

Aston Tower Multi-Academy Trust
(A Company Limited by Guarantee)
Annual Report and Financial Statements
Year ended 31 August 2020

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 2020

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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 Jonathan Moore (from 1/3/16) Accounting Officer & Chief Executive Officer Mr Qamar Riaz (from 6/7/2020) Trustee & Community Governor Mrs Jacinth Ryan (from 24/9/18) Trustee & Community Governor Mrs Deborah Ward (from 1/3/16) Staff Trustee & Strategic Business Manager Ms Dorothy Alison Graham (from 1/3/16 to 30/6/2020) Trustee & Community Governor Miss Barbara Grayson (from 1/3/16 to 2/9/19) Trustee & Community Governor
Company secretary	Deborah Ward
Senior management team	
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Executive Headteacher• Deputy Headteacher• Deputy Headteacher• Business Manager	Mr Jonathan Moore Mrs Suki Rai-Moore Mrs Devinder Kaur 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

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

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 2019

The trustees present their annual report together with the financial statements and auditor's report of the charitable company for the period 1 September 2019 to 31 August 2020. 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 434 in the school census on 1st October 2020.

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.

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

Trustees' report for the year ended 31 August 2020 (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 2019 to 31st August 2020 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
- Pupil Wellbeing and Safeguarding

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 of on the leadership team always include at least one member of the Board of Trustees.

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Trustees' report for the year ended 31 August 2020 (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. An external adviser makes 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

Objects and aims

The strategic goal of Aston Tower Multi-Academy Trust is to ensure its pupils achieve as high standards both academically and in their personal development standards as possible through the provision of a broad and balanced curriculum to all pupils in accordance with the funding agreement between the academy trust and the Department for Education.

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Trustees' report for the year ended 31 August 2020 (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:

- Seeking to achieving excellence
- High expectations of all members of the school community
- Promoting positive relationships within a learning, caring and inclusive school community
- Enabling all children and young people to achieve the very best – academically and personally
- Promoting healthy attitudes and positive behaviours
- Developing the expertise of all staff
- A strong sense of community
- Good interpersonal relationships
- Appropriate pastoral care for pupils and staff
- An atmosphere that encourages citizenship
- A partnership with parents to capitalise on their commitment to their children's success.

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.

Trustees' report for the year ended 31 August 2020 (continued)

Strategic Report

Achievements and Performance

It was a year like no other being dominated by the global pandemic Covid-19. However, despite the temporary dropping of accountability measures, there was evidence that much was achieved.

Early in the year, the trust received a letter from the Minister of State for School Standards, Rt. Hon. Nick Gibb MP, congratulating us on our success in ensuring that progress across key stage 2, as measured by Year 6 assessments, was in the top 3% in England in all subjects. There was further celebration when the Executive Headteacher and one Deputy Headteacher collected on behalf of the school a parliamentary award for delivering excellence in public service at a ceremony held at the Houses of Parliament. Such recognition celebrated achievements made by the whole school community over a long period of time. The Executive Headteacher also participated in a Department for Education and British Council project working with headteachers from Singapore and England during a week in London.

The trust's focus on achieving excellence for all was well supported by a strong focus on developing pupils' vocabulary. The evidence of this is clearly seen in classrooms, teaching and conversations with pupils. Meeting the challenge set by the last Ofsted inspection, pupils in key stage 1 achieved very well in phonics.

Our focus on providing a high quality curriculum was reinforced through the appointment of two new assistant headteachers who will lead important improvements to our curriculum. Our leadership capacity was further strengthened by the promotion of an internal candidate to lead the early years under the guidance of one of the Deputy Headteachers. By the end of the reporting period, the school was fully staffed with a strong team.

At trust board level, Alison Graham, a founding trustee and member of the Trust, and before conversion to academy status, a long serving governor and Chair, stood down from her twenty year service firstly as Chair, and then as a member during the reporting year. It was fitting that the new library was opened by her and in honour of her service. However, we were delighted that Alex Smith has become the new Chair who is ably supported by Avtar Sheergill as Vice Chair.

In terms of buildings, the refurbishment of School House was completed providing additional facilities to help support Aston Tower now, and the potential growth of the trust in the future. Towards the end of the reporting period, the trust secured a grant through the Department for Education's Condition Improvement Funding to make further improvement to the buildings. In line with the focus on healthy life styles, a daily mile track was laid across both playgrounds for pupils to both enjoy and promote their fitness. New attractive signage has been erected.

However, the most significant of our achievements was our response to the Covid-19 outbreak. The trust quickly improved its digital infrastructure for staff, pupils and parents to ensure Aston Tower continued to deliver its core function of providing a high quality education. Staff made effective use of cloud based technology to communicate and share information with each other to support their work and taught pupils during period of Covid-19 enforced closures through the use of the Google Classrooms platform. Throughout the height of the pandemic, the school remained open to serve vulnerable children and those of key workers. In addition to providing online learning, staff are to be congratulated for the improvements they made to the curriculum. During the whole period, the school remained in close contact with the community it proudly serves and ensured that school was safe throughout the partial closure and ready for the full return of pupils in September 2020.

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Trustees' report for the year ended 31 August 2020 (continued)

Key Performance Indicators

The trust made significant progress, from a starting point, to achieving excellence in education by providing remote online learning experiences for its pupils. Although no statutory assessments were held this year, standardised internal assessments have shown that pupils achieved well in key areas of the curriculum despite Aston Tower's closure. The benefits of a range of remote learning materials have helped prevent pupils slipping backwards in their academic achievements.

Pupils attended well, and in line with the previous year's national average for the period from September 2019 until the partial closure of schools by HM Government on 20th March 2020.

Despite closure, recruitment continued and the school starts September 2020 with a full staff team.

- Direct costs as a percentage of total costs were 66.7% (2019 : 62.9%)
- Support costs as a percentage of total costs were 33.3% (2019 : 37.1%)
- Total payroll costs as a percentage of recurring income were 81.2% (2019 : 81.8%)

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.

During the year ended 31 August 2020 total resources expended were £2,506,339 and the deficit of income over expenditure was £52,907 which included depreciation of £128,712.

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 2020 of £3,630,515 which included £103,802 restricted funds not available for general purposes of the academy trust, £463,673 of free reserves defined as unrestricted funds available for general purposes and £5,217,876 which can only be realised by the disposal of tangible fixed assets.

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Trustees' report for the year ended 31 August 2020 (continued)

The balance on restricted general funds (excluding pension reserve) plus the balance on unrestricted funds was a surplus of £568,639.

In addition, the deficit on the restricted pension fund of £2,156,000 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 2020/21 is £2,497,266 and hence the minimum target is £416,211. Unrestricted reserves at 31 August 2020 therefore represent 2.2 months.

Investment Policy

Any surplus funds are invested 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.

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

Aston Tower Multi-Academy Trust aims to expand by the end of 2020/21 with a minimum of one additional school joining the Trust. The Trust's objective is for Aston Tower Community Primary School to at least retain its Ofsted grading of good at the next inspection and to move to outstanding.

For the period 1st September 2020 to 31st August 2021 the Trust's priorities are as follows:

- Ensure the return to school of all pupils following the partial closure caused by Covid-19 with attendance rates being at least in line with the national average for primary aged pupils.
- Close any gaps in pupils' knowledge caused by the partial Covid-19 closure so that pupils achieve well.
- Provide remote learning opportunities for all year groups as needed if Covid-19 causes further school closures.
- Strengthen the quality of the curriculum by improving a number of subject areas by strengthening teacher subject knowledge, and ensuring improved sequencing and progression in learning.
- Develop the capacity of recently appointed leaders to effectively deliver in their roles.
- Secure further CIF funding to improve the estate
- Celebrate the strong partnership we have with parents by winning the Leading Parent Partnership Award.
- Develop the trust board's capacity to manage the growth to a trust of more than one school.

**Aston Tower Multi-Academy Trust
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Trustees' report for the year ended 31 August 2020 (continued)

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 ~~31 December~~ ^{31 December} 2020 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 2020

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 Executive Headteacher, as Accounting Officer, for ensuring financial controls conform with the requirements of both propriety and good financial management and in accordance with the requirements and responsibilities assigned to it in the funding agreement between 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 5 times during the year. Attendance during the year at meetings of the board of trustees was as follows :

Trustee	Meetings attended	Out of a possible
Ms Alexandra Smith (from 30/1/2017) Chair of Trustees & Community Governor	5	5
Mr Avtar Sheergill (from 23/4/18) Vice Chair of Trustees and Community Governor	3	5
Ms Celine Benoit (from 20/1/2020) Trustee & Community Governor	3	3
Ms Amanda Bishop (from 26/9/17) Trustee & Community Governor	3	5
Ms Ashwaaq Hassan (from 6/1/2020) Trustee & Community Governor	2	3
Mr Amjad Hussain (from 1/3/16) Trustee & Parent Governor	0	5
Mr Billy Jones (from 1/4/19) Trustee & Community Governor	4	5
Mrs Ruhena Khanam (from 1/3/16) Trustee & Parent Governor	3	5
Mr Jonathan Moore (from 1/3/16) Accounting Officer & Chief Executive Officer	5	5
Mr Qamar Riaz (from 6/7/2020) Trustee & Community Governor	0	0
Mrs Jacinth Ryan (from 24/9/18) Trustee & Community Governor	2	5
Mrs Deborah Ward (from 1/3/16) Staff Trustee & Strategic Business Manager	5	5
Ms Dorothy Alison Graham (from 1/3/16 to 30/6/2020) Trustee & Community Governor	3	5
Miss Barbara Grayson (from 1/3/16 to 2/9/19) Trustee & Community Governor	0	0

Following the review of governance in the Summer Term 2019, the committee structure was altered to

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Governance statement for the year ended 31 August 2020 (continued)

include the following:

Staffing & Finance
Quality of Education
Pupil Wellbeing & Safeguarding.

A review of governance was undertaken during the year which found that the composition of the Trust governance structures would continue to be modified or adjusted to ensure the needs of the Trust are met going forward.

Subsequent to this the following actions were taken:

- committee structure has been adjusted from September 2020.

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 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 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 intends to conduct its next self-evaluation/external review in Summer Term 2021.

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	5
Mr Billy Jones (1/4/19)	4	5
Mr Jonathan Moore (1/3/16) (Executive Headteacher and Accounting Officer)	5	5
Mrs Deborah Ward (1/3/16) (Staff)	5	5

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 school and deliver best value.
- 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.

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Governance statement for the year ended 31 August 2020 (continued)

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 2019 to 31 August 2020 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 2019 to 31 August 2020 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 appointed Feltons, the external auditor, to perform additional checks. 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

On a termly basis, the auditors in their role as internal reviewer reports to the board of trustees, through the Staffing and 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.

The internal reviewers have delivered their schedule of work as planned and there have not been any material control issues arising as a result of the internal reviewer's work.

**Aston Tower Multi-Academy Trust
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Governance statement for the year ended 31 August 2020 (continued)

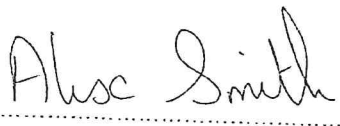
Review of Effectiveness

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 and 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 31st December 2020 and signed on its behalf by:



Alexandra Smith
Chair of Trustees



Jonathan Moore
Accounting Officer


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Statement of regularity, propriety and compliance for the year ended 31 August 2020

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 2019.

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 2019.

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


..... 31st December 2020

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Statement of Trustees' Responsibilities for the year ended 31 August 2020

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:

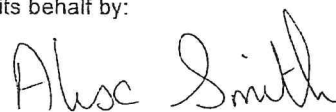
- select suitable accounting policies and then apply them consistently;
- observe the methods and principles in the Charities SORP 2019 and the Academies Accounts Direction 2019 to 2020;
- make judgements and accounting estimates that are reasonable and prudent;
- state whether applicable UK Accounting 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 31st December 2020 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 (the 'academy trust') for the year ended 31 August 2020 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 2019 to 2020 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 2020, and of its incoming resources and application of resources, including its income and expenditure, for the year then ended
- have been properly prepared in accordance with United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice
- have been prepared in accordance with the requirements of the Companies Act 2006, the Charities SORP 2019 and the Academies Accounts Direction 2019 to 2020 issued by the Education & 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

We have nothing to report in respect of the following matters in relation to which the ISAs (UK) require us to report to you where:

- the trustees' use of the going concern basis of accounting in the preparation of the financial statements is not appropriate; or
- the trustees have not disclosed in the financial statements any identified material uncertainties that may cast significant doubt about the academy trust's ability to continue to adopt the going concern basis of accounting for a period of at least twelve months from the date when the financial statements are authorised for issue.

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 trustees are responsible for the 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. Other information includes the trustees' report (incorporating the strategic report and the directors' report), the governance statement, and the Accounting Officer's statement. Our opinion on the financial statements does not cover the other information and, except to the extent otherwise explicitly stated in our report, we do not express any form of assurance conclusion thereon.

In connection with our audit of the financial statements, our responsibility is to read the other information and, in doing so, consider whether the other information is materially inconsistent with the financial statements or our knowledge obtained in the audit or otherwise appears to be materially misstated. If we identify such material inconsistencies or apparent material misstatements, we are required to determine whether there is a material misstatement in the financial statements or a material misstatement of the other information. If, based on the work we have performed, we conclude that there is a material misstatement of this other information, we are required to report that fact.

We have nothing to report in this regard.

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 our knowledge and understanding of the academy trust and its environment obtained in the course of the audit, we have not identified material misstatements in the 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 for the financial statements

As explained more fully in the trustees' responsibilities statement (set out on page 16), the trustees (who are also the directors of the academy trust for the purposes of company law) are responsible for the preparation of the financial statements and for being satisfied that they give a true and fair view, and for such internal control as the trustees determine is necessary to enable the preparation of financial statements that are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

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

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.

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 academy trust's internal control.
- 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 academy trust'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 academy trust to cease to continue as a going concern.

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 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 academy trust'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.



David W Farnsworth FCA (Senior Statutory Auditor)

For and on behalf of Feltons, Statutory Auditor

8 Sovereign Court

8 Graham Street

Birmingham B1 3JR

10 December 2020

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 25 April 2016 and further to the requirements of the Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA) as included in the Academies Accounts Direction 2019 to 2020, 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 2019 to 31 August 2020 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 2019, 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 2019 to 2020. 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 2019 to 31 August 2020 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 2019 to 2020 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 2019 to 31 August 2020 has not been applied to purposes intended by Parliament and the financial transactions do not conform to the authorities which govern them.



David W Farnsworth FCA (Reporting Accountant)

For and on behalf of Feltons, Statutory Auditor

8 Sovereign Court

8 Graham Street

Birmingham B1 3JR

10 December 2020

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

Statement of financial activities for the year ended 31 August 2020
(including income and expenditure account)

	Notes	Unrestricted funds £	Restricted pension fund £	Restricted general funds £	Restricted fixed asset funds £	Total 2019/20 £	Total 2018/19 £
Income from :							
Donations and capital grants	2	-	-	-	8,689	8,689	25,867
Charitable activities :	3						
Funding for the academy trust's educational operations		35,798	-	2,408,547	-	2,444,345	2,438,196
Other trading activities	4	130	-	-	-	130	343
Investments	5	268	-	-	-	268	782
Total		36,196	-	2,408,547	8,689	2,453,432	2,465,188
Expenditure on :							
Charitable activities:							
Academy trust educational operations	6	35,032	67,000	2,275,595	128,712	2,506,339	2,620,023
Total		35,032	67,000	2,275,595	128,712	2,506,339	2,620,023
Net income/(expenditure) before transfers		1,164	(67,000)	132,952	(120,023)	(52,907)	(154,835)
Transfers between funds	14	-	-	(37,181)	37,181	-	-
Net income/(expenditure) after transfers		1,164	(67,000)	95,771	(82,842)	(52,907)	(154,835)
Other recognised gains/(losses)							
Actuarial gains/(losses) on defined benefit pension schemes	14, 22	-	92,000	-	-	92,000	(367,000)
Net movement in funds		1,164	25,000	95,771	(82,842)	39,093	(521,835)
Reconciliation of funds							
Total funds brought forward	14	463,673	(2,181,000)	8,031	5,300,718	3,591,422	4,113,257
Total funds carried forward		464,837	(2,156,000)	103,802	5,217,876	3,630,515	3,591,422

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 2020

	Notes	2020		2019	
		£	£	£	£
Fixed assets					
Tangible assets	11		5,217,481		5,286,570
Current assets					
Debtors	12	59,901		56,727	
Cash at bank and in hand		<u>609,345</u>		<u>581,248</u>	
		669,246		637,975	
Liabilities					
Creditors: amounts falling due within one year	13	<u>100,212</u>		<u>152,123</u>	
Net current assets			569,034		485,852
Net assets excluding pension liability			<u>5,786,515</u>		<u>5,772,422</u>
Defined benefit pension scheme liability	22		(2,156,000)		(2,181,000)
Total net assets			<u><u>3,630,515</u></u>		<u><u>3,591,422</u></u>
Funds of the academy trust :					
Restricted funds					
Fixed asset fund	14	5,217,876		5,300,718	
Restricted income fund	14	103,802		8,031	
Pension reserve	14	<u>(2,156,000)</u>		<u>(2,181,000)</u>	
Total restricted funds			3,165,678		3,127,749
Unrestricted income funds	14		464,837		463,673
Total funds			<u><u>3,630,515</u></u>		<u><u>3,591,422</u></u>

The financial statements on pages 23 to 44 were approved by the trustees, and authorised for issue on 31st December 2020 and are signed on their behalf by:



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 2020

	Notes	2019/20 £	2018/19 £
Cash flows from operating activities			
Net cash provided by / (used in) operating activities	18	78,763	(170,375)
Cash flows from investing activities	19	(50,666)	(659,383)
Change in cash and cash equivalents in the reporting period		<hr/> 28,097	<hr/> (829,758)
Cash and cash equivalents at 1 September 2019		581,248	1,411,006
Cash and cash equivalents at 31 August 2020	20	<hr/> 609,345	<hr/> 581,248

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

Notes to the financial statements for the year ended 31 August 2020

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 2019 to 2020 issued by ESFA, the Charities Act 2011 and the Companies Act 2006.

Aston Tower Multi- Academy Trust meets the definition of a public benefit entity under FRS 102.

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 2020 (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'.

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 2020 (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. 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:

Leasehold land and 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 2020 (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 so as to spread the cost of pensions over employees' working lives with the academy trust in such a way that the pension cost is a substantially level percentage of current and future pensionable payroll. The contributions are determined by the Government Actuary on the basis of quadrennial valuations using a prospective unit credit method. TPS is an unfunded multi-employer scheme with no underlying assets to assign between employers. Consequently, the TPS is treated as a defined contribution scheme for accounting purposes and the contributions recognised in the period to which they relate.

The LGPS is a funded multi-employer scheme and the assets are held separately from those of the academy trust in separate trustee administered funds. Pension scheme assets are measured at fair value and liabilities are measured on an actuarial basis using the projected unit credit method and discounted at a rate equivalent to the current rate of return on a high quality corporate bond of equivalent term and currency to the liabilities. The actuarial valuations are obtained at least triennially and are updated at each balance sheet date. The amounts charged to 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 2020 (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 2016 has been used by the actuary in valuing the pensions liability at 31 August 2020. 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 2020 (continued)

2. Donations and capital grants

	Unrestricted funds £	Restricted general fund £	Restricted fixed asset funds £	2019/20 Total £	2018/19 Total £
Capital grants	-	-	8,689	8,689	25,867
	-	-	8,689	8,689	25,867
2019 total	-	-	25,867	25,867	

3. Funding for the Academy Trust's educational operations

	Unrestricted funds £	Restricted general fund £	Restricted fixed asset funds £	2019/20 Total £	2018/19 Total £
DfE/ESFA grants					
General Annual Grant (GAG)	-	1,884,920	-	1,884,920	1,913,715
Other DfE Group grants	-	379,969	-	379,969	324,250
	-	2,264,889	-	2,264,889	2,237,965
Other government grants					
Local authority grants	-	143,658	-	143,658	147,822
	-	143,658	-	143,658	147,822
Other income from the academy trust's educational operations	35,798	-	-	35,798	52,409
	35,798	143,658	-	179,456	200,231
	35,798	2,408,547	-	2,444,345	2,438,196
2019 total	52,409	2,385,787	-	2,438,196	

4. Other trading activities

	Unrestricted funds £	Restricted funds £	2019/20 Total £	2018/19 Total £
Hire of facilities	130	-	130	343
	130	-	130	343
2019 total	343	-	343	

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

Notes to the financial statements for the year ended 31 August 2020 (continued)

5. Investment income

	Unrestricted funds £	Restricted funds £	2019/20 Total £	2018/19 Total £
Short term deposits	268	-	268	782
2019 total	782	-	782	

6. Expenditure

	Staff costs £	Non pay expenditure Premises £	Other £	2019/20 Total £	2018/19 Total £
Academy's educational operations					
Direct costs	1,536,064	72,157	62,405	1,670,626	1,646,778
Allocated support costs	455,798	145,618	234,297	835,713	973,245
	<u>1,991,862</u>	<u>217,775</u>	<u>296,702</u>	<u>2,506,339</u>	<u>2,620,023</u>
2019 total	2,017,404	233,113	369,506	2,620,023	

Net income/(expenditure) for the period includes :

		2019/20 £	2018/19 £
Operating leases	- plant and machinery	5,745	5,354
Depreciation		128,337	128,336
Loss on disposal of fixed assets		375	75
Fees payable to auditor	- audit	8,250	7,950
	- other services	<u>2,830</u>	<u>2,350</u>

7. Charitable activities

	Unrestricted funds £	Restricted pension fund £	Other restricted funds £	2019/20 Total £	2018/19 Total £
Educational operations					
Direct costs	9,652	-	1,660,974	1,670,626	1,646,778
Support costs	25,380	67,000	743,333	835,713	973,245
	<u>35,032</u>	<u>67,000</u>	<u>2,404,307</u>	<u>2,506,339</u>	<u>2,620,023</u>
2019 total	50,970	95,000	2,474,053	2,620,023	

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Notes to the financial statements for the year ended 31 August 2020 (continued)

7. Charitable activities (continued)

	Unrestricted funds £	Restricted pension fund £	Other restricted funds £	2019/20 Total £	2018/19 Total £
Analysis of support costs					
Support staff costs	-	67,000	388,798	455,798	534,298
Depreciation	-	-	56,555	56,555	54,444
Premises costs	-	-	94,808	94,808	110,058
Other support costs	25,380	-	190,345	215,725	262,720
Governance costs	-	-	12,827	12,827	11,725
Total support costs	25,380	67,000	743,333	835,713	973,245
2019 total	34,587	95,000	843,658	973,245	

8. Staff

a) Staff costs

Staff costs during the period were:

	2019/20 £	2018/19 £
Wages and salaries	1,241,652	1,330,145
Social security costs	112,932	118,379
Pension costs	371,015	381,749
	1,725,599	1,830,273
Agency staff costs	256,831	182,017
Staff restructuring costs	9,432	5,114
	1,991,862	2,017,404
	2019/20 £	2018/19 £
Staff restructuring costs comprise :		
Redundancy payments	-	1,214
Severance payments	9,432	3,900
	9,432	5,114

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Notes to the financial statements for the year ended 31 August 2020 (continued)

8. Staff (continued)

b) Staff severance payments

Included in staff restructuring costs are non-statutory/non-contractual severance payments totalling £9,432 (2019 : £3,900). Individually, the payments were: £3,144 , £3,144 and £3,144

c) Staff numbers

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

	2019/20 Number	2018/19 Number
Teachers	15	15
Administration and support	40	45
Management	4	6
	<u>59</u>	<u>66</u>

d) Higher paid staff

	2019/20 Number	2018/19 Number
The number of employees whose employee benefits (excluding employer pension costs) exceeded £60,000 was :		
£80,001 - £90,000	<u>1</u>	<u>1</u>

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 £350,581 (2019: £410,141).

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	£85,000 - £90,000 (2019 : £85,000 - £90,000)
Employer's pension contributions paid	£20,000 - £25,000 (2019 : £10,000 - £15,000)
Deborah Ward (staff trustee)	
Remuneration	£50,000 - £55,000 (2019 : £50,000 - £55,000)
Employer's pension contributions paid	£10,000 - £15,000 (2019 : £10,000 - £15,000)

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Notes to the financial statements for the year ended 31 August 2020 (continued)

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

During the year ended 31 August 2020, travel and subsistence expenses totalling £77 (2019 : £165) were reimbursed or paid directly to one (2019 : one) trustees.

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 2019	5,626,165	37,825	64,761	5,728,751
Additions	43,195	11,144	5,284	59,623
Disposals	-	(570)	(1,901)	(2,471)
At 31 August 2020	<u>5,669,360</u>	<u>48,399</u>	<u>68,144</u>	<u>5,785,903</u>
Depreciation				
At 1 September 2019	388,337	11,841	42,003	442,181
Charge for the year	113,243	4,419	10,675	128,337
Released by disposals	-	(195)	(1,901)	(2,096)
At 31 August 2020	<u>501,580</u>	<u>16,065</u>	<u>50,777</u>	<u>568,422</u>
Net book values				
At 31 August 2020	<u>5,167,780</u>	<u>32,334</u>	<u>17,367</u>	<u>5,217,481</u>
At 31 August 2019	<u>5,237,828</u>	<u>25,984</u>	<u>22,758</u>	<u>5,286,570</u>

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.

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Notes to the financial statements for the year ended 31 August 2020 (continued)

11. Tangible fixed assets (continued)

Cost or valuation at 31 August 2020 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	1,217,989	23,110	39,964	1,281,063
	<u>5,669,360</u>	<u>48,399</u>	<u>68,144</u>	<u>5,785,903</u>

12. Debtors

	2020 £	2019 £
VAT recoverable	3,718	212
Prepayments and accrued income	54,501	56,515
Other debtors	1,682	-
	<u>59,901</u>	<u>56,727</u>

13. Creditors

	2020 £	2019 £
Amounts falling due within one year :		
Accruals and deferred income	81,242	152,123
Other creditors	18,970	-
	<u>100,212</u>	<u>152,123</u>
Deferred income		
Deferred income at 1 September 2019	25,875	43,547
Resources deferred in the year	27,103	25,875
Amounts released from previous years	(25,875)	(43,547)
Deferred income at 31 August 2020	<u>27,103</u>	<u>25,875</u>

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

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Notes to the financial statements for the year ended 31 August 2020 (continued)

14. Funds

	Balance at 1 September 2019 £	Income £	Expenditure £	Gains, losses and transfers £	Balance at 31 August 2020 £
Restricted general funds					
General Annual Grant (GAG)	8,031	1,884,920	(1,751,968)	(37,181)	103,802
Pupil premium	-	231,630	(231,630)	-	-
Other grants	-	291,997	(291,997)	-	-
	<u>8,031</u>	<u>2,408,547</u>	<u>(2,275,595)</u>	<u>(37,181)</u>	<u>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</u>	<u>519,036</u>
	<u>5,300,718</u>	<u>8,689</u>	<u>(128,712)</u>	<u>37,181</u>	<u>5,217,876</u>
Pension reserve	<u>(2,181,000)</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>(67,000)</u>	<u>92,000</u>	<u>(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</u>	<u>3,165,678</u>
Unrestricted funds					
Other income	<u>463,673</u>	<u>36,196</u>	<u>(35,032)</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>464,837</u>
Total unrestricted funds	<u>463,673</u>	<u>36,196</u>	<u>(35,032)</u>	<u>-</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</u>	<u>3,630,515</u>

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 2020.

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.

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Notes to the financial statements for the year ended 31 August 2020 (continued)

14. Funds (continued)

Comparative information in respect of the preceding period

	Balance at 1 September 2018 £	Income £	Expenditure £	Gains, losses and transfers £	Balance at 31 August 2019 £
Restricted general funds					
General Annual Grant (GAG)	67,307	1,913,715	(1,873,572)	(99,419)	8,031
Pupil premium	-	246,840	(246,840)	-	-
Other grants	-	225,232	(225,232)	-	-
	<u>67,307</u>	<u>2,385,787</u>	<u>(2,345,644)</u>	<u>(99,419)</u>	<u>8,031</u>
Restricted fixed asset funds					
Transfer on conversion	4,200,215	-	(97,036)	-	4,103,179
DfE Group capital grants	691,697	25,867	(17,773)	-	699,791
Capital expenditure from GAG	16,929	-	(13,600)	494,419	497,748
	<u>4,908,841</u>	<u>25,867</u>	<u>(128,409)</u>	<u>494,419</u>	<u>5,300,718</u>
Pension reserve	<u>(1,719,000)</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>(95,000)</u>	<u>(367,000)</u>	<u>(2,181,000)</u>
Total restricted funds	<u>3,257,148</u>	<u>2,411,654</u>	<u>(2,569,053)</u>	<u>28,000</u>	<u>3,127,749</u>
Unrestricted funds					
Other income	856,109	53,534	(50,970)	(395,000)	463,673
Total unrestricted funds	<u>856,109</u>	<u>53,534</u>	<u>(50,970)</u>	<u>(395,000)</u>	<u>463,673</u>
Total funds	<u>4,113,257</u>	<u>2,465,188</u>	<u>(2,620,023)</u>	<u>(367,000)</u>	<u>3,591,422</u>

15. Analysis of net assets between funds

Fund balances at 31 August 2020
are represented by:

	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)
	<u>464,837</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>103,802</u>	<u>5,217,876</u>	<u>5,786,515</u>
Pension scheme liability	-	(2,156,000)	-	-	(2,156,000)
Total net assets	<u>464,837</u>	<u>(2,156,000)</u>	<u>103,802</u>	<u>5,217,876</u>	<u>3,630,515</u>

Aston Tower Multi- Academy Trust
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Notes to the financial statements for the year ended 31 August 2020 (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	-	-	-	5,286,570	5,286,570
Current assets	463,673	-	160,154	14,148	637,975
Current liabilities	-	-	(152,123)	-	(152,123)
	463,673	-	8,031	5,300,718	5,772,422
Pension scheme liability	-	(2,181,000)	-	-	(2,181,000)
Total net assets	463,673	(2,181,000)	8,031	5,300,718	3,591,422

16. Capital commitments

There were no capital commitments at 31 August 2020 nor at 31 August 2019.

17. Commitments under operating leases

At 31 August 2020 the total of the Academy Trust's future minimum lease payments under non-cancellable operating leases was:

	Total 2020	Other Total 2019
	£	£
Amounts due within one year	4,046	5,744
Amounts due between one and five years	3,518	5,212
	<u>7,564</u>	<u>10,956</u>

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

	2019/20	2018/19
	Total	Total
	£	£
Net expenditure for reporting period (as per the SoFA)	(52,907)	(154,835)
Adjusted for :		
Depreciation (note 11)	128,337	128,336
Loss on disposal of fixed assets	375	75
Capital grants from DfE and other capital income	(8,689)	(25,867)
Interest receivable (note 5)	(268)	(782)
Defined benefit pension scheme cost less contributions payable (note 22)	28,000	52,000
Defined benefit pension scheme finance cost/(income) (note 22)	39,000	43,000
Decrease / (increase) in debtors	(3,174)	253,412
Increase / (decrease) in creditors	(51,911)	(465,714)
Net cash provided by / (used in) operating activities	<u>78,763</u>	<u>(170,375)</u>

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Notes to the financial statements for the year ended 31 August 2020 (continued)

19. Cash flows from investing activities

	2019/20 Total £	2018/19 Total £
Interest received	268	782
Purchase of tangible fixed assets	(59,623)	(686,032)
Capital grants from DfE Group	8,689	25,867
Net cash used in investing activities	<u>(50,666)</u>	<u>(659,383)</u>

20. Analysis of cash and cash equivalents

	At 31 August 2020 £	At 31 August 2019 £
Cash at bank and in hand	609,345	581,248
	<u>609,345</u>	<u>581,248</u>

21. Member's 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 Midlands 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 2016.

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

Aston Tower Multi- Academy Trust
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Notes to the financial statements for the year ended 31 August 2020 (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 £148,593 (2019 : £115,660).

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
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Notes to the financial statements for the year ended 31 August 2020 (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 2020 was £186,000 (2019 : £201,000), of which employer's contributions totalled £158,000 (2019 : £171,000) and employees' contributions totalled £28,000 (2019 : £30,000). 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 2020	At 31 August 2019
Rate of increase in salaries	3.30%	3.70%
Rate of increase for pensions in payment / inflation	2.30%	2.20%
Discount rate for scheme liabilities	1.60%	1.85%
Inflation assumption (CPI)	2.30%	2.20%
Commutation of pensions to lump sums	50.00%	50.00%

Sensitivity analysis

	As disclosed	Discount rate	CPI rate	In life expectancy
		+ 0.1% pa	+ 0.1% pa	+ 1 year
	£'000s	£'000s	£'000s	£'000s
Present value of total obligation	4,021	3,931	4,100	4,183
Projected service cost	233	226	240	242
		- 0.1% pa	- 0.1% pa	- 1 year
	£'000s	£'000s	£'000s	£'000s
Present value of total obligation	4,021	4,113	3,944	3,866
Projected service cost	233	240	227	224

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 2020	At 31 August 2019
Retiring today		
Males	21.9	20.9
Females	24.1	23.2
Retiring in 20 years		
Males	23.8	22.6
Females	26.0	25.1

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Notes to the financial statements for the year ended 31 August 2020 (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 2020 £	31 August 2019 £
Equities	1,048,000	972,000
Government bonds	202,000	153,000
Other bonds	72,000	61,000
Property	141,000	132,000
Cash/liquidity	124,000	58,000
Other	278,000	240,000
Total market value of assets	1,865,000	1,616,000

The actual return on scheme assets was £160,000 (2019 : £95,000).

	2019/20 £	2018/19 £
Amount recognised in the statement of financial activities		
Current service cost	185,000	222,000
Net interest cost	39,000	43,000
Administration expenses	1,000	1,000
Total amount recognised in the SoFA	225,000	266,000

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

	2019/20 £	2018/19 £
At 1 September 2019	3,797,000	3,076,000
Current service cost	185,000	174,000
Interest cost	70,000	81,000
Employee contributions	28,000	30,000
Experience loss/(gain) on defined benefit obligation	(366,000)	-
Benefits paid	(39,000)	(36,000)
Changes in financial assumptions	245,000	580,000
Past service cost	-	48,000
Changes in demographic assumptions	101,000	(156,000)
At 31 August 2020	4,021,000	3,797,000

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Notes to the financial statements for the year ended 31 August 2020 (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 :

	2019/20	2018/19
	£	£
At 1 September 2019	1,616,000	1,357,000
Interest income	31,000	38,000
Other actuarial gains/(losses)	(57,000)	-
Employer contributions	158,000	171,000
Employee contributions	28,000	30,000
Benefits paid	(39,000)	(36,000)
Return on assets less interest	129,000	57,000
Administration expenses	(1,000)	(1,000)
At 31 August 2020	1,865,000	1,616,000
Net pension scheme liability	(2,156,000)	(2,181,000)

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. All transactions involving such organisations are conducted in accordance with the requirements of the Handbook, including notifying the ESFA of all transactions made on or after 1 April 2019 and obtaining their approval where required, and with the academy trust's financial regulations and normal procurement procedures relating to connected and related party transactions.

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