360,000	288,000
Employee contributions	110,000	103,000
Actuarial losses/(gains)	500,000	(715,000)
Benefits paid	(163,000)	(118,000)
Effects of non-routine settlements	-	(86,000)
At 31 August	7,999,000	6,826,000

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

	2024 £	2023 £
At 1 September	6,787,000	5,837,000
Interest income	370,000	253,000
Actuarial gains	436,000	365,000
Employer contributions	464,000	421,000
Employee contributions	110,000	103,000
Benefits paid	(163,000)	(118,000)
Effects of non-routine settlements	-	(71,000)
Administration expenses	(5,000)	(3,000)
At 31 August	7,999,000	6,787,000

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

26. Pension commitments (continued)

Impact of the McCloud/Sargeant judgement on the Local Government Pension Scheme

An allowance was made in 2019 for the Court of Appeal judgement in relation to the McCloud & Sargeant cases which relate to age discrimination within the Judicial & Fire Pension schemes respectively. On 27 June 2019 the Supreme Court denied the Government's request for an appeal, and on 15 July 2019 the Government released a statement to confirm that it expects to have to amend all public service schemes, including the LGPS.

The estimated impact on the total liabilities at 31 August 2019 was allowed for as a past service cost and has resulted in a slight increase in the defined benefit obligation as at 31 August 2024.

This adjustment is an estimate of the potential impact on the Trust's defined benefit obligation as provided by the scheme's actuary.

On 13 May 2021, the Government issued a ministerial statement on the proposed remedy to be applied to LGPS benefits in response to the McCloud and Sargeant cases. It is not anticipated that there are any material differences between the approach underlying the estimated allowance in 2019 and the proposed remedy.

Guaranteed Minimum Pension (GMP) Equalisation

As a result of the High Court's Lloyds ruling on the equalisation of GMPs between genders, it is anticipated that the Fund will pay limited increases for members that have reached State Pension Age (SPA) by 6 April 2016, with the Government providing the remainder of the inflationary increase.

For members that reach SPA after this date, it has been assumed in the valuation that the Fund will be required to pay the entire inflationary increase. It is not therefore necessary to make any adjustments to the value placed on the liabilities as a result of the above outcome.

Goodwin case

Following a case involving the Teachers' Pension scheme, known as the Goodwin case, differences between survivor benefits payable to members with same-sex or opposite-sex survivors have been identified within a number of public sector pension schemes. As a result, the Government have confirmed that a remedy is required in all affected public sector pension schemes, which includes the LGPS.

It is anticipated that the impact on the value of LGPS liabilities as a whole, and for the majority of employers participating in the LGPS, will not be material. However, the impact on individual employers will vary depending on their specific membership profile.

Sufficient information is not currently available to assess the actual impact on the Academy Trust as such no provision has been included within these financial statements.

Asset Ceiling

At the reporting date the Academy Trust's estimated fair value of LGPS scheme assets exceeded the estimated total liabilities. The resulting surplus should only be recognised where there is an expectation that future contributions will reduce, or that the scheme will refund contributions already made.

The scheme actuaries have assessed the position and concluded:

- There is no right for the Trust to receive a refund of the surplus at a level required by the accounting standard.
- The Trust is expected and assumed, as an academy trust, to participate in the scheme indefinitely.

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

26. Pension commitments (continued)

- The Trust is bound by a minimum funding requirement to make contributions to the fund, and there is no expectation for the contribution rates to change beyond the information provided by the existing Rates and Adjustments certificate.
- FRS102 does not require any additional liability recognised from an onerous funding commitment.
- Any reduction in contributions is expected to have an economic benefit of £nil.

As the recognition threshold for the surplus has not been reached the Academy Trust's share of the net plan assets/liabilities have been reduced to £Nil in the financial statements.

The amount of asset derecognised was £230,000 and is included in the gains and losses on the Trust's share of scheme assets.

27. Operating lease commitments

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

	2024 £	2023 £
Not later than 1 year	84,052	95,565
Later than 1 year and not later than 5 years	144,357	24,380
	<u>228,409</u>	<u>119,945</u>

28. 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.

29. Related party transactions

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

30. Agency arrangements

The Trust administers the distributions of the discretionary support for learners, 16-19 Bursary Funds, on behalf of the ESFA. During the year the Trust received funds of £5,758 (2023 - £6,458) and disbursed £5,758 (2023 - £6,458). £NIL (2023 - £NIL) was retained to cover administration expenses and therefore a balance of £NIL (2023 - £NIL) relating to undistributed funds is repayable to the ESFA as at the Balance Sheet date.

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31. Controlling party

The Trustees consider there to be no ultimate controlling party.