

**Aston Tower Multi-Academy Trust
(A Company Limited by Guarantee)**

**Annual Report and Financial Statements
Year ended 31 August 2021**

Company Registration Number
10034419 (England and Wales)

**Feltons
Chartered Accountants**

**Birmingham
B1 3JR**

**Aston Tower Multi-Academy Trust
(A Company Limited by Guarantee)**

**Report and Financial Statements
Year ended 31 August 2021**

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**Aston Tower Multi-Academy Trust
(A Company Limited by Guarantee)**

Reference and Administrative Details

Members	Ms Alexandra Smith Mr Amjad Hussain Ms Amanda Bishop Mr Avtar Sheergill
Trustees	Ms Alexandra Smith (from 30/1/2017) Chair of Trustees & Community Governor Mr Avtar Sheergill (from 23/4/18) Vice Chair of Trustees and Community Governor Ms Celine Benoit (from 20/1/2020) Trustee & Community Governor Ms Amanda Bishop (from 26/9/17) Trustee & Community Governor Ms Ashwaaq Hassan (from 6/1/2020) Trustee & Community Governor Mr Amjad Hussain (from 1/3/16) Trustee & Parent Governor Mr Billy Jones (from 1/4/19) Trustee & Community Governor Mrs Ruhena Khanam (from 1/3/16) Trustee & Parent Governor Mr Charalambois Loizou (from 9/4/2021) Trustee & Community Governor Mr Jonathan Moore (from 1/3/16) Accounting Officer & Chief Executive Officer Mr Qamar Riaz (from 6/7/2020) Trustee & Community Governor Dr Jacinth Ryan (from 24/9/18 to 19/10/21) Trustee & Community Governor Mrs Deborah Ward (from 1/3/16) Staff Trustee & Strategic Business Manager
Company secretary	Mrs Deborah Ward
Senior management team	Mr Jonathan Moore Mrs Suki Rai-Moore Mrs Deborah Ward
Company name	Aston Tower Multi-Academy Trust
Principal and registered office	Aston Tower Community Primary School Upper Sutton Street Aston Birmingham B6 5BE
Company registration number	10034419
Independent auditor	Feltons 8 Sovereign Court 8 Graham Street Birmingham B1 3JR
Bankers	Lloyds Bank Caxton Gate Units 2 & 3, 36/38 New Street Birmingham B2 4LP
Solicitors	Browne Jacobson Victoria Square House, Victoria Square Birmingham B2 4BY

Aston Tower Multi- Academy Trust (A Company Limited by Guarantee)

Trustees' report for the year ended 31 August 2021

The trustees present their annual report together with the financial statements and auditor's report of the charitable company for the period 1 September 2020 to 31 August 2021. The annual report serves the purposes of both a trustees' report and a directors' report under company law.

The academy trust operates an academy for pupils aged 3 to 11 serving a catchment area in Aston, Birmingham. It has a pupil capacity of 485 and had a roll of 425 in the school census on 7th October 2021.

Structure, Governance and Management

Constitution

The academy trust is a company limited by guarantee and an exempt charity. The charitable company's memorandum and articles of association are the primary governing documents of the academy trust. The trustees of Aston Tower Multi-Academy Trust are also the directors of the charitable company for the purposes of company law. The charitable company operates as Aston Tower Multi-Academy Trust.

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

Members' liability

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

Trustees' indemnities

In accordance with normal commercial practice the academy has purchased insurance to protect trustees and officers from claims arising from negligent acts, errors or omissions occurring whilst on academy business. The insurance provides cover up to £10,000,000 on any one claim.

Method of recruitment and appointment or election of Trustees

Members of the MAT are appointed by existing members. The members appoint the Trustees of the MAT by way of a vote. The total number of Trustees including the Chief Executive Officer who are employees of the company shall not exceed one third of the total number of Trustees. There shall be a minimum of two parent Trustees unless there are Local Governing Bodies which include at least two Parent Members. Local Governing Body members would be appointed by the Board of Trustees.

Parent trustees are elected by the parents of registered pupils at the academy. A parent trustee must be a parent of a pupil at the academy at the time when she/he is elected.

Community trustees may be appointed by the board of trustees provided that the person who is appointed as a community trustee is:

- a person who lives or works in the community served by the academy; or
- a person who, in the opinion of the board of trustees, is committed to the government and success of the academy.

Staff Trustees are elected by employees of the academy trust.

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Trustees' report for the year ended 31 August 2021 (continued)

Method of recruitment and appointment or election of Trustees (continued)

Co-Opted Trustees

The Trustees may appoint Co-Opted Trustees. A "Co-Opted Trustee" means a person who is appointed to be a Trustee by being Co-opted by Trustees who have not themselves been so appointed. The Trustees may not co-opt an employee of the Trust as a Co-Opted Trustee if, thereby the number of Trustees who are employees of the Trust, would exceed one third of the total number of Trustees including the Chief Executive Officer.

The term of office for any Trustee shall be 4 years, save that this time limit shall not apply to the Chief Executive Officer. Subject to remaining eligible to be a particular type of Trustee, any Trustee may be re-appointed or re-elected.

The above selection procedures are adhered to when a vacancy arises.

Policies and Procedures Adopted for the Induction and Training of Trustees

The board of trustees has a service level agreement with the trustee support department of School and Governor Support to provide training, advice and support to the board of trustees.

Newly elected trustees attend induction training for new trustees, and in addition select specific training provided by trustee support in accordance with their needs.

One of the trustees is appointed as link trustee, attends relevant training and provides information to trustees following such training.

The Executive Headteacher is the leader for professional development in school, and he/she ensures that trustees are provided with opportunities to receive training in accordance with their role, and the school's training plan.

Organisational structure

On 1st April 2016, Aston Tower Community Primary School formed Aston Tower Multi-Academy Trust with a Master Funding Agreement (MFA) and a separate Supplemental Funding Agreement. Aston Tower Community Primary School is currently the only school within Aston Tower Multi-Academy Trust.

The Trustees of Aston Tower Multi-Academy Trust govern the activities of the Trust and act as the Governing Body of Aston Tower Community Primary School. From 1st September 2020 to 31st August 2021 the Board of Trustees held 4 meetings. Details of the Trustees who served during the period are included in the Reference and Administrative details on page 1. The Board of Trustees has established committees and appoints Trustees to serve on each of the committees annually. The committees for the period of the report were:

- Staffing and Finance
- Quality of Education

The written terms of reference of the committees include the monitoring of the preparation and management of the academy's budget and implementation of the academy's financial management policies, including risk assessment.

The day-to-day management of Aston Tower Community Primary School is delegated by the Board of Trustees to the Executive Headteacher who is supported by the Senior Leadership Team. The Executive Headteacher is responsible for authorising expenditure within agreed budgets and appointing staff within the existing establishment; appointments for posts on the leadership team always include at least one member of the Board of Trustees.

**Aston Tower Multi-Academy Trust
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Trustees' report for the year ended 31 August 2021 (continued)

Arrangements for setting pay and remuneration of key management personnel

Pay and remuneration for all staff is determined in accordance with our performance management framework and Pay Policy. Following reviews at the end of the performance management cycle, the Executive Headteacher makes recommendations for pay progression to the Staffing and Finance Committee who then approve the annual determination of salaries. External advisers make recommendations regarding the Executive Headteacher and Deputy Headteacher (Mrs S Rai-Moore) to the Board.

Trade union facility time

Information in accordance with Schedule 2 of the Trade Union (Facility Time Publication Requirements) Regulations 2018 is as follows:

Relevant union officials

Number of employees who were relevant union officials during the relevant period	Full-time equivalent number
0	0

Percentage of time spent on facility time

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

Percentage of pay bill spent on facility time

Total cost of facility time	£nil
Total pay bill	£nil
Facility time as percentage of total pay bill	0

Paid trade union activities

Time spent on paid trade union activities as a percentage of total paid facility time hours	0
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Related parties and other Connected Charities and Organisations

None.

Objectives and activities

The strategic goal of Aston Tower Multi-Academy Trust is to provide a broad and balanced curriculum to all pupils in accordance with the funding agreement between the academy trust and the Department for Education.

**Aston Tower Multi-Academy Trust
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Trustees' report for the year ended 31 August 2021 (continued)

Objectives, strategies and activities

Aston Tower Multi-Academy Trust holds the values of excellence and equality and promotes a commitment to diversity and promotes a positive ethos through:

- Achieving excellence
- Promoting positive relationships within a learning, caring and inclusive school community
- Supporting children and young people
- Promoting positive healthy attitudes and behaviours
- Enabling all children and young people to achieve the very best – academically and personally
- Encouraging enterprising attitudes and behaviours
- A strong sense of community
- Good interpersonal relationships
- Appropriate pastoral care for pupils and staff
- An atmosphere that encourages citizenship
- Pupil participation in decision making

To ensure that standards are continually raised the Trust expects:

- A whole school approach to self-evaluation
- Established and clear assessment and monitoring policies and procedures which ensure all staff are accountable for the progress of all children
- Tracking of individual progress of all children, including the identification of vulnerable groups and those receiving pupil premium funding
- Evaluation of trends and proactivity in meeting needs
- Thorough planning to meet all individual needs
- Setting of individual, group, class and whole school targets that are challenging and aspirational
- Setting of appropriate interventions and individual plans for children with special educational needs and disabilities, children with specific needs and more able children working with appropriate agencies
- Commitment to continued professional development and outstanding performance of all staff through a well-established and rigorous performance management process
- Challenge from the CEO/Executive Headteacher and Trustees to ensure rigour.

Public benefit

In setting our objectives and planning our activities, the board of trustees has given careful consideration to the general guidance on public benefit published by the Charity Commission on their website at www.gov.uk/running-charity/managing-charity in exercising their powers or duties.

Aston Tower Multi-Academy Trust is an equal opportunity employer, and strives to give full and fair consideration to all applicants for employment, training and promotions, irrespective of disability, gender, race, colour or sexual orientation.

Strategic Report

Achievements and Performance

There were many successes despite the difficult changes presented by the pandemic to the Trust and the school. An extensive remote education programme was introduced to reduce the potentially negative impact on pupils' achievements of Covid-19 closures. All staff were trained to deliver a daily set of lessons using the Goggle Classroom software. Lessons lasted for most of the school day with 'live' lessons taught by teachers each morning focusing on reading, writing and mathematics. Other subjects were taught through a mixture of recorded and 'live' sessions with selected resources closely linked to the school's curriculum plan. On a daily basis, more than 90% of pupils accessed their online lessons. During the second lockdown period (January to March 2021) the school ensured that over 90 devices were delivered to families with limited access to IT. Furthermore, many parents were supported by being provided with free online data.

Aston Tower Multi-Academy Trust (A Company Limited by Guarantee)

Trustees' report for the year ended 31 August 2021 (continued)

Following extensive planning, pupils and staff safely returned to school in September 2021. Weekly risk assessments played a key role in ensuring that the Department for Education's operational guidance was both followed and that risks were kept to a minimum. Very few bubble closures were necessary for most of the academic year which helped to lessen the impact of the pandemic on pupils' achievement and well-being. However, the number of bubble closures rose during July 2021 as a result of the highly transmissible delta variant.

Despite the pandemic, we remained focused on growing our Trust and developing the school's performance. Governance was strengthened in terms of expertise and understanding of our role, to prepare us well for any new schools joining our Trust during 2021/22. Governance is a strength of the Trust.

At the school itself, significant work was completed to improve the curriculum offer. Major changes were made to our geography and science curriculums with minor tweaks made to others. Pupil behaviour and attitudes to learning remain highly positive. Staff in the Early Years Foundation Stage were well prepared for the introduction of the government-led changes from September 2021. Significant work to improve the estate also took place. The nursery had a major refurbishment, new touchscreens purchased to replace the remaining interactive whiteboards and a number of classrooms redecorated. Some of the office areas have also been improved.

Careful management of the Trust's finances has placed it in a strong financial position. This is helped by the school's continuing popularity. The number of pupils on roll remains high and the school is currently not affected by the full in numbers of primary aged children in the sector.

Key Performance Indicators

No Ofsted inspections or monitoring visits occurred during the reporting period. However, we have strengthened our performance as a 'good' setting. No statutory assessments took place, however 75% of Year 2 pupils passed the delayed phonics screen which is close to the pre-pandemic national average. Furthermore, 80% of year 1 pupils pass a 'mock' phonics screen during the summer term which again is close to the pre-pandemic national average. Internal assessments were encouraging and help identify where gaps in achievement need to be filled during 2021/2022.

- Direct costs as a percentage of total costs were 63.6% (2020 : 66.7%)
- Support costs as a percentage of total costs were 36.4% (2020 : 33.3%)
- Total payroll costs as a percentage of recurring income were 76.6% (2020 : 81.2%)

Going concern

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

Financial Review

The financial results of Aston Tower Multi-Academy Trust are detailed in the following pages. It is considered that the finances are sound and well established. The principal financial management policies adopted are laid down by the Finance Handbook for Academies published by the ESFA and requirements as laid down by the Academy's Financial Handbook.

The principal funding source is grant income from the ESFA. All expenditure of this grant income is planned to fulfil the objectives and strategies of the Academy.

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Trustees' report for the year ended 31 August 2021 (continued)

During the year ended 31 August 2021 total resources expended were £2,469,764 and the surplus of income over expenditure was £398,934 which included depreciation of £138,173.

Reserves Policy

The trustees continually monitor the reserves of the charitable company. This process encompasses the nature of income and expenditure streams and the need to match commitments with income and nature of reserves.

It is the board of trustees' general policy to continue to build reserves which can be used for future educational purposes.

The academy had total funds at 31 August 2021 of £3,937,449 which included £316,979 restricted funds not available for general purposes of the academy trust, £467,311 of free reserves defined as unrestricted funds available for general purposes and £5,510,159 which can only be realised by the disposal of tangible fixed assets.

The balance on restricted general funds (excluding pension reserve) plus the balance on unrestricted funds was a surplus of £784,290.

In addition, the deficit on the restricted pension fund of £2,357,000 arises from an actuarial deficit on the local government pension scheme which will be dealt with as advised by the actuary.

The trustees regularly review the level of reserves and aim to maintain them at a minimum of 2 months of expenditure. Budgeted expenditure for 2021/22 is £2,471,585 and hence the minimum target is £411,931. Unrestricted reserves at 31 August 2021 therefore represent 2.3 months.

Investment Policy

Any surplus funds are invested this is with Lloyds Bank in a deposit account.

These investments are carried out in accordance with the powers vested in the board of trustees.

Principal Risks and Uncertainties

The trustees have considered the major risks and uncertainties facing the charitable company which include changes in legislation and regulations and cash flow management and have put in place procedures to deal with these matters.

Attention has also been focussed on non-financial risks arising from fire, health and safety. These risks are managed by ensuring accreditation is up to date, having robust policies in place, and regular awareness training for staff working in these operational areas.

Due to the Covid-19 pandemic we made changes to our operational processes in order to implement DfE guidance to keep pupils and staff safe in school. The possible closure of school due to lockdowns or bubble closures, and their impact on pupil's learning, was a principal risk during the year. Our control measures for this were to switch to remote learning and utilising donated DfE laptops to benefit our pupils. Wider control measures during the year included a strict Risk Assessment with senior leaders supporting staff to follow newly adopted practices to keep everyone safe. As part of the risk assessment we purchased increased our spending on consumables and larger investments included screens for the dining hall tables and the office, sanitizers throughout school and increased our cleaning hours to ensure an enhanced cleaning regime was in place.

**Aston Tower Multi-Academy Trust
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Trustees' report for the year ended 31 August 2021 (continued)

Fundraising

The academy trust does not use any external fundraisers. All fundraising undertaken during the period was monitored by the Trustees.

Plans for Future Periods

The Trust's objective is to maintain the high performance of both academic and pastoral provision at Aston Tower Community Primary School. This will include opportunities to develop the curriculum so that it has the necessary scope and breadth to ensure pupils achieve well in the primary phase and are well prepared for the next phase of their education. The Trust expects Aston Tower Community Primary School to at least retain its Ofsted grading of good at the next inspection and to move to outstanding.

During the period 1st September 2021 to 31st August 2022, the Trust will also be seeking opportunities to grow the Trust and continue to develop the trust board's capacity to manage this growth. We will be celebrating the strong partnership we have with parents by winning the Leading Parent Partnership Award. We will again be seeking to secure further CIF funding to continue to improve the school estate.

Funds Held as Custodian Trustee on Behalf of Others

None.

Auditor

Insofar as the Trustees are aware:

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

The trustees' report, incorporating a strategic report, was approved by order of the board of trustees, as the company directors, on 1 November 2021 and signed on the board's behalf by:



..... Alexandra Smith - Chair of Trustees

Aston Tower Multi-Academy Trust (A Company Limited by Guarantee)

Governance statement for the year ended 31 August 2021

Scope of Responsibility

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

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

The board of trustees has delegated the day-to-day responsibility to the Principal, 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 Aston Tower Multi-Academy 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.

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 4 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
Ms Alexandra Smith (from 30/1/2017) Chair of Trustees & Community Governor	4	4
Mr Avtar Sheergill (from 23/4/18) Vice Chair of Trustees and Community Governor	3	4
Ms Celine Benoit (from 20/1/2020) Trustee & Community Governor	3	4
Ms Amanda Bishop (from 26/9/17) Trustee & Community Governor	3	4
Ms Ashwaaq Hassan (from 6/1/2020) Trustee & Community Governor	3	4
Mr Amjad Hussain (from 1/3/16) Trustee & Parent Governor	1	4
Mr Billy Jones (from 1/4/19) Trustee & Community Governor	2	4
Mrs Ruhena Khanam (from 1/3/16) Trustee & Parent Governor	4	4
Mr Charalambos Loizou (from 9/4/2021) Trustees & Community Governor	1	1
Mr Jonathan Moore (from 1/3/16) Accounting Officer & Chief Executive Officer	4	4
Mr Qamar Riaz (from 6/7/2020) Trustee & Community Governor	4	4
Mrs Jacinth Ryan (from 24/9/18) Trustee & Community Governor	0	4
Mrs Deborah Ward (from 1/3/16) Staff Trustee & Strategic Business Manager	4	4

**Aston Tower Multi-Academy Trust
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Governance statement for the year ended 31 August 2021 (continued)

Following the review of governance in the Summer Term 2020, the committee structure was altered to include the following:

Staffing & Finance
Quality of Education

Trustees have confidence in the data provided by the Analysing School Performance website and the Inspection Data School Report. This is externally produced data made available from the Department for Education and Ofsted.

The Trust Board maintained effective oversight of the funds through the work of the Staffing & Finance Committee. The Management Accounts consisting of a Budget Report, Balance Sheet and Cash Flow were sent to the Chair of Trustees and Chair of Staffing & Finance monthly and to all other Trustees six times throughout the year. The Management Accounts were discussed at each of the Full Trust Board meetings.

The trust board carried out a review during the year. Subsequent to this the following actions were taken:

- the Staffing & Finance Committee will be renamed to Resources, Audit & Risk committee to better reflect the importance the board places on these areas
- Strengthen expertise of the board
- Deciding that once the existing staff trustee completes their term of office no other staff trustee will be appointed.

The trust intends to conduct its next self-evaluation/external review in Summer Term 2022.

The Staffing and Finance committee is a sub-committee of the main board of trustees. Its purpose is to provide guidance and assistance to the Headteacher and Trustees in all matters relating to budgeting and finance and to clearly define financial responsibility. The work of a separate Audit Committee is also undertaken by the Staffing and Finance committee. It therefore reviews all of the External Assurance Reports and receives the Annual Report and Financial Statements from the statutory auditor.

Trustee	Meetings attended	Out of a possible
Ms Alexandra Smith (30/1/17)	4	4
Mr Billy Jones (1/4/19)	4	4
Mr Jonathan Moore (1/3/16) (Executive Headteacher and Accounting Officer)	3	3
Mr Qamar Riaz (6/7/2020)	4	4
Mrs Deborah Ward (1/3/16) (Staff)	3	3

Review of value for money

As accounting officer the Executive 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:

- Continuous review of staffing structures in line with the needs of the Trust and to achieve year-on-year savings.
- Review of contracts when they are due for renewal to ensure they continue to meet the needs of the

Aston Tower Multi-Academy Trust (A Company Limited by Guarantee)

Governance statement for the year ended 31 August 2021 (continued)

school and deliver best value resulting in savings on both the photocopying contract and catering contract this year.

- Robust purchasing procedures which ensure that best value is considered for all purchases. Budgets reflect the School Development Plan with budget holders ensuring that goods and services provide best value in terms of suitability, efficiency, time and cost. Robust procedures ensure that budget holders do not exceed their budget allocations.

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 the academy trust's 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 Aston Tower Multi-Academy trust for the period from 1 September 2020 to 31 August 2021 and up to the date of approval of the annual report and financial statements.

Capacity to handle risk

The board of trustees has reviewed the key risks to which the 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 from 1 September 2020 to 31 August 2021 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 considered the need for a specific internal audit function and has decided not to appoint an internal auditor. However the trustees have decided to buy-in an internal audit service from Services 4 Schools. Their 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:

- testing of payroll systems
- testing of purchase systems
- testing of control accounts / bank reconciliations
- testing of income systems
- testing of VAT reconciliations
- review of financial oversight including reporting, Governance and management information.

On a termly basis, Services 4 Schools provide a report to the board of trustees, through the Staffing and

**Aston Tower Multi-Academy Trust
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Governance statement for the year ended 31 August 2021 (continued)

Finance committee on the operation of the systems of control and on the discharge of the board of trustees' financial responsibilities and annually prepares an annual summary report to the committee outlining the areas reviewed, key findings, recommendations and conclusions to help the committee consider actions and assess year on year progress.

During the period 2020/21, Services 4 Schools have delivered their schedule of work as planned. As a result of their work, the internal reviewer raised with us the need to ensure the following and all have been satisfactorily resolved:

- the review of the Risk Register has been discussed with the Trust Board;
- the Financial Procedures Manual is updated promptly for any changes;
- all orders are raised in compliance with our procedures;
- the management accounts are adjusted at month end.

Review of Effectiveness

As accounting officer, Jonathan Moore, (the Executive 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 internal reviewer
- the work of the external auditor;
- the financial management and governance self-assessment process of the school resource management self-assessment tool;
- the work of the executive managers within the academy trust who have responsibility for the development and maintenance of the internal control framework.

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

Approved by order of the members of the board of trustees on 1 November 2021 and signed on its behalf by:



Alexandra Smith
Chair of Trustees



Jonathan Moore
Accounting Officer

**Aston Tower Multi-Academy Trust
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**Statement of regularity, propriety and compliance
for the period ended 31 August 2021**

As accounting officer of Aston Tower Multi- Academy Trust I have considered my responsibility to notify the academy trust board of trustees and the Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA) of material irregularity, impropriety and non-compliance with 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 Academies Financial Handbook 2020.

I confirm that I and the academy trust board of trustees are able to identify any material irregular or improper use of funds by the academy trust, or material non-compliance with the terms and conditions of funding under the academy trust's funding agreement and the Academies Financial Handbook 2020.

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.

 Jonathan Moore – Accounting Officer

1 November 2021

**Aston Tower Multi-Academy Trust
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**Statement of Trustees' responsibilities
for the period ended 31 August 2021**

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 in the Charities SORP 2019 and the Academies Accounts Direction 2020 to 2021;
- make judgements 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; and
- 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 the ESFA/DfE have been applied for the purposes intended.

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

Approved by order of the members of the board of trustees on 1 November 2021 and signed on its behalf by:



..... Alexandra Smith – Chair of Trustees

**Aston Tower Multi-Academy Trust
(A Company Limited by Guarantee)**

**Independent Auditor's Report on the Financial Statements to the Members of
Aston Tower Multi-Academy Trust**

Opinion

We have audited the financial statements of Aston Tower Multi-Academy Trust for the year ended 31 August 2021 which comprise the Statement of Financial Activities, the Balance Sheet, the Statement of Cash Flows and notes to the financial statements, including a summary of significant accounting policies. The financial reporting framework that has been applied in their preparation is applicable law and 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 2020 to 2021 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 2021, and of its incoming resources and application of resources, including its income and expenditure, for the period then ended
- have been properly prepared in accordance with United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice
- have been prepared in accordance with the requirements of the Companies Act 2006, the Charities SORP 2019 and the Academies Accounts Direction 2020 to 2021 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 Auditor's 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 UK, including the FRC's Ethical Standard, and we have fulfilled our other ethical responsibilities in accordance with these requirements. We believe that the audit evidence we have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our opinion.

Conclusions relating to going concern

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

- Based on the work we have performed, we have not identified any material uncertainties relating to events or conditions that, individually or collectively, may cast significant doubt on the 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
- Our responsibilities and the responsibilities of the trustees with respect to going concern are described in the relevant sections of this report.

**Aston Tower Multi-Academy Trust
(A Company Limited by Guarantee)**

Independent Auditor's Report on the Financial Statements to the Members of Aston Tower Multi-Academy Trust

(continued)

Other information

The other information comprises the information included in the trustees annual report, other than the financial statements and our auditor's 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 matter 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 (incorporating the strategic report and the directors' report) for the financial year for which the financial statements are prepared is consistent with the financial statements; and
- the strategic report and the directors' report have been prepared in accordance with applicable legal requirements.

Matters on which we are required to report by exception

In the light of the knowledge and understanding of the academy and its environment obtained in the course of the audit, we have not identified material misstatements in the strategic report and the directors' 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
- the financial statements are not in agreement with the accounting records and returns; or
- certain disclosures of directors' remuneration specified by law are not made; or
- we have not received all the information and explanations we require for our audit.

**Aston Tower Multi-Academy Trust
(A Company Limited by Guarantee)**

**Independent Auditor's Report on the Financial Statements to the Members of Aston Tower Multi-Academy Trust
(continued)**

Responsibilities of trustees

As explained more fully in the trustees' responsibilities statement (set out on page 14), the trustees (who are also the directors of the charitable company for the purposes of company law) are responsible for the preparation of the financial statements and for being satisfied that they give a true and fair view, and for such internal control as the trustees determine is necessary to enable the preparation of financial statements that are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

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

Auditor's responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements

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

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

- We reviewed the academy's control and risk management procedures and planned our work based on our assessment of those controls and procedures;
- This review included an assessment of the risk of material misstatement due to errors, fraud and management override of controls for all material areas in the financial statements;
- We made enquiries of management and the academy's lawyers regarding any actual or potential litigation and/or claims;
- Financial statements disclosures were reviewed and checked for compliance with applicable laws;
- Detailed testing was conducted on balances and transactions including unusual items and those of individual significance to the financial statements;
- Data analytics were used in order to identify unusual or significant trends;
- Communications with management and those charged with governance regarding relevant matters was undertaken throughout the audit and on completion.

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

- Identify and assess the risks of material misstatement of the financial statements, whether due to fraud or error, design and perform audit procedures responsive to those risks, and obtain audit evidence that is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our opinion. The risk of not detecting a material misstatement resulting from fraud is higher than for one resulting from error, as fraud may involve collusion, forgery, intentional omissions, misrepresentations, or the override of internal control.
- Obtain an understanding of internal control relevant to the audit in order to design audit procedures that are appropriate in the circumstances, but not for the purpose of expressing an opinion on the effectiveness of the charitable company's internal control.

**Aston Tower Multi-Academy Trust
(A Company Limited by Guarantee)**

Independent Auditor's Report on the Financial Statements to the Members of Aston Tower Multi-Academy Trust

(continued)

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

- Evaluate the appropriateness of accounting policies used and the reasonableness of accounting estimates and related disclosures made by the trustees.
- Conclude on the appropriateness of the trustees' use of the going concern basis of accounting and, based on the audit evidence obtained, whether a material uncertainty exists related to events or conditions that may cast significant doubt on the charitable company's ability to continue as a going concern. If we conclude that a material uncertainty exists, we are required to draw attention in our auditor's report to the related disclosures in the financial statements or, if such disclosures are inadequate, to modify our opinion. Our conclusions are based on the audit evidence obtained up to the date of our auditor's report. However, future events or conditions may cause the charitable company to cease to continue as a going concern.
- Evaluate the overall presentation, structure and content of the financial statements, including the disclosures, and whether the financial statements represent the underlying transactions and events in a manner that achieves fair presentation.

We communicate with those charged with governance regarding, among other matters, the planned scope and timing of the audit and significant audit findings, including any significant deficiencies in internal control that we identify during our audit.

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 charitable company's members those matters we are required to state to them in an auditor's report and for no other purpose. To the fullest extent permitted by law, we do not accept or assume responsibility to anyone other than the academy trust and the academy trust's members as a body, for our audit work, for this report, or for the opinions we have formed.

Feltons

David W Farnsworth FCA (Senior Statutory Auditor)
For and on behalf of Feltons, Statutory Auditor
8 Sovereign Court
8 Graham Street
Birmingham B1 3JR

1 November 2021

**Aston Tower Multi-Academy Trust
(A Company Limited by Guarantee)**

Independent Reporting Accountant's Assurance Report on Regularity to Aston Tower Multi-Academy Trust and the Education and Skills Funding Agency

In accordance with the terms of our engagement letter dated 30 March 2021 and further to the requirements of the Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA) as included in the Academies Accounts Direction 2020 to 2021, we have carried out an engagement to obtain limited assurance about whether the expenditure disbursed and income received by Aston Tower Multi-Academy Trust during the period 1 September 2020 to 31 August 2021 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 Aston Tower Multi-Academy Trust and ESFA in accordance with the terms of our engagement letter. Our work has been undertaken so that we might state to Aston Tower Multi-Academy 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 Aston Tower Multi-Academy Trust and ESFA, for our work, for this report, or for the conclusion we have formed.

Respective responsibilities of Aston Tower Multi-Academy Trust's accounting officer and the reporting accountant

The accounting officer is responsible, under the requirements of Aston Tower Multi-Academy Trust's funding agreement with the Secretary of State for Education dated 23 March 2016 and the Academies Financial Handbook, extant from 1 September 2020, 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 2020 to 2021. We report to you whether anything has come to our attention in carrying out our work which suggests that in all material respects, expenditure disbursed and income received during the period 1 September 2020 to 31 August 2021 have not been applied to purposes intended by Parliament or that the financial transactions do not conform to the authorities which govern them.

Approach

We conducted our engagement in accordance with the Academies Accounts Direction 2020 to 2021 issued by ESFA. We performed a limited assurance engagement as defined in our engagement letter.

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

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

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

The work undertaken to draw our conclusion includes :

- Consideration of the applicable legislation and the academy trust's funding agreement
- Review and evaluation of the academy trust's system of internal controls
- Examination and assessment of the Accounting Officer's statement on Regularity, Propriety and Compliance
- Examination, on a test basis, of third party evidence supporting income and expenditure
- Review of exceptional and unusual items

**Aston Tower Multi-Academy Trust
(A Company Limited by Guarantee)**

Independent Reporting Accountant's Assurance Report on Regularity to Aston Tower Multi-Academy Trust and the Education and Skills Funding Agency (continued)

Conclusion

In the course of our work, nothing has come to our attention which suggests that in all material respects the expenditure disbursed and income received during the period 1 September 2020 to 31 August 2021 has not been applied to purposes intended by Parliament and the financial transactions do not conform to the authorities which govern them.

Feltons

David W Farnsworth FCA (Reporting Accountant)

For and on behalf of Feltons, Statutory Auditor
8 Sovereign Court
8 Graham Street
Birmingham B1 3JR

1 November 2021

**Aston Tower Multi-Academy Trust
(A Company Limited by Guarantee)**

**Statement of financial activities for the year ended 31 August 2021
(including income and expenditure account)**

	Notes	Unrestricted funds £	Restricted pension fund £	Restricted general funds £	Restricted fixed asset funds £	Total 2020/21 £	Total 2019/20 £
Income from :							
Donations and capital grants	2	250	-	-	395,220	395,470	8,689
Charitable activities :	3						
Funding for the academy trust's educational operations		13,829	-	2,459,145	-	2,472,974	2,444,345
Other trading activities	4	170	-	-	-	170	130
Investments	5	84	-	-	-	84	268
Total		14,333	-	2,459,145	395,220	2,868,698	2,453,432
Expenditure on :							
Charitable activities:							
Academy trust educational operations	6	11,859	109,000	2,210,732	138,173	2,469,764	2,506,339
Total		11,859	109,000	2,210,732	138,173	2,469,764	2,506,339
Net income/(expenditure) before transfers		2,474	(109,000)	248,413	257,047	398,934	(52,907)
Transfers between funds	14	-	-	(35,236)	35,236	-	-
Net income/(expenditure) after transfers		2,474	(109,000)	213,177	292,283	398,934	(52,907)
Other recognised gains/(losses)							
Actuarial gains/(losses) on defined benefit pension schemes	14, 22	-	(92,000)	-	-	(92,000)	92,000
Net movement in funds		2,474	(201,000)	213,177	292,283	306,934	39,093
Reconciliation of funds							
Total funds brought forward	14	464,837	(2,156,000)	103,802	5,217,876	3,630,515	3,591,422
Total funds carried forward		467,311	(2,357,000)	316,979	5,510,159	3,937,449	3,630,515

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

**Aston Tower Multi-Academy Trust
(A Company Limited by Guarantee)**

Company number : 10034419
Balance sheet as at 31 August 2021

	Notes	2021	2020
		£	£
Fixed assets			
Tangible assets	11	5,503,046	5,217,481
Current assets			
Debtors	12	59,577	59,901
Cash at bank and in hand		853,485	609,345
		913,062	669,246
Liabilities			
Creditors: amounts falling due within one year	13	121,659	100,212
Net current assets		791,403	569,034
Net assets excluding pension liability		6,294,449	5,786,515
Defined benefit pension scheme liability	22	(2,357,000)	(2,156,000)
Total net assets		3,937,449	3,630,515

Funds of the academy trust :

Restricted funds			
		£	£
Fixed asset fund	14	5,510,159	5,217,876
Restricted income fund	14	316,979	103,802
Pension reserve	14	(2,357,000)	(2,156,000)
Total restricted funds		3,470,138	3,165,678
Unrestricted income funds		467,311	464,837
Total funds		3,937,449	3,630,515

The financial statements on pages 21 to 42 were approved by the trustees, and authorised for issue on 1 November 2021 and are signed on their behalf by:

Alex Smith

Alexandra Smith - Chair of Trustees

**Aston Tower Multi-Academy Trust
(A Company Limited by Guarantee)**

Statement of cash flows for the year ended 31 August 2021

	Notes	2020/21	2019/20
		£	£
Cash flows from operating activities			
Net cash provided by operating activities	18	272,575	78,763
Cash flows from investing activities	19	(28,435)	(50,666)
<hr/>			
Change in cash and cash equivalents in the reporting period		244,140	28,097
Cash and cash equivalents at 1 September 2020		609,345	581,248
Cash and cash equivalents at 31 August 2021	20	853,485	609,345

**Aston Tower Multi-Academy Trust
(A Company Limited by Guarantee)**

Notes to the financial statements for the year ended 31 August 2021

1. Accounting policies

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

Basis of preparation

The financial statements of the academy trust, which is a public benefit entity under FRS 102, have been prepared under the historical cost convention in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard Applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102), the Accounting and Reporting by Charities: Statement of Recommended Practice applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102) (Charities SORP (FRS 102)), the Academies Accounts Direction 2020 to 2021 issued by ESFA, the Charities Act 2011 and the Companies Act 2006.

Going concern

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

Income

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

• **Grants**

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

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

Capital grants are recognised in full when there is an 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.

**Aston Tower Multi-Academy Trust
(A Company Limited by Guarantee)**

Notes to the financial statements for the year ended 31 August 2021 (continued)

1. Accounting policies (continued)

Income (continued)

- **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.
- **Other income**
Other income, including the hire of facilities, is recognised in the period it is receivable and to the extent the academy trust has provided the goods or services.
- **Donated goods, facilities and services**
Goods donated for resale are included at fair value, being the expected proceeds from sale less the expected costs of sale. Upon sale the fair value of the goods is charged against, and the proceeds are recognised as, 'Income from other trading activities'.
- **Donated fixed assets**
Where the donated good is a fixed asset it is measured at fair value, unless it is impractical to measure this reliably, in which case the cost of the item to the donor should be used. The gain is recognised as income from donations and a corresponding amount is included in the appropriate fixed asset category and depreciated over the useful economic life in accordance with the academy trust's accounting policies.

Expenditure

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

- **Expenditure on raising funds**

This includes all expenditure incurred by the academy trust to raise funds for its charitable purposes and includes costs of all fundraising activities events and non-charitable trading.

- **Charitable activities**

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

All resources expended are inclusive of irrecoverable VAT.

**Aston Tower Multi-Academy Trust
(A Company Limited by Guarantee)**

Notes to the financial statements for the year ended 31 August 2021 (continued)

1. Accounting policies (continued)

Tangible fixed assets

Assets costing £1,000 or more are capitalised as tangible fixed assets and are carried at cost, net of depreciation and any provision for impairment.

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

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

Long leasehold buildings	- straight line over 50 years
Furniture and equipment	- 10% straight line
Computer hardware	- 33% straight line

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.

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.

Leased assets

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

Financial instruments

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

Financial assets - trade and other debtors are basic financial instruments and are debt instruments measured at amortised cost. Prepayments are not financial instruments.

**Aston Tower Multi-Academy Trust
(A Company Limited by Guarantee)**

Notes to the financial statements for the year ended 31 August 2021 (continued)

1. Accounting policies (continued)

Financial instruments (continued)

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. Taxation and social security are not included in the financial instruments disclosure definition. Deferred income is not deemed to be a financial liability, as the cash settlement has already taken place and there is an obligation to deliver services rather than cash or another financial instrument.

Taxation

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

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

Pension benefits

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

The TPS is an unfunded scheme and contributions are calculated to spread the cost of pensions over employees' working lives with the academy trust in such a way that the pension cost is a substantially level percentage of current and future pensionable payroll. The contributions are determined by the Government Actuary 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 net income/(expenditure) are the current service costs and the costs of scheme introductions, benefit changes, settlements and curtailments. They are included as part of staff costs as incurred. Net interest on the net defined benefit liability/asset is also recognised in the Statement of Financial Activities and comprises the interest cost on the defined benefit obligation and interest income on the scheme assets, calculated by multiplying the fair value of the scheme assets at the beginning of the period by the rate used to discount the benefit obligations. The difference between the interest income on the scheme assets and the actual return on the scheme assets is recognised in other recognised gains and losses.

**Aston Tower Multi-Academy Trust
(A Company Limited by Guarantee)**

Notes to the financial statements for the year ended 31 August 2021 (continued)

1. Accounting policies (continued)

Pension benefits (continued)

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

Fund accounting

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

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

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

Critical accounting estimates and areas of judgement

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

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

The present value of the Local Government Pension Scheme defined benefit liability depends on a number of factors that are determined on an actuarial basis using a variety of assumptions. The assumptions used in determining the net cost (income) for pensions include the discount rate. Any changes in these assumptions, which are disclosed in note 22, 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 2019 has been used by the actuary in valuing the pensions liability at 31 August 2021. 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.

**Aston Tower Multi-Academy Trust
(A Company Limited by Guarantee)**

Notes to the financial statements for the year ended 31 August 2021 (continued)

2. Donations and capital grants

	Unrestricted funds £	Restricted general fund £	Restricted fixed asset funds £	2020/21 Total £	2019/20 Total £
Capital grants	-	-	375,239	375,239	8,689
Donated fixed assets	-	-	19,981	19,981	-
Other donations	250	-	-	250	-
	<u>250</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>395,220</u>	<u>395,470</u>	<u>8,689</u>
2020 total	-	-	8,689	8,689	

3. Funding for the Academy Trust's educational operations

	Unrestricted funds £	Restricted general fund £	Restricted fixed asset funds £	2020/21 Total £	2019/20 Total £
DfE/ESFA grants					
General Annual Grant (GAG)	-	1,902,330	-	1,902,330	1,884,920
Other DfE Group grants					
UIFSM	-	39,348	-	39,348	45,667
Pupil premium	-	227,641	-	227,641	231,630
Teachers pay		20,540	-	20,540	20,818
Teachers pension		58,038	-	58,038	58,824
Others	-	36,717	-	36,717	23,030
	<u>-</u>	<u>2,284,614</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>2,284,614</u>	<u>2,264,889</u>
Other government grants					
Local authority grants	-	142,591	-	142,591	143,658
Other income from the academy trust's educational operations	13,829	-	-	13,829	35,798
Covid-19 additional funding (DfE/ESFA)					
Catch-up premium	-	31,200	-	31,200	-
Other DfE/ESFA Covid-19 funding	-	740	-	740	-
	<u>13,829</u>	<u>174,531</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>188,360</u>	<u>179,456</u>
	<u>13,829</u>	<u>2,459,145</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>2,472,974</u>	<u>2,444,345</u>
2020 total	35,798	2,408,547	-	2,444,345	

The academy received £31,200 of funding for catch-up premium and costs incurred in respect of this funding totalled £1,142, with the remaining £30,058 to be spent in 2021/22.

**Aston Tower Multi-Academy Trust
(A Company Limited by Guarantee)**

Notes to the financial statements for the year ended 31 August 2021 (continued)

4. Other trading activities

	Unrestricted funds £	Restricted funds £	2020/21 Total £	2019/20 Total £
Hire of facilities	170	-	170	130
	170	-	170	130
2020 total	130		130	

5. Investment income

	Unrestricted funds £	Restricted funds £	2020/21 Total £	2019/20 Total £
Short term deposits	84	-	84	268
2020 total	268		268	

6. Expenditure

	Staff costs £	Non pay expenditure Premises £	Non pay expenditure Other £	2020/21 Total £	2019/20 Total £
Academy's educational operations					
Direct costs	1,429,940	81,936	59,862	1,571,738	1,670,626
Allocated support costs	486,090	171,309	240,627	898,026	835,713
	1,916,030	253,245	300,489	2,469,764	2,506,339
2020 total	1,991,862	217,775	296,702	2,506,339	

Net income/(expenditure) for the period includes :

		2020/21 £	2019/20 £
Operating leases	- plant and machinery	4,504	5,745
Depreciation		137,781	128,337
Loss on disposal of fixed assets		392	375
Fees payable to auditor	- audit	8,500	8,250
	- other services	2,250	2,830

**Aston Tower Multi-Academy Trust
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Notes to the financial statements for the year ended 31 August 2021 (continued)

7. Charitable activities

	Unrestricted funds £	Restricted pension fund £	Other restricted funds £	2020/21 Total £	2019/20 Total £
Educational operations					
Direct costs	13	-	1,571,725	1,571,738	1,670,626
Support costs	11,846	109,000	777,180	898,026	835,713
	11,859	109,000	2,348,905	2,469,764	2,506,339
2020 total	35,032	67,000	2,404,307	2,506,339	
Analysis of support costs					
Support staff costs	-	109,000	377,090	486,090	455,798
Depreciation	-	-	56,237	56,237	56,555
Premises costs	-	-	119,576	119,576	94,808
Legal costs	-	-	738	738	-
Other support costs	11,846	-	211,259	223,105	215,725
Governance costs	-	-	12,280	12,280	12,827
Total support costs	11,846	109,000	777,180	898,026	835,713
2020 total	25,380	67,000	743,333	835,713	

8. Staff

a) Staff costs

Staff costs during the period were:	2020/21 £	2019/20 £
Wages and salaries	1,235,498	1,241,652
Social security costs	117,683	112,932
Pension costs	403,900	371,015
	1,757,081	1,725,599
Agency staff costs	153,949	256,831
Staff restructuring costs	5,000	9,432
	1,916,030	1,991,862

Staff restructuring costs comprise :

Severance payments	5,000	9,432
	5,000	9,432

**Aston Tower Multi-Academy Trust
(A Company Limited by Guarantee)**

Notes to the financial statements for the year ended 31 August 2021 (continued)

8. Staff (continued)

b) Non-statutory/non-contractual staff severance payments

Included in staff restructuring costs is a non-statutory/non-contractual severance payment of £5,000 (2020 : £9,432).

c) Staff numbers

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

	2020/21 Number	2019/20 Number
Teachers	16	15
Administration and support	34	40
Management	4	4
	<hr/>	<hr/>
	54	59

d) Higher paid staff

	2020/21 Number	2019/20 Number
The number of employees whose employee benefits (excluding employer pension costs) exceeded £60,000 was :		
£60,001 - £70,000	1	-
£70,001 - £80,000	-	-
£80,001 - £90,000	-	1
£90,001 - £100,000	1	-

e) Key management personnel

The key management personnel of the academy trust comprise the trustees and the senior management team as listed on page 1. The total amount of employee benefits (including employer pension contributions and employer national insurance contributions) received by key management personnel for their services to the academy trust was £344,548 (2020 : £350,581).

9. Related Party Transactions - Trustees' remuneration and expenses

One or more trustees has been paid remuneration or has received other benefits from 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 :

Jonathan Moore (principal and trustee)	
Remuneration	£90,000 - £95,000 (2020 : £85,000 - £90,000)
Employer's pension contributions paid	£20,000 - £25,000 (2020 : £20,000 - £25,000)

**Aston Tower Multi-Academy Trust
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Notes to the financial statements for the year ended 31 August 2021 (continued)

9. Related Party Transactions - Trustees' remuneration and expenses (continued)

Deborah Ward (staff trustee)

Remuneration £55,000 - £60,000 (2020 : £50,000 - £55,000)

Employer's pension contributions paid £10,000 - £15,000 (2020 : £10,000 - £15,000)

During the year ended 31 August 2021 there were no travel and subsistence expenses reimbursed or paid directly to any trustee (2020 : one trustee was reimbursed £77).

Other related party transactions involving the trustees are set out in note 23.

10. Trustees' and officers' insurance

The academy trust has opted into the Department for Education's risk protection arrangement (RPA), an alternative to insurance where UK government funds cover losses that arise. This scheme protects trustees and officers from claims arising from negligent acts, errors or omissions occurring whilst on academy business, and provides cover up to £10,000,000. It is not possible to quantify the trustees and officers indemnity element from the overall cost of the RPA scheme.

11. Tangible fixed assets

	Leasehold land and buildings	Furniture and equipment	Computer hardware	Total
	£	£	£	£
Cost or valuation				
At 1 September 2020	5,669,360	48,399	68,144	5,785,903
Additions	366,560	3,627	53,552	423,739
Disposals	-	(855)	(1,450)	(2,305)
At 31 August 2021	<u>6,035,920</u>	<u>51,171</u>	<u>120,246</u>	<u>6,207,337</u>

	Depreciation			
	£	£	£	£
At 1 September 2020				
At 1 September 2020	501,580	16,065	50,777	568,422
Charge for the year	117,053	4,428	16,300	137,781
Released by disposals	-	(462)	(1,450)	(1,912)
At 31 August 2021	<u>618,633</u>	<u>20,031</u>	<u>65,627</u>	<u>704,291</u>

	Net book values			
	£	£	£	£
At 31 August 2021				
At 31 August 2021	5,417,287	31,140	54,619	5,503,046
At 31 August 2020				
At 31 August 2020	<u>5,167,780</u>	<u>32,334</u>	<u>17,367</u>	<u>5,217,481</u>

**Aston Tower Multi-Academy Trust
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Notes to the financial statements for the year ended 31 August 2021 (continued)

11. Tangible fixed assets (continued)

Leasehold property was valued at 1 April 2016 by The Valuation Office Agency – DVS and the furniture and equipment and computer hardware were valued as at the same date by the trustees. The basis on which the valuations were made was depreciated replacement cost.

Cost or valuation at 31 August 2021 is represented by :

	Leasehold land and buildings	Furniture and equipment	Computer hardware	Total
	£	£	£	£
Valuation in 2016	4,451,371	25,289	28,180	4,504,840
Cost	1,584,549	25,882	92,066	1,702,497
	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>
	6,035,920	51,171	120,246	6,207,337

12. Debtors

	2021	2020
	£	£
VAT recoverable	11,028	3,718
Prepayments and accrued income	48,549	54,501
Other debtors	-	1,682
	<hr/>	<hr/>
	59,577	59,901

13. Creditors

	2021	2020
	£	£
Amounts falling due within one year :		
Accruals and deferred income	92,332	81,242
Other creditors	29,327	18,970
	<hr/>	<hr/>
	121,659	100,212
Deferred income		
Deferred income at 1 September 2020	27,103	25,875
Resources deferred in the year	22,953	27,103
Amounts released from previous years	(27,103)	(25,875)
Deferred income at 31 August 2021	22,953	27,103

At the balance sheet date the academy trust was holding funds received in advance for universal infant free school meals.

**Aston Tower Multi-Academy Trust
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Notes to the financial statements for the year ended 31 August 2021 (continued)

14. Funds

	Balance at 1 September		Expenditure £	Gains, losses and transfers £	Balance at 31 August	
	2020 £	Income £			2021 £	
Restricted general funds						
General Annual Grant (GAG)	103,802	1,902,330	(1,683,975)	(35,236)	286,921	
UIFSM		39,348	(39,348)	-	-	
Pupil premium	-	227,641	(227,641)	-	-	
Catch-up premium	-	31,200	(1,142)	-	30,058	
Other DfE/ESFA Covid-19 funding	-	740	(740)	-	-	
Other grants	-	257,886	(257,886)	-	-	
	103,802	2,459,145	(2,210,732)	(35,236)	316,979	
Restricted fixed asset funds						
Transfer on conversion	4,011,745	-	(91,355)	-	3,920,390	
DfE Group capital grants	687,095	375,239	(30,255)	(1,962)	1,030,117	
Capital expenditure from GAG	519,036	-	(15,989)	37,198	540,245	
Donations		19,981	(574)	-	19,407	
	5,217,876	395,220	(138,173)	35,236	5,510,159	
Pension reserve	(2,156,000)	-	(109,000)	(92,000)	(2,357,000)	
Total restricted funds	3,165,678	2,854,365	(2,457,905)	(92,000)	3,470,138	
Unrestricted funds						
Other income	464,837	14,333	(11,859)	-	467,311	
Total unrestricted funds	464,837	14,333	(11,859)	-	467,311	
Total funds	3,630,515	2,868,698	(2,469,764)	(92,000)	3,937,449	

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

Restricted general funds

These comprise all restricted funds other than restricted fixed asset funds and include grants from The Education and Skills Funding Agency and Birmingham City Council.

Under the funding agreement with the Secretary of State, the academy trust was not subject to a limit on the amount of GAG that it could carry forward at 31 August 2021.

Unrestricted funds

These comprise resources that may be used towards meeting any of the charitable objects of the academy trust at the discretion of the trustees.

Restricted fixed asset funds

These comprise resources which are to be applied to specific capital purposes imposed by The Education and Skills Funding Agency and Birmingham City Council where the asset acquired or created is held for a specific purpose.

**Aston Tower Multi-Academy Trust
(A Company Limited by Guarantee)**

Notes to the financial statements for the year ended 31 August 2021 (continued)

14. Funds (continued)

Comparative information in respect of the preceding period

	Balance at 1 September		Gains, losses and transfers £	Balance at 31 August 2020 £
	2019 £	Income £		
Restricted general funds				
General Annual Grant (GAG)	8,031	1,884,920	(1,751,968)	(37,181) 103,802
UIFSM	-	47,867	(47,867)	- -
Pupil premium	-	231,630	(231,630)	- -
Other grants	-	244,130	(244,130)	- -
	<u>8,031</u>	<u>2,408,547</u>	<u>(2,275,595)</u>	<u>(37,181) 103,802</u>
Restricted fixed asset funds				
Transfer on conversion	4,103,179	-	(91,434)	- 4,011,745
DfE Group capital grants	699,791	8,689	(21,385)	- 687,095
Capital expenditure from GAG	<u>497,748</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>(15,893)</u>	<u>37,181 519,036</u>
	<u>5,300,718</u>	<u>8,689</u>	<u>(128,712)</u>	<u>37,181 5,217,876</u>
Pension reserve	<u>(2,181,000)</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>(67,000)</u>	<u>92,000 (2,156,000)</u>
Total restricted funds	<u>3,127,749</u>	<u>2,417,236</u>	<u>(2,471,307)</u>	<u>92,000 3,165,678</u>
Unrestricted funds				
Other income	463,673	36,196	(35,032)	- 464,837
Total unrestricted funds	<u>463,673</u>	<u>36,196</u>	<u>(35,032)</u>	<u>- 464,837</u>
Total funds	<u>3,591,422</u>	<u>2,453,432</u>	<u>(2,506,339)</u>	<u>92,000 3,630,515</u>

15. Analysis of net assets between funds

Fund balances at 31 August 2021
are represented by:

	Unrestricted funds £	Restricted pension funds £	Restricted general funds £	Restricted fixed asset funds £	Total funds £
Tangible fixed assets	-	-	-	5,503,046	5,503,046
Current assets	467,311	-	438,638	7,113	913,062
Current liabilities	-	-	(121,659)	-	(121,659)
	<u>467,311</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>316,979</u>	<u>5,510,159</u>	<u>6,294,449</u>
Pension scheme liability	-	(2,357,000)	-	-	(2,357,000)
Total net assets	<u>467,311</u>	<u>(2,357,000)</u>	<u>316,979</u>	<u>5,510,159</u>	<u>3,937,449</u>

**Aston Tower Multi-Academy Trust
(A Company Limited by Guarantee)**

Notes to the financial statements for the year ended 31 August 2021 (continued)

15. Analysis of net assets between funds (continued)

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

	Unrestricted funds £	Restricted pension funds £	Restricted general funds £	Restricted fixed asset funds £	Total funds £
Tangible fixed assets	-	-	-	5,217,481	5,217,481
Current assets	464,837	-	204,014	395	669,246
Current liabilities	-	-	(100,212)	-	(100,212)
	464,837	-	103,802	5,217,876	5,786,515
Pension scheme liability	-	(2,156,000)	-	-	(2,156,000)
Total net assets	464,837	(2,156,000)	103,802	5,217,876	3,630,515

16. Capital commitments

There are no capital commitments at 31 August 2021 nor at 31 August 2020.

17. Commitments under operating leases

At 31 August 2021 the total of the Academy Trust's future minimum lease payments under non-cancellable operating leases was:

	Other	
	Total 2021 £	Total 2020 £
Amounts due within one year	6,603	4,046
Amounts due between one and five years	11,008	3,518
	17,611	7,564

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

Net income/(expenditure) for reporting period (as per the SoFA)
Adjusted for :

	2020/21 Total £	2019/20 Total £
Net income/(expenditure) for reporting period (as per the SoFA)	398,934	(52,907)
Depreciation (note 11)	137,781	128,337
Loss on disposal of fixed assets	392	375
Capital grants from DfE and other capital income	(375,239)	(8,689)
Donated fixed assets	(19,981)	-
Interest receivable (note 5)	(84)	(268)
Defined benefit pension scheme cost less contributions payable (note 22)	75,000	28,000
Defined benefit pension scheme finance cost/(income) (note 22)	34,000	39,000
Decrease / (increase) in debtors	324	(3,174)
Increase / (decrease) in creditors	21,448	(51,911)
Net cash provided by / (used in) operating activities	272,575	78,763

**Aston Tower Multi-Academy Trust
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Notes to the financial statements for the year ended 31 August 2021 (continued)

19. Cash flows from investing activities

	2020/21	2019/20
	Total	Total
	£	£
Interest received	84	268
Purchase of tangible fixed assets	(403,758)	(59,623)
Capital grants from DfE Group	375,239	8,689
Net cash used in investing activities	(28,435)	(50,666)

20. Analysis of cash and cash equivalents

	At	At
	31 August	31 August
	2021	2020
	£	£
Cash at bank and in hand	853,485	609,345
	<hr/>	<hr/>
	853,485	609,345

21. 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.

22. Pension and similar obligations

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

The latest actuarial valuation of the TPS related to the period ended 31 March 2016 and of the LGPS 31 March 2019.

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

**Aston Tower Multi-Academy Trust
(A Company Limited by Guarantee)**

Notes to the financial statements for the year ended 31 August 2021 (continued)

22. Pension and similar obligations (continued)

Teachers' Pension Scheme

Introduction

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

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

Valuation of the Teachers' Pension Scheme

The Government Actuary, using normal actuarial principles, conducts a formal actuarial review of the TPS in accordance with the Public Service Pensions (Valuations and Employer Cost Cap) Directions 2014 published by HM Treasury every four years. The aim of the review is to specify the level of future contributions. Actuarial scheme valuations are dependent on assumptions about the value of future costs, design of benefits and many other factors. The latest actuarial valuation of the TPS was carried out as at 31 March 2016. The valuation report was published by the Department for Education on 5 March 2019. The key elements of the valuation and subsequent consultation are :

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

The next valuation is due to be implemented from 1 April 2023.

The employer's pension costs paid to TPS in the year amounted to £165,348 (2020 : £148,593).

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

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

**Aston Tower Multi-Academy Trust
(A Company Limited by Guarantee)**

Notes to the financial statements for the year ended 31 August 2021 (continued)

22. Pension and similar obligations (continued)

Local Government Pension Scheme

The LGPS is a funded defined benefit pension scheme, with the assets held in separate trustee-administered funds. The total contribution made for the year ended 31 August 2021 was £157,000 (2020 : £186,000), of which employer's contributions totalled £132,000 (2020 : £158,000) and employees' contributions totalled £25,000 (2020 : £28,000). The agreed contribution rates for future years are 21.7% for employers and between 5.5% and 8.5% for employees.

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

The trustees have agreed that the trust will make additional contributions in addition to normal funding levels over the next 23 years.

Principal actuarial assumptions	At 31 August 2021	At 31 August 2020
Rate of increase in salaries	3.90%	3.30%
Rate of increase for pensions in payment / inflation	2.90%	2.30%
Discount rate for scheme liabilities	1.65%	1.60%
Inflation assumption (CPI)	2.90%	2.30%
Commutation of pensions to lump sums	50.00%	50.00%

Sensitivity analysis	As disclosed	Discount rate	CPI rate	In life expectancy
	£'000s	£'000s	£'000s	£'000s
Present value of total obligation	4,629	4,525	4,720	4,828
Projected service cost	239	232	247	250
	£'000s	£'000s	£'000s	£'000s
Present value of total obligation	4,629	4,735	4,541	4,438
Projected service cost	239	247	232	228

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

	At 31 August 2021	At 31 August 2020
Retiring today		
Males	21.6	21.9
Females	24.0	24.1
Retiring in 20 years		
Males	23.4	23.8
Females	25.8	26.0

**Aston Tower Multi-Academy Trust
(A Company Limited by Guarantee)**

Notes to the financial statements for the year ended 31 August 2021 (continued)

22. Pension and similar obligations (continued)

Local Government Pension Scheme (continued)

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

	31 August 2021	31 August 2020
	£	£
Equities	1,383,000	1,048,000
Government bonds	188,000	202,000
Other bonds	139,000	72,000
Property	160,000	141,000
Cash/liquidity	84,000	124,000
Other	318,000	278,000
Total market value of assets	2,272,000	1,865,000

The actual return on scheme assets was £335,000 (2020 : £160,000).

	2020/21	2019/20
	£	£
Amount recognised in the statement of financial activities		
Current service cost	207,000	185,000
Net interest cost	34,000	39,000
Administration expenses	-	1,000
Total amount recognised in the SoFA	241,000	225,000

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

	2020/21	2019/20
	£	£
At 1 September 2020	4,021,000	3,797,000
Current service cost	207,000	185,000
Interest cost	64,000	70,000
Employee contributions	25,000	28,000
Change in financial assumptions	513,000	245,000
Change in demographic assumptions	(58,000)	101,000
Actuarial losses - experience losses	(58,000)	(366,000)
Benefits paid	(85,000)	(39,000)
At 31 August 2021	4,629,000	4,021,000

**Aston Tower Multi-Academy Trust
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Notes to the financial statements for the year ended 31 August 2021 (continued)

22. Pension and similar obligations (continued)

Local Government Pension Scheme (continued)

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

	2020/21	2019/20
	£	£
At 1 September 2020	1,865,000	1,616,000
Interest income	30,000	31,000
Employer contributions	132,000	158,000
Employee contributions	25,000	28,000
Benefits paid net of transfers in	(85,000)	(39,000)
Actuarial loss	-	(57,000)
Administration costs	-	(1,000)
Return on assets less interest	305,000	129,000
 At 31 August 2021	 2,272,000	 1,865,000
 Net pension scheme liability	 (2,357,000)	 (2,156,000)

23. Related party transactions

Owing to the nature of the academy trust and the composition of the board of trustees being drawn from local public and private sector organisations, transactions may take place with organisations in which the trustees have an interest.

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