United Schools Trust

(A company limited by guarantee)

Annual Report and Financial Statements

Year Ended 31 August 2021

Company Registration number: 09255130 (England and Wales)

United Schools Trust

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United Schools Trust

Reference and Administrative Details

Members	Mrs E Thompson Mr I Sheriff Mr G Smith Mrs J Stuchbery-Ullah Mrs C Mabin (appointed 1 November 2020)
Directors	Mrs J Stuchbery-Ullah, Chair Mrs C Mabin (resigned 31 October 2020) Mrs S Clarke (resigned 11 January 2021) Mrs C Vicary-Ward (resigned 9 September 2021) Dr P Fitch, Principal Mr K Presland Mrs H Hanks (resigned 2 September 2020) Mrs K West Mr D Barnett Mrs S Wharf Mrs C Peplow (appointed 14 September 2020) Mr M West (appointed 11 January 2021) Mrs L Cummings (appointed 26 April 2021)
Senior Management Team	Dr P Fitch Mrs K West Mrs R Cunningham
Principal and Registered Office	Kingsteignton School Heron Way Kingsteignton Newton Abbot Devon TQ12 3QY
Company Registration Number	09255130
Independent Auditors	PKF Francis Clark Chartered Accountants and Statutory Auditor Sigma House Oak View Close Edginswell Park Torquay Devon TQ2 7FF

Reference and Administrative Details (continued)

Bankers	Lloyds Bank Plc 41 Courtenay Street Newton Abbot Devon TQ12 2QW
Solicitors	Wolferstans Solicitors 60-66 North Hill Plymouth Devon PL4 8EP

United Schools Trust

Trustees' Report for the Year Ended 31 August 2021

The Trustees present their annual report together with the financial statements and auditor's report of the charitable company for the year ended 31 August 2021. The annual report serves the purposes of both a Trustees' report, and a Directors' report under company law.

The Trust operates an Academy for pupils aged 4 to 11 serving a catchment area in Kingsteignton. It has a pupil capacity of 420 and had a roll of 143 in the latest school census (October 2020) with the school opening in September 2016. At the end of the summer term 2021 there were 147 pupils on roll

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 the United Schools Trust Limited are also the directors of the charitable company for the purposes of company law. The charitable company operates as the United Schools Trust.

Details of the Trustees who served throughout 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

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 trust 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

Trustees' Report for the Year Ended 31 August 2021 (continued)

Method of recruitment and appointment or election of Trustees

The Board of Trustees is currently made up of 10 Trustees. 6 of these were selected and appointed by the Members, the Principal continues to be the CEO (was previously appointed by Members), one trustee is a parent trustees appointed following election arrangements and two trustees have been co-opted by the Trust Board (in line with the articles of association, articles 45-58). The membership of the board focuses on skills, and the primary consideration in the appointment and election of new trustees is the acquisition of the skills and experience the board needs to be effective. The Board has developed a skills-based set of criteria for Trustee selection and recruitment which can also be used to inform on going self-evaluation and Trustee training.

A parent election process took place in March 2021 with one candidate standing for the position and joining the board in April 2021. This new trustee has a background in audit and finance and was elected as a parent of a registered pupil at Kingsteignton School. A subsequent election process took place in July 2021, but no candidates came forward. In September 2020, during the pandemic, the trust board co-opted a parent with safeguarding expertise onto the board. These arrangements mean that there is a vacancy for a parent trustee, which will be filled through the recruitment of a parent from the academy during the autumn term 2021.

The Principal of the academy is the CEO and remains a member of the board of Trustees. In January 2021, the members appointed the finance portfolio holder who had previously been a parent trustee to the Board as well as another trustee with a background in primary education. This has enabled us to ensure the board retains a broad balance of skills and expertise.

Future appointments and recruitment will continue to be looked at in terms of the skills gap left by any vacancy and the Members will recruit and appoint appropriate trustees to fill the vacancy efficiently. A number of recruitment sites have been contacted to allow a wider search for suitable trustee candidates.

All policies are in place and induction and training of Trustees is on-going. The board is committed to ensuring that their policies and procedures follow the models of good practice outlined in DfE guidance.

Policies and procedures adopted for the induction and training of Trustees

The board is responsible for identifying and securing the induction and other ongoing training and development they need – including for those with specific responsibilities such as the lead on safeguarding including Prevent. As the Academie Trust Handbook requires, the United Schools Trust identifies and fills any skills gaps on the board through recruitment or training.

As part of induction and continuous development, the board encourages everyone, especially those new to the role, to make the most of the resources, guidance and training available to develop their knowledge and skills.

The board's code of conduct sets an ethos of professionalism and high expectations of everyone involved in governance, including an expectation that they undertake training and development activity to fill gaps in the skills they have to contribute to effective governance. Importantly, this includes their ability to understand and interpret educational and financial performance data. Everyone on the board should be able to engage fully with discussions on these matters and if they cannot, they undertake appropriate training or development to enable them to do so.

If, in the view of the board, an individual fails persistently to undertake the training and development they need to contribute effectively to the board, then they are likely to be in breach of the board's code of conduct. Where they have powers to do so, the board should consider suspending them on the grounds that they have acted in a way that is contrary to the board's ethos and has brought or is likely to bring the organisation, the board or their role into disrepute. Suspensions are for a fixed period of up to six months at a time.

Succession plans are in place so that any change in the chair or trust board does not impede the board's effectiveness.

Organisational Structure

The Trust Members
There are 5 Trust Members including the chair of trustees (Articles of Association – Article 12). All members have a clear understanding of the vision of the Academy Trust and are fully on board with its ethos.

The Members are responsible for appointing and removing trustees. In order to ensure that they do an effective job the Members will have a thorough knowledge of the school, its performance and where the Board of trustees lacks expertise (information gained through sight of Trust Board agendas, minutes and associated papers). The Members will appoint up to 8 trustees on a skills basis. They will consider the outcome of the skills audit and feedback on the Free School's performance to establish what person they need and then they should properly assess the skills set of any proposed candidate.

The Board of Trustees
The governance of the Trust is defined in the Articles of Association together with the funding agreements with the Department for Education.

The management structure is on 4 levels: the members, the Board of Trustees, The Chief Executive Officer and Principal and the senior leadership team.

All trustees are members of the full board of trustees. The chief executive officer and Principal is also the accounting officer of the academy trust.

A scheme of delegation has been agreed in order to devolve responsibility and encourage decision making at all levels. Each trustee, depending on their skills and/or experience holds a portfolio which covers an area of responsibility and has clear terms of reference that show where a decision can be made by the portfolio holder which is then reported to the full trust board and recorded in the minutes or where the portfolio holder makes a recommendation to the full trust board, who will make the decision. Portfolio holders undertake appropriate training in order to fully understand their role including, where possible and appropriate, joining relevant staff training to keep updated e.g. annual Safeguarding Level 2 training.

Currently, the board of trustees oversee Kingsteignton School only. When an additional school joins the UST, the board of trustees will oversee more than one academy. The board of trustees will be reconstituted as another academy joins the trust to incorporate the Principal and parental representatives of the academies within the MAT. Initially the board may oversee more than one academy with no local governing body.

Role of the Chief Executive Officer and Principal
The Principal is responsible for the everyday operation of the school and works strategically alongside the Board of trustees to plan the future direction of the school and Trust. The Principal and CEO are accountable to the Board of Trustees. The Principal is also the Accounting Officer.

Arrangements for setting pay and remuneration of key management personnel

The United Schools Trust has followed the LA agreed pay policy which has been endorsed annually by the trustees/members with regards to the setting of key management personnel pay.

Following the Principal's appraisal meeting comprising of trustees and an independent external reviewer; pay recommendations are discussed by the performance and pay committee along with evidence of targets met.

Trustees' Report for the Year Ended 31 August 2021 (continued)

Trade Union Facility Time

There is no requirement for the Academy to disclose Trade Union Facility Time.

Related Parties and other Connected Charities and Organisations

The United School's Trust continues to work in partnership with the United Schools Federation who provided support during the pre-opening and opening of the academy. The Trustees agreed on this decision and all decisions around this area have been discussed and agreed with the full declaration of any interests. This is evidenced within the minutes of the trustee meetings and the declaration of interest forms. Appropriate procedures are followed, as set out in the Articles of Association to ensure there is no conflict of interests within discussion or voting in this area. The United Schools Federation is a group of 7 schools who work as school improvement partners to the United Schools Trust and Kingsteignton School; the USF and the UST also form part of a co-operative trust – The United Schools Learning Partnership.

Kingsteignton School also shares its site with an external nursery and preschool, Humpty Dumpty Childcare (HDC). HDC has occupied the site since August 2019 on a peppercorn rent but subject to a service charge by the Trust for any supplies and services shared with the Trust.
HDC were due to start paying a rent from August 2020 but because the lease from the DfE had not been agreed at that time-his prohibits the trust from sub-letting. The rent will be accrued until the lease has been agreed and signed. Heads of Terms have been by agreed by the Trust and HDC and acts as a Tenancy at Will which allows either partner to dissolve the agreement at any time until the Trust have a lease with the DfE and subsequently with HDC.

SMASC (St Michael's School After School Club) was transferred back to the management of the United Schools Federation including a transfer of assets and the tupe of all staff. Humpty Dumpty Childcare now provides 'wrap around' care from 8.00 am until 6.00 pm as well as a holiday club. The care outside of school hours is paid for by parents but is offered at a reasonable cost to ensure that it is accessible to all parents. A significant number of children entering the school in Reception came from HDC in September 2020

Objectives and Activities

Objects and Aims

The United Schools Trust aims to provide all children at Kingsteignton School with an outstanding and inspiring education within a caring and nurturing environment. We value individuals, recognise and celebrate their gifts and talents and provide the opportunities they need to help them achieve personal and academic excellence. Our school motto is Aiming Higher, Achieving More, Together. The values for life that we promote throughout our school are Friendship, Compassion, Justice, Courage and Perseverance.

A child-centred vision is at the centre of all we do.

Trustees' Report for the Year Ended 31 August 2021 (continued)

AIMING HIGHER, ACHIEVING MORE, TOGETHER

OUR VISION:
By the time you leave us you will:
- have grown healthy and strong and understand how to look after your body and mind
- feel part of our community, proud of yourselves and our school and inspired to make a difference
- love learning new things, feel ready for the future and want to keep on learning more
- know what it feels like to be good at something and have achieved your very best
- understand just how amazing you are, believe in yourself and have the confidence and resilience to follow your dream
- have known friendship and learned how to get along well with other people of all ages
- have been privileged to work alongside outstanding teachers who inspire, enthuse and motivate you in your learning
- have learned to love nature, the outdoor environment and learning 'without walls and ceiling'
- have embraced technology in all its forms and understand how it can help you in life
- have learned how to keep yourselves safe in all elements of your life
- have become a responsible global citizen who respects the rights of others

Our motto, values and school vision are relevant to all stakeholders including children, staff, trustees and volunteers.

Trustees' Report for the Year Ended 31 August 2021 (continued)

Objectives, Strategies and Activities

Our curriculum aims to inspire and motivate children to explore and learn about the world around them. It helps them gain an awareness of the role within their communities and prepares them for their future lives. We actively encourage children to embrace technology and lead healthy and active lives.

The school places a great importance on developing links with the community. The school is a Dementia Friendly School, with a high-quality healthy curriculum that will prepare children for healthy adult lives. Community links will be a large part of this. A member of the teaching staff has taken over the role of Dementia team leader and will work towards ensuring that the physical and mental health of all stakeholders are a priority. This will include the development of the use of mindfulness and yoga across the school and the liaison with Early Help for Mental Health (EHMH) and other organisations and individuals who will help to maintain our dementia friendly initiative as an integral part of our ethos and curriculum. Children in the school regularly visit a local dementia care home to share their learning and other activities. We will to continue to develop how we involve the local community, particularly the more elderly members of the community, in school life when possible.

The school continues to invest heavily in Technology including notebooks, tablets, multimedia recording equipment, editing equipment and environmental and scientific monitoring tools, interactive tabletops to inspire and motivate children in their learning. Technology is used to support children and ensure that they make excellent progress and achieve their full potential. A member of the teaching staff has expertise in digital learning and is developing and disseminating new initiatives across the school, Trust and Federation to enhance learning. This expertise continued to be particularly useful in allowing the school to develop an effective platform for online learning throughout the pandemic for children who were in lockdown and accessing learning virtually from home. All teachers have gained valuable training and experience in using digital technology to support learning both at home and in the classroom and were integral in creating the online learning materials across our partnership. As a result of changes in practice, parents evenings, for example, will continue to be offered virtually and work for a child who is self-isolating or at home ill can be provided virtually through Google Classroom.

We also participated in the National Tutoring Programme which funded one to one tuition for those children in receipt of the Pupil Premium Grant.

The use of the outdoors and nature to motivate and inspire children in their learning is an area which the school has developed including the construction of a large play trail in the playground which the children use daily. The school is also working in partnership with Humpty Dumpty Childcare to fund raise and develop a sensory and productive garden within the school grounds. It is hoped that this will provide the children with the opportunity to grow their own food and develop enterprise skills as they are involved in fundraising and will sell produce to the local community. This links with the dementia friendly ethos of the school and a vision of learning 'without walls and ceiling' is an integral part of our of school improvement plan. A close link with Abbrook Farm (created by and maintained by the local secondary school – Teign) means that outdoor learning has been extended away from the school ground but COVID restrictions have delayed further developments.

Trustees' Report for the Year Ended 31 August 2021 (continued)

Teaching continues to be exciting and motivating through the context of our enquiry based curriculum. It inspires children to make excellent progress and ensures that they become confident, successful and independent learners. Despite the challenges presented by COVID, the majority of pupils have made good progress from their starting points this year. The foundation curriculum which is both knowledge rich and skills led has been embedded and continues to result in a lively and motivating curriculum linked to the school's context and which is enquiry-based and, wherever possible, child led. An Ofsted area for development, improving the quality of cross curricular writing, has been successfully addressed through our Learning Challenge Curriculum.

Partnership working has been restricted throughout the year due to the pandemic but the trustees, as part of their strategic planning, have considered a range of partnership options for the future. After research, a number of options were considered by the board and it was decided to formalise the partnership with the United Schools Federation. In June 2021, a management partnership agreement was drafted by the Chairs and Senior Leaders of the two organisations for a start date of the 1st of September 2021. The aims of this partnership will support staff development, team planning, assessment and moderation allowing for quality assurance across the schools. In addition, termly evaluation visits were reintroduced in the latter half of the Summer term 2021 and were carried out by senior leaders across the trust and federation allowing for further validation of standards.

As part of our strategic planning, trustees have considered the future growth of Kingsteignton School The projected numbers (from Devon County) this year and into the next year for pre-school places in Kingsteignton for children aged 0-4 show that there is a short fall in numbers of Reception Starters. Although available numbers are lower, Kingsteignton school was oversubscribed for September 2020 and September 2021. The trust board have agreed that the school should remain a one form entry school as planned until DCC projected numbers show that there is the need for additional places in the local area. This will continue to be reviewed on an annual basis.

As a result of the above discussions, a comprehensive staffing review has been carried out by the trust board. The board had decided just before the start of the COVID pandemic to advertise for a part time Business Manager for the United Schools Trust. The advertisement was delayed from April 2020 to September 2020 due to the restrictions and interviews took place in October 2020. The successful candidate started their position after October half term 2020.

The board had also decided in the Summer term 2020 to anticipate that there would be a need for comprehensive catch up interventions across the school as a result of the pandemic and agreed that an additional teacher should be employed for the Year 2020-21. An appointment was made and intensive intervention programmes were planned by each class teacher and implemented by the 'catch up teacher'. This enabled children to make accelerated progress which is evidenced in the end of year assessments.This appointment also benefitted all staff as it enabled cover for sickness including COVID, self isolation and additional PPA time to allow additional time of high quality planning both online and in the classroom.

During the Spring term 2021, the board reviewed the staffing structure in order to develop leadership capacity. Modelling exercises were undertaken with full costings and the preferred, affordable structure will be implemented from September 2021. The formation of the leadership team will build capacity and provide the opportunity for a more distributive approach now that the number of staff and pupils has increased. The structure has provided existing teaching staff the opportunity to undertake leadership training and develop their roles in school. As in previous years, another teacher has been appointed for September 2021 as there will be an additional class of children. Throughout discussions, the board ensured that staffing in place supports pupils with their mental health and wellbeing needs during this year and into the new year in September.

Trustees' Report for the Year Ended 31 August 2021 (continued)

A governance self-evaluation exercise was completed in May 2021. This showed that there was a good spread of skills and experience across the board that that the board lacks chairing experience. As a result, the Clerk has been searching the governance recruitment sites and the current Chair has been in contact with the Governance Consultancy Team at Babcock to ask them to recommend any people who may be interested in joining our board with experience of being a Chair. An external review of governance will take place in the Autumn term 2021.

SMASC (St Michael's School After School Club) was transferred back to the management of the United Schools Federation including a transfer of assets and the tupe of all staff.

Humpty Dumpty Childcare now provides 'wrap around' care from 8.00 am until 6.00 pm as well as a holiday club. The care outside of school hours is paid for by parents, but is offered at a reasonable cost to ensure that it is accessible to all parents. A significant number of children entering the school in Reception came from HDC in September 2020.

Public Benefit

The Academy Trust provides educational services to all children in the local area. The Trustees confirm that they have complied with the duty in Section 4 of the Charities Act 2006 to have due regard to the public benefit guidance provided by the Charity Commission.

Strategic Report

Achievements and Performance

Key Performance Indicators

During the Year 2020--21, our school population consisted of a Reception class, a Year 1 class, a Year 2 class, a Year 3 class and a mixed age Year 4 / 5 class. Interim results from the last assessments that were carried out in the summer term showed that the majority of children were on track for Age Related Expectations despite the interruptions to learning this year.

There was no statutory testing during the summer term so no key data to report on. There was no Year 6 cohort this year.

All vulnerable and key worker children were in school from the start of this year until March 2021 when, in line with Government policy, all children returned to full time education. The figures from March to July showed that attendance was outstanding at 97.1%.

Prior to March 2021, those children who remained at home accessed high quality home learning planning and resources which matched the learning in the classroom. There were frequent opportunities for the children at home to engage with those in school for example daily story telling for the younger children and for the older children the opportunity to meet up online and discuss their learning with teachers and with their peers. The engagement with home learning was high. iPads were loaned out to any children who did not have access to technology devices. Parental feedback reflected very positively the high quality of online planning and the support from teachers when parents needed support with helping their children learn from home.

The school provided, for a short period, packed lunches to collect for Free School Meal children working from home until the school could facilitate the Government vouchers.

Humpty Dumpty Childcare were selected to run Government funded holiday clubs for Free School Meal children and these were well attended by our children.

Financially, the school year on year has presented a budget that is in credit. The three year budget forecast shows that the school will not be working in deficit at any time.

A summary report produced by Devon Audit Partnership (our internal auditors) showed that based on the evaluation of system controls, review of documentary evidence and the results of testing a sample of transactions their overall opinion for the Academy is as follows:

Substantial Assurance - A sound system of governance, risk management and control exists, with internal controls operating effectively and being consistently applied to support the achievement of objectives in the area audited.

Strategic Report

Executive Summary

The Principal takes responsibility for the day to day running of the Academy along with the support of the Business Manager and the admin / finance staff. The Principal also implements the policies laid down by the Trustees and reports back to the Board of Trustees on performance.
It is pleasing to note that the financial controls and procedures in place are well managed and comprehensive overall in the areas reviewed and this is much to the credit of the Trustees, Principal, Business Manager and the admin / finance staff. The internal audit reviews that took place during the 2020-21 academic year has provided Trustees with assurance that the controls in place to manage the risks within the areas tested are well controlled and consistently practiced. Minimal findings have been made in the 2020-21 internal audit report that should be addressed by the Academy by implementing the suggested recommendations in order to ensure that the control framework is effective in managing and reducing the identified risks.

Going Concern

After making appropriate enquiries, the Board of Trustees has an expectation that the Academy Trust has adequate resources to continue in operational existence for the foreseeable future. Further details regarding the adoption of the going concern basis can be found in the Statement of Accounting Policies.

Promoting the success of the academy

Under Section 172(1) (a) to (f) of the Companies Act 2006, directors of a company must act in a way most likely to promote the success of the company and in doing so must have regard to:
- The likely consequences of any decision in the long term
- The interests of the company's employees
- The need to foster the company's business relationships with suppliers, customers and others
- The impact of the company's operations on the community and the environment
- The desirability of the company maintaining a reputation for high standards of business conduct
- The need to act fairly as between members of the company

Strategic Report

Financial Review

The Academy opened four years ago and is growing in size, therefore all comparative income and expenditure figures will reflect this fact. Income in the current period totalled £845,000 (2020: £667,000) and expenditure totalled £1,116,000 (2020: £921,000). After the loss of £86,000 (2020: loss of £76,000) on the pension scheme, the total net movement in funds for the year was a decrease of £357,000 (2020: a decrease of £330,000). Excluding pension and fixed asset movements, there was a small increase in unrestricted and general restricted funds for the year.

Although COVID has significantly impacted the school, it has been able to minimise this impact on the pupils learning through strategic staff deployments and the additional COVID related grants.

The reserves policy and investment policy of the school are outlined below, along with the Trust's principal risks and uncertainties.

The Trust is not aware of any key factors that may negatively impact the Trust's financial position or performance going forward.

The Academy adheres to the financial management policies as contained in the Finance Policy.

Reserves and Investment policy

The aims of this policy are to:
1. Regularly monitor Cash Flow and Current Account balances to ensure immediate financial commitments can be met (payroll and payments runs) and that the current accounts have adequate balances to meet forthcoming commitments. In practice a working balance of between £20,000 and £30,000 is likely to be maintained in a primary school
2. The Trust will avoid any of its Current Accounts going overdrawn.
3. Periodically (at least annually) review interest rates and compare with other investment opportunities
4. The Trust's current policy is to only invest funds in risk free and immediately accessible Deposit Accounts.
5. Any change in policy requires the approval of the Trustees.

The school has ring-fenced £100,000 as reserves to provide emergency funds for such expenses as building repairs because the building is new and would be unlikely to be eligible for additional grants. It is planned to use the remainder of the school funds to provide additional school facilities such as an enhanced sports field and playground shade.

Trustees' Report for the Year Ended 31 August 2021 (continued)

Strategic Report

Principal Risks and Uncertainties

There is a need for a school in Kingsteignton and, therefore, minimal risk that the school will not continue to grow at its current rate and beyond into the future. The school was oversubscribed this year in contrast to other primary schools in the locality and the reputation of the school is high in the local community.

The United Schools Trust has agreed a Risk Management Strategy, a Risk Register and a Risk Management Plan. These have been developed by the Trustees in conjunction with Devon Audit Services and include the financial risks to the Trust.

The trustees have assessed the major risks to which the Trust is exposed, in particular those relating to its finances, teaching, facilities (including buildings) and other operational areas. The Trustees have implemented a number of systems to assess and minimise those risks, including internal controls. Where significant financial risk still remains, the trustees ensure that the Trust has adequate insurance cover.

Whilst the local population continues to grow, risks to revenue funding from a falling roll are relatively small. However, changes in the Funding Formula, changes in funding arrangements for special educational needs and the increasing employment and premises costs mean that budgets will be increasingly tight in coming years.

The trustees examine the financial health of the Trust formally every term, reviewing performance against budgets and overall expenditure by means of regular update reports at Board of Trustee meetings.

Strategic Report

The principal risks and uncertainties facing the Trust are as follows:

Financial
The Trust has considerable reliance on continued Government funding through the EFSA with the majority of the Trust's incoming resources being ultimately Government funded and there is no assurance that Government policy or practice will remain the same or that public funding will continue on the same levels or on the same terms.

Failures in governance and/or management
The risk in this area arises from the potential failure to effectively manage the Trusts' finances, internal controls, compliance with regulations and legislation, statutory returns etc. The trustees will continue to review and ensure appropriate measures are in place to mitigate these risks.

Reputational
The continued success of the Trust is dependent on academic attainment and progress measures being at or above Devon and National figures thus maintaining the highest educational standards. This will ensure that applicants are attracted in sufficient numbers to ensure that the Trust remains financially sustainable.

Safeguarding and child protection
The trustees continue to ensure that the highest standards are maintained in the areas of selection and monitoring of staff, the operation of child protection policies and procedures, health and safety and behaviour. A strong culture of safeguarding for all stakeholders is an integral part of the school's ethos.

Staffing
The success of the Trust is reliant on the quality of its staff so the trustees monitor and review policies and procedures to ensure continued development and training of staff as well as ensuring there is clear succession planning.

Fraud and mismanagement of funds
The Trust has engaged its external auditors to perform a program of work aimed at checking and reviewing the financial systems and records as required by the Academy Trust Handbook. All finance staff receive training and support to keep them up to date with financial developments and to develop their skills in this area.

The Trust will continue to strengthen its risk management process into the future by continually reviewing and improving the process and ensuring staff awareness. A Risk Register is maintained and reviewed and updated on a regular basis by the Board of trustees.

Strategic Report

Investment Policy

Introduction
At Kingsteignton School, we are careful with the public money we are entrusted with. We will carefully invest any money that is not required to cover anticipated expenditure and take steps to manage the risk associated with financial investments.

Objectives and targets
The purpose of this policy is to ensure that any surplus funds are invested well so that they achieve the best financial returns with the minimum risk. Good financial returns mean that more money can be spend on educating pupils.

Action Plan
Adequate cash balances must be maintained to ensure that there are always sufficient funds in the school's current account to cover financial commitments such as payroll and day-to-day expenses. If there is a surplus of funds after all financial commitments have been considered, this surplus will be invested. Funds should be invested in trances of £10,000 where possible and after agreement from the Board of trustees. It may be beneficial to invest each tranche with a different financial institution. Funds, and any interest they earn, will be automatically reinvested, unless they are required for immediate or anticipated expenditure.

Monitoring and Evaluation
The Accounting officer will compare alternative investment opportunities every six months to ensure that the school's funds achieve the best interest rates.

The Chief Executive Officer and Business Manager will carry out a review of this policy on a regular basis to ensure that any new or changed legislation is adhered to. Next school review due January 2022.

For the last four years, the trustees have deemed that with the uncertainty of actual costs in occupying the new school, investment is not appropriate at present and that the returns achieved by investing in risk free and immediately accessible Deposit Accounts does not justify the time spent in organising the investment.

Fundraising

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

Plans for Future Periods

The United Schools Trust will look to grow the trust over the next few years. An interest has been registered with the DfE in the development of any new free schools in the local area. Initial discussions with the Regional Schools Commissioner have taken place and the possibility of other already established schools joining the MAT is being investigated. This intention has been communicated to the local authority and the diocese.

The number of children admitted into the future will increase in line with local need. When full, the school will have the capacity to take 15 classes of 30 children including a nursery class. This will provide enough places for 420 primary and 60 nursery children.

Trustees' Report for the Year Ended 31 August 2021 (continued)

Strategic Report

Funds Held as Custodian Trustee on Behalf of Others
The Trust and its Trustees do not act as custodian trustees for any other charities.

Auditor
In so far 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.

Trustees' Report, incorporating a Strategic Report, was approved by order of the members of the Governing Body, as the company directors, on ..6/12/21... and signed on its behalf by:

P Fitch
.....
Dr P Fitch
Director

United Schools Trust

Governance Statement

Scope of responsibility

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

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

The Governing Body has delegated the day-to-day responsibility to Dr P Fitch, 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 United Schools Trust and the Secretary of State for Education. They are also responsible for reporting to the Governing Body 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 11 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
Mrs J Stuchbery-Ullah	9	11
Mrs S Clarke	5	5
Mr D Barnett	10	11
Dr P Fitch	11	11
Mrs C Mabin	2	2
Mr K Presland	9	11
Mrs C Vicary-Ward	10	11
Mrs S Wharf	9	11
Mrs K West	9	11
Mrs C Peplow	8	10
Mrs L Cummings	2	3
Mr M West	4	6

The Audit and Risk Committee is also a sub-committee of the main board of trustees Its purpose is to monitor the adequacy and effectiveness of the United Schools Trust's systems of internal control and its arrangements for risk management, control and governance processes and for securing economy, efficiency and effectiveness. The minutes of committee meetings are circulated to all Board members. The Audit and Risk Committee has formally met 5 times during the year. Attendance at meetings during the year was as follows:

Governance Statement (continued)

Trustee	Meetings attended	Out of a possible
Mr D Barnett	4	5
Mrs S Clarke	3	3
Mrs L Cummings	1	1
Mrs C Vicary-Ward	5	5
Mrs S Wharf	5	5
Mr K Presland	0	1
Mrs K West	0	1

At the end of the summer term 2020, three trustees expressed their wish to resign during the year 2020/21. They agreed to a staggered resignation to ensure continuity during the ongoing pandemic and allow succession planning and handovers.

Christina Mabin agreed to resign at October half tern 2020 and become a Member in November 2020. Christina was the safeguarding portfolio holder and this arrangement gave Carli Peplow, a new trustee with safeguarding expertise, a handover period with Christina Mabin at the beginning of the year. The board co-opted Carli Peplow to the board at the housekeeping meeting in September so that she could start immediately.

Although David Barnett and Suzannah Wharf had been appointed to the board in February 2020 and were responsible for the portfolio areas previously held by Sue Clarke, no face to face meetings had occurred and the need for further overlap was considered necessary. Sue Clarke therefore agreed to resign at the end of the autumn term 2020 (she did in fact resign in January 2021). Marcus West was appointed in January 2021 to give further primary school experience to the board and support partnership work with the United Schools Federation.

Julie Stuchbery-Ullah agreed to remain as Chair throughout 2020/21 with David Barnett as Vice Chair. Clear responsibilities were agreed to aid succession planning and the Chair's workload. The board agreed that we would endeavour to recruit a new trustee with chairing experience to enable Julie Stuchbery-Ullah to resign in July or December 2021. It is planned that a new trustee with chairing experience will be appointed during October 2021.

In September 2020, Helen Hanks resigned at the beginning of term due to covid related work demands thus leaving a parent vacancy. As we were living with covid restrictions, and there were two other parents on the board, the board decided this was an inappropriate time to hold parent trustee elections. Elections were held the following March and Lisa Cummings became a parent trustee in April 2021, bringing additional audit and finance experience to the board. Elections during the summer term did not attract any candidates but there were three parents on the board.

Governance Statement (continued)

Impact report

The Board of Trustees continue to play a very strong role in driving the school forward and ensuring that the pupils progress very well in their education. Throughout the year 2020/21 the board held a full board meeting every month with the meeting with Members in July 2021 being optional. This was agreed in July 2020 so that if the pandemic restrictions continued and trustees were unable to visit school, the board would receive updates regularly via virtual board meetings. As, during the year there were to be a number of changes on the board, meeting regularly helped trustees to become familiar with each other and gain a general understanding of school business. Finally, as a new Business Manager had been appointed, the board invited her to all meetings and used this as an opportunity to ensure all trustees had an overview of developments taking place in school. The Finance Group (Chair, Finance Portfolio Holder, Principal and Business Manager) met the week before the board meeting. Notes from these meetings together with all financial reporting were available for trustees prior to the board meeting each month. It is proposed that the board will meet 7 times a year in 2021/22 as covid restrictions are lifted.

The board appreciates that pupils must be supported by a well led, enthusiastic and motivated staff who constantly strive for excellence in all that they do. Trustees and staff have continued to work as a cohesive team within a safe, supportive yet challenging, working environment and support the values and vision of the school despite covid restrictions throughout the year. We work in partnership with the United Schools Federation under the umbrella of the United Schools Learning Partnership to develop skills, share outstanding practice and ensure that standards are at a very high level and that both staff and pupils are aspirational in terms of their targets and outcomes.

Throughout 2020/21 the Chair and Principal had regular virtual meetings and sent updates to trustees whenever Covid-19 guidance and circumstances changed. Trustees were informed and involved immediately following any PHE, DfE and LA advice. This meant trustees were clear about planning and actions being taken regarding the provision of online teaching and learning and communication with families and how the most vulnerable and key worker children were attending school safely. Trustees had the opportunity to question the Principal and develop a good understanding of the complex arrangements that enabled school to open to our Reception and Year 1 children in June.

Trustees requested information about the wellbeing of staff and what actions should be implemented to support them. In July 2020, the recruitment of an additional teacher was agreed for September 2020 so that interventions were available for pupils immediately, additional PPA time could be allocated to teachers and a 'known' member of staff would be available to cover staff absences due to covid or isolation. Trustees worked with the Principal when schools re-opened fully in March 2021 and have been delighted with the support from parents and high attendance figures.

Trustee monitoring visits were reduced during the pandemic, but some visits including safeguarding and premises visits were conducted outside of school hours.

The Trust Board's 'Strategy and School Improvement' meeting took place in October 2020. The headings of the 3-year strategic plan are: Vision and Community, Growing the School, Partnerships and Governance. The board will ensure that a focus on tackling issues related to the impact of Covid-19 continues as we refocus on the longer-term strategic developments of both Kingsteignton School and the United Schools Trust.

The key targets for the school improvement plan 2020/21 were:

Governance Statement (continued)

OUTCOMES FOR PUPILS Judgement: Good

Next steps:

- ✓ **OP1** To ensure that pupils are able to develop and apply a wide range of age-appropriate skills in reading, writing and maths within the context of the Learning Challenge Curriculum with a particular focus on the quality of cross-curricular writing and the acceleration of progress particularly with the more able to achieve greater depth in writing

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT Judgement: Good

Next steps, including those identified from the SEF:

- ✓ **LM1** To ensure that pupils are able to develop and apply a wide range of age-appropriate skills in reading, writing and maths within the context of the Learning Challenge Curriculum with a particular focus on the quality of cross-curricular writing and the acceleration of progress particularly with the more able to achieve greater depth in writing
- ✓ **LM2** To ensure that the well being and mental health of all staff is of paramount importance including ensuring that staff have a healthy work life balance
- ✓ **LM3 To ensure that the well-being and mental health of pupils is a priority with particular reference to COVID-19**
- ✓ **LM4 To ensure succession planning for leadership**

QUALITY OF TEACHING, LEARNING AND ASSESSMENT Judgement: Good

Next steps, including those identified from the SEF:

- ✓ TL1: To ensure that pupils are able to develop and apply a wide range of age-appropriate skills in reading, writing and maths within the context of the Learning Challenge Curriculum with a particular focus on the quality of cross-curricular writing and the acceleration of progress particularly with the more able to achieve greater depth in writing.
- ✓ TL2: To ensure that the application of spelling rules and patterns and the spelling of common exception words improves in writing in all areas of the curriculum

PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT, BEHAVIOUR AND WELFARE Judgement: Good

Next steps, including those identified from the SEF:

- **PDBW1** To enable children to become global citizens who respect the rights of others
- **PDBW2** To ensure healthy lifestyles (particularly mental health) and eco- friendliness are embedded in school.
-

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF EARLY YEARS PROVISION Judgement: Good

Next steps, including those identified from the SEF:

- ✓ **EEYP1:** To ensure that Reception and external providers of nursery/preschool work closely in partnership to ensure maximum alignment

and to ensure a smooth transition into Reception.

- ✓ **EEYP2:** To ensure that the Foundation stage team are aware of the changes in the new EYFS curriculum and have made the appropriate changes to practice

Governance Statement (continued)

SUSTAINABILITY

Next steps, including those identified from the SEF:

- ✓ **S1** To ensure that the school identity as linked to dementia friendly ethos is clear to all
- ✓ **S2** To grow the United Schools Trust

OFSTED PRIORITIES (May 2019)

- **Further increase the accountability of leaders by ensuring that:**
  - **School improvement plans are more sharply focused, for example with clear targets and time scales, to ensure that they have the required impact on raising pupils' achievement, particularly for pupils with SEND**
  - **Leaders, including trustees, monitor plans regularly and make adjustments to increase the effectiveness of their work**
- **Improve the quality of teaching and learning by ensuring that teachers:**
  - **Develop pupils' ability to use their knowledge and skills in writing across the curriculum, in order to increase the number of pupils reaching the higher standards of which they are capable**
  - **Improve the teaching and assessment of spelling across Key Stage 1 so that pupils understand spelling patterns and rules and spell words correctly**

The Board of trustees demonstrates its focus on its three core strategic functions: firstly, ensuring clarity of vision, ethos and strategic direction; secondly, holding the Principal to account for educational performance of the school and its pupils; and finally overseeing the financial performance of the school and making sure its money is well spent.

1. Vision, ethos and strategic direction

The Board of trustees seek to provide all children at Kingsteignton School with an outstanding and inspiring education within a caring and nurturing environment.

We value individuals, recognise and celebrate their gifts and talents and provide the opportunities they need to help them achieve personal and academic excellence.

Our curriculum aims to inspire and motivate children to explore and learn about the world around them, it will help them gain an awareness of the role within their communities and prepare them for their future lives. We actively encourage children to embrace technology and aim to be at the cutting edge of using technology in the classroom.

The values for life that we promote through our Trust are Friendship, Compassion, Justice, Courage and Perseverance.

We are a dementia friendly school and actively encourage children to lead healthy and active lives and to engage with more elderly members of the local community in a wide range of ventures and activities. The school and its trustees will be central to developing a dementia friendly local community.

Finally, our trust is aspirational - we want every child to reach his or her potential and every member of staff to do the same. Our overarching motto is 'Aiming Higher, Achieving More, Together' and this encompasses everything we do.

Governance Statement (continued)

Our child-centred ethos states that for all stake holders including pupils, staff and trustees:

By the time you leave us you will:

- have grown healthy and strong and understand how to look after your body and mind
- feel part of our community, proud of yourselves and our school and inspired to make a difference
- love learning new things, feel ready for the future and want to keep on learning more
- know what it feels like to be good at something and have achieved your very best
- understand just how amazing you are, believe in yourself and have the confidence and resilience to follow your dream
- have known friendship and learned how to get along well with other people of all ages
- have been privileged to work alongside outstanding teachers who inspire, enthuse and motivate you in your learning
- have learned to love nature, the outdoor environment and learning 'without walls and ceiling'
- have embraced technology in all its forms and understand how it can help you in life
- have become a responsible global citizen who respects the rights of others

The challenges of opening a new school have continued to form a major part of the strategic development of the school by the trustees. Ensuring that the school is valued within the local community continues to be a priority and this has been achieved through a range of marketing strategies and the development of an aspirational culture. The school started with 14 pupils in September 2016 - and finished the 2020-2021 academic year with 148 pupils. The school is now held in high regard by the local community and the trustees are confident that the school will continue to grow rapidly towards its full capacity as a single form entry school. Depending on the local demographics including NHS forecasts for the number of children who require a Reception place each year, the Trust will decide whether it is in a position to offer an additional reception class and raise the PAN to 60 rather than 30. The school has a capacity of 420 children. Managing the growth of both the school and the Trust is included within the strategic plan 2021-2024.

Governance Statement (continued)

2. Holding the Principal to account for education performance or the school

The trustees are rigorous in their evaluation of the educational performance of the school and individual trustees work alongside the Principal as described in their portfolio terms of reference. The trustees and the Principal are aspirational in terms of pupil progress and attainment and half termly assessment results are shared with the trustees. SMART interventions are put in place to accelerate progress where a child is falling behind and the impact of these interventions is closely monitored. The outcome of this is that pupils have performed well above national and Devon expectations at the end of each year and it is expected that these will be maintained into the future. The onset of the COVID pandemic has meant that this year there is no statutory data with which to benchmark the school, however mid-year assessments in July showed that the majority of pupils were on track to achieve their targets and that, given a normal year, would have continued the high level of performance that the school has exhibited up to the present.

Trustees actively promote the partnership work between the UST and the USF and recognise the importance of this work in the development of our school. The significant benefits of working in partnership have also been recognised by external agencies including Ofsted and the Department of Education.

Individual trustees have clear responsibilities for monitoring particular areas of school business as part of their portfolio terms of reference and have reported back to the full board at monthly virtual meetings throughout 2020/21. Monitoring visits throughout the year have been virtual meetings or telephone calls due to covid restrictions.

The school's first Ofsted inspection in the Summer term 2019 showed that the school was working 'at the very top end of good' in all areas and the areas of development continue to form the driving force behind the School Improvement plan as well as addressing the impact of covid-19 on our children and staff.

3. Overseeing the financial performance of the school

Throughout 2020/21, trustees have received training from the Business Manager regarding Finance management at the monthly board meetings. The impact of the trustees' role in the school ensures that the budget is managed effectively and improvements are effective, continuous and understood. The appointment of another parent trustee with financial expertise to the board of trustees has strengthened the board.

The internal audit review that took place during the 2020/21 financial year has provided Trustees with assurance that the controls in place to manage the risks within the areas tested are well controlled and consistently practiced. Minimal findings have been made in the 2020/21 audit report that should be addressed by the academy by implementing the suggested recommendations in order to ensure that the control framework is effective in managing and reducing the identified risks. The overall opinion of the internal auditors is that the systems in place show a substantial assurance level. The definition of which is:

Governance Statement (continued)

'A sound system of governance, risk management and control exists, with internal controls operating effectively and being consistently applied to support the achievement of objectives in the area audited.'

Executive Summary

'The Principal takes responsibility for the day to day running of the Academy along with the support of the Business Manager and the admin / finance staff. The Principal also implements the policies laid down by the Trustees and reports back to the Board of Trustees on performance.
It is pleasing to note that the financial controls and procedures in place are well managed and comprehensive overall in the areas reviewed and this is much to the credit of the Trustees, Principal, Business Manager, and the admin / finance staff.
The internal audit reviews that took place during the 2020-21 academic year has provided Trustees with assurance that the controls in place to manage the risks within the areas tested are well controlled and consistently practiced. Minimal findings have been made in the 2020-21 internal audit report that should be addressed by the Academy by implementing the suggested recommendations in order to ensure that the control framework is effective in managing and reducing the identified risks.'

Review of Value for Money

As accounting officer the Principal 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 available. The accounting officer for the academy trust has delivered improved value for money during the year by:

- Migrating from older, more expensive systems to new, cost-effective, cloud-based system. This reduces our direct costs for these systems but also indirectly reduces costs by reducing administration overheads as the systems are integrated and easy to access.
- Insourcing our ICT support as this is more cost effective.
- Tendering is used appropriately and effectively to get the best deal

The impact of delivering improved value for money is that the budget forecast shows that for the next 3 years, the school will operate on a positive credit budget.

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 academy trust policies, aims and objectives, to evaluate the likelihood of those risks being realised and the impact should they be realised, and to manage them efficiently, effectively and economically. The system of internal control has been in place in United Schools Trust for the year ended 31 August 2021 and up to the date of approval of the annual report and financial statements.

Governance Statement (continued)

Capacity to Handle Risk
The board of trustees are reviewing 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 and a Risk Management Strategy and a Risk Register have been developed and is reviewed regularly at Board of trustee meetings.

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 board of trustees 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;
- delegation of authority and segregation of duties;
- identification and management of risks.

The board of Trustees has considered the need for a specific internal audit function and has appointed Devon Audit Partnership as an internal auditor. Internal checks are generally carried out on a termly basis, However, due to COVID this was reduced to two virtual checks this year. This included 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:

Accounting and financial control
Internal financial control - Income
Internal financial control - Purchasing and payments
Internal financial control - Tendering
Internal financial control - Salaries and expenses
Internal financial control - Assets

The internal auditor produces a report following the audit visit and the principal/accounting officer reports to the board of trustees on the operation of systems of control and on the discharge of the board of trustee's financial responsibilities.

A new finance/accounting system - Access for Education has been introduced and the administration team have been fully trained on the new system. The reason for the change was to allow the introduction of a system that was specifically aligned to the reporting arrangements required for academies.

Governance Statement (continued)

Review of Effectiveness

As accounting officer, the Principal 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 auditor, the work of the external auditor, the financial management and governance self-assessment process or the school resource management self-assessment tool and 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 review of the system of internal control by the Board of Trustees and a plan to ensure continuous improvement of the system is in place.

Approved by order of the members of the Governing Body on 6/12/21 and signed on its behalf by:

J E Stuchbery-Ullah

Mrs J Stuchbery-Ullah
Director

P Fitch

Dr P Fitch
Accounting officer
Director

United Schools Trust

Statement of Regularity, Propriety and Compliance

As Accounting Officer of United Schools Trust I have considered my responsibility to notify the Academy Trust board of trustees and the Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA) of material irregularity, impropriety and non-compliance with ESFA terms and conditions of funding, under the funding agreement in place between the Academy Trust and the Secretary of State for Education. As part of my consideration I have had due regard to the requirements of the Academies Financial Handbook 2020.

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

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

P Fitch

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Dr P Fitch
Accounting officer

Date: 10.12.21

United Schools Trust

Statement of Trustees' Responsibilities

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

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

- select suitable accounting policies and then apply them consistently;
- observe the methods and principles in the Charities SORP 2019 and the Academies Accounts Direction 2020 to 21;
- make judgments and accounting estimates that are reasonable and prudent;
- state whether applicable UK Accounting Standards [FRS 102] have been followed, subject to any material departures disclosed and explained in the financial statements; 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 6/12/21 and signed on its behalf by:

JE Stuchbery-Ullah

Mrs J Stuchbery-Ullah
Trustee

P Fitch

Dr P Fitch
Trustee

United Schools Trust

Independent Auditor's Report on the Financial Statements to the Members of United Schools Trust

Opinion

We have audited the financial statements of United Schools Trust (the 'Academy') for the year ended 31 August 2021, which comprise the Statement of Financial Activities, Balance Sheet, 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 FRS 102 'The Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland'.

In our opinion the financial statements:

- give a true and fair view of the state of the Academy's affairs as at 31 August 2021 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, the Charities SORP 2019 and the Academies Accounts Direction 2020 to 2021; and
- have been prepared in accordance with the requirements of the Companies Act 2006.

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 in accordance with the ethical requirements that are relevant to our audit of the financial statements in the UK, including the FRC's Ethical Standard, and we have fulfilled our other ethical responsibilities in accordance with these requirements. We believe that the audit evidence we have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our opinion.

Conclusions relating to going concern

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

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

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

Other information (covers the Reference and Administrative Details, the Trustees' Report and Strategic Report and the Governance Statement)

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

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.

Independent Auditor's Report on the Financial Statements to the Members of United Schools Trust (continued)

Opinion on other matters prescribed by the Companies Act 2006
In our opinion, based on the work undertaken in the course of the audit:

- the information given in the Strategic Report and Trustees' Report for the financial year for which the financial statements are prepared is consistent with the financial statements; and
- the Strategic Report and Trustees' 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 company and its environment obtained in the course of the audit, we have not identified material misstatements in the Strategic Report or Trustees' Report.

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

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

Responsibilities of Trustees

As explained more fully in the Statement of Trustees' Responsibilities [set out on page 30], the Trustees 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'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 or to cease operations, or have no realistic alternative but to do so.

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

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

Independent Auditor's Report on the Financial Statements to the Members of United Schools Trust (continued)

As part of our audit planning we obtained an understanding of the legal and regulatory framework that is applicable to the entity and the education sector in which it operates to identify the key laws and regulations affecting the entity. The key laws and regulations we identified were compliance with the funding agreement and Academies Financial Handbook 2020 and requirements with regard to safeguarding.

We also considered those laws and regulations that have a direct impact on the preparation of the financial statements, primarily the Academies Accounts Direction 2020/21, Companies Act 2006 and Charities Act 2011.

We discussed with management how the compliance with these laws and regulations is monitored and discussed the policies and procedures in place. We also identified the individuals who have responsibility for ensuring that the entity complies with laws and regulations and deals with reporting any issues if they arise.

As part of our planning procedures, we assessed the risk of any non-compliance with laws and regulations on the entity's ability to continue operating and the risk of material misstatement to the accounts.

Based on this understanding we designed our audit procedures to identify non-compliance with such laws and regulations. Our procedures involved the following:

- Conducting detailed regularity testing in accordance with the Framework and Guide for External Auditors and Reporting Accountant of Academy Trusts as issued by the ESFA, as reported on separately in our Independent Reporting Accountant's Assurance Report;
- Reviewed Board minutes for indications of non compliance;
- Reviewed legal and professional costs to identify legal costs in respect of non compliance;
- Reviewed the accounts disclosures against those in the Academies Model Accounts 2020 to 2021, published by the ESFA.

As part of our enquiries we discussed with management whether there have been any known instances, allegations or suspicions of fraud of which there were none.

We also evaluated the risk of fraud through management override including that arising from management's incentives. We determined that these risks are low as the academy operates on a charitable, not for profit basis and so there would be no motivation for management to influence performance for individual gain. However, there was considered a risk of the inappropriate allocation of expenditure against restricted funds.

In response to the identified risk, as part of our audit work we:

- Reviewed the material restricted grant income sources, identified the related conditions and reviewed the nature of expenditure set against it for appropriateness, together with sample testing on expenditure;
- Used data analytics to test journal entries throughout the period, for appropriateness;
- Reviewed accounting estimates and judgements made in the accounts for any indication of bias and challenged assumptions used by management in making the estimates.

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

Independent Auditor's Report on the Financial Statements to the Members of United Schools Trust (continued)

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

Use of our report

This report is made solely to the Academy'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'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's Members, as a body, for our audit work, for this report, or for the opinions we have formed.

PKF Francis Clark

Sharon Austen FCCA (Senior Statutory Auditor)
PKF Francis Clark, Statutory Auditor

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Torquay
Devon
TQ2 7FF

Date:.15 December 2021

United Schools Trust

Independent Reporting Accountant's Assurance Report on Regularity to United Schools Trust and the Education and Skills Funding Agency

In accordance with the terms of our engagement letter dated 22 September 2021 and further to the requirements of the Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA) as included in the Academies Accounts Direction 2020 to 21, we have carried out an engagement to obtain limited assurance about whether the expenditure disbursed and income received by United Schools Trust during the period 1 September 2020 to 31 August 2021 have been applied to the purposes identified by Parliament and the financial transactions conform to the authorities which govern them.

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

Respective responsibilities of United Schools Trust's Accounting Officer and the reporting Accountant

The Accounting Officer is responsible, under the requirements of United Schools Trust's funding agreement with the Secretary of State for Education dated and the Academies Financial Handbook, extant from 1 September 2020, for ensuring that expenditure disbursed and income received is applied for the purposes intended by Parliament and the financial transactions conform to the authorities which govern them.

Our responsibilities for this engagement are established in the United Kingdom by our profession's ethical guidance and are to obtain limited assurance and report in accordance with our engagement letter and the requirements of the Academies Accounts Direction 2020 to 2021. We report to you whether anything has come to our attention in carrying out our work which suggests that in all material respects, expenditure disbursed and income received during the year from 1 September 2020 to 31 August 2021 have not been applied to purposes intended by Parliament or that the financial transactions do not conform to the authorities which govern them.

Approach

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

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

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

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

The work undertaken to draw to our conclusion includes:

- Inspection and review of documentation providing evidence of governance procedures;
- Evaluation of the system of internal controls for authorisation and approval;
- Performing substantive tests on relevant transactions.

Independent Reporting Accountant's Assurance Report on Regularity to United Schools 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 year from 1 September 2020 to 31 August 2021 has not been applied to purposes intended by Parliament and the financial transactions do not conform to the authorities which govern them.

PKF Francis Clark

.....

Sharon Austen FCCA
PKF Francis Clark, Chartered Accountants

Sigma House
Oak View Close
Edginswell Park
Torquay
Devon
TQ2 7FF

Date:. 15 December 2021

United Schools Trust

Statement of Financial Activities for the Year Ended 31 August 2021 (including Income and Expenditure Account)

	Note	Unrestricted Funds £ 000	Restricted General Funds £ 000	Restricted Fixed Asset Funds £ 000	2020/21 Total £ 000
Income and endowments from:					
Donations and capital grants	2	-	1	5	6
Other trading activities	4	32	16	-	48
Charitable activities:					
Funding for the Academy Trust's educational operations	3	-	791	-	791
Total		32	808	5	845
Expenditure on:					
Charitable activities:					
Academy trust educational operations	6	18	880	218	1,116
Net income/(expenditure)		14	(72)	(213)	(271)
Transfers between funds		-	5	(5)	-
Other recognised gains and losses					
Actuarial gain/(loss) on defined benefit pension schemes	21	-	(86)	-	(86)
Net movement in funds/(deficit)		14	(153)	(218)	(357)
Reconciliation of funds					
Total funds brought forward at 1 September 2020		5	36	6,399	6,440
Total funds/(deficit) carried forward at 31 August 2021		19	(117)	6,181	6,083

United Schools Trust

Statement of Financial Activities for the Year Ended 31 August 2020 (including Income and Expenditure Account)

	Note	Unrestricted Funds £ 000	Restricted General Funds £ 000	Restricted Fixed Asset Funds £ 000	Total 2019/20 £ 000
Income and endowments from:					
Donations and capital grants	2	-	-	1	1
Charitable activities:					
Funding for the Academy Trust's educational operations	3	-	611	-	611
Other trading activities	4	9	46	-	55
Total		9	657	1	667
Expenditure on:					
Charitable activities:					
Academy trust educational operations	6	5	702	214	921
Net income/(expenditure)		4	(45)	(213)	(254)
Transfers between funds		-	(48)	48	-
Other recognised gains and losses					
Actuarial gain/(loss) on defined benefit pension schemes	21	-	(76)	-	(76)
Net movement in funds/(deficit)		4	(169)	(165)	(330)
Reconciliation of funds					
Total funds brought forward at 1 September 2019		1	205	6,564	6,770
Total funds carried forward at 31 August 2020		5	36	6,399	6,440

United Schools Trust

(Registration number: 09255130)
Balance Sheet as at 31 August 2021

	Note	2021 £ 000	2020 £ 000
Fixed assets			
Intangible assets	10	2	3
Tangible assets	11	6,074	6,291
		6,076	6,294
Current assets			
Debtors	12	201	158
Cash at bank and in hand		243	273
		444	431
Creditors: Amounts falling due within one year	13	(114)	(100)
Net current assets		330	331
Total assets less current liabilities		6,406	6,625
Net assets excluding pension liability		6,406	6,625
Defined benefit pension scheme liability	21	(323)	(185)
Total net assets		6,083	6,440
Funds of the Academy:			
Restricted funds			
Restricted general fund		221	221
Restricted fixed asset fund		6,166	6,399
Restricted pension fund		(323)	(185)
		6,064	6,435
Unrestricted funds			
Unrestricted general fund		19	5
Total funds		6,083	6,440

The financial statements on pages 37 to 64 were approved by the Trustees, and authorised for issue on ..6/12/21.. and signed on their behalf by:

JE Stuchbery-Ullah
.....
Mrs J Stuchbery-Ullah
Director

PFitch
.....
Dr P Fitch
Director

United Schools Trust

Statement of Cash Flows for the year ended 31 August 2021

	Note	2021 £ 000	2020 £ 000
Cash flows from operating activities			
Net cash (used in)/provided by operating activities	17	(35)	75
Cash flows from investing activities	18	5	(60)
Change in cash and cash equivalents in the year		(30)	15
Cash and cash equivalents at 1 September		273	258
Cash and cash equivalents at 31 August	19	243	273

Notes to the Financial Statements for the Year Ended 31 August 2021

1 Accounting policies

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

Basis of preparation

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

United Schools 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 one year from the date of approval of the financial statements. The Trustees 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 spent on capital projects in line with the terms and conditions of the grant. Capital grants are recognised when there is entitlement and are not deferred over the life of the asset on which they are expended.

1 Accounting policies (continued)

The trust is benefiting from the ESFA's Free School Building Programme for the construction of Kingsteignton Primary School. The funding for the programme is not recognised as a capital grant until there is unconditional entitlement from costs being incurred, and the development occurring on a site where the trust controls (through lease) the site where the development is occurring. The expenditure is capitalised in assets under construction until the project is complete.

Sponsorship income

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

Donations

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

Other income

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

Donated goods, facilities and services

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

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 is 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.

All resources expended are inclusive of irrecoverable VAT.

1 Accounting policies (continued)

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.

Intangible fixed assets

Intangible assets costing £1,000 or more are capitalised and recognised when future economic benefits are probable and the cost or value of the asset can be measured reliably. Intangible assets are initially recognised at cost and are subsequently measured at cost net of amortisation and any provision for impairment. Amortisation is provided on intangible fixed assets at rates calculated to write off the cost of each asset on a straight-line basis over its expected useful life, as follows:

Asset class	Amortisation method and rate
Software	20% straight line

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. The related grants are credited to a restricted fixed asset fund in the Statement of Financial Activities and carried forward in the Balance Sheet. Depreciation on such assets is charged to the restricted fixed asset fund in the Statement of Financial Activities so as to reduce the fund over the useful economic life of the related asset on a basis consistent with the Academy Trust's depreciation policy.

Depreciation is provided on all tangible fixed assets other than freehold land, at rates calculated to write off the cost of each asset over its expected useful lives, per the table below.

Leasehold land and buildings	Straight line over the period from purchase date to 14 January 2019 or 2% straight line
Plant and equipment	33% straight line
Furniture and fixtures	25% straight line
Motor Vehicles	20% 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.

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

1 Accounting policies (continued)

Liabilities

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

Provisions

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

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

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 in FRS 102. The financial assets and financial liabilities of the academy trust and their measurement basis are as follows:

Financial assets - trade and other debtors are basic financial instruments and are debt instruments measured at amortised cost as detailed in note 12. Prepayments are not financial instruments. Amounts due to the charity's wholly owned subsidiary are held at face value less any impairment.

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

Financial liabilities - trade creditors, accruals and other creditors are financial instruments, and are measured at amortised cost as detailed in note 13. Taxation and social security are not included in the financial instruments disclosure definition. Deferred income is not deemed to be a financial liability, as the cash settlement has already taken place and there is an obligation to deliver services rather than cash or another financial instrument. Amounts due to charity's wholly owned subsidiary are held at face value less any impairment.

Taxation

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

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

1 Accounting policies (continued)

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

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

Fund accounting

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

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

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

1 Accounting policies (continued)

Critical accounting estimates and assumptions

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

The present value of the Local Government Pension Scheme defined benefit liability depends on a number of factors that are determined on an actuarial basis using a variety of assumptions. The assumptions used in determining the net cost (income) for pensions include the discount rate. Any changes in these assumptions, which are disclosed in note 21 will impact the carrying amount of the pension liability. Furthermore a roll forward approach which projects results from the latest full actuarial valuation performed at 31 March 2019 has been used by the actuary in valuing the pensions liability at 31 August 2021. Any differences between the figures derived from the roll forward approach and a full actuarial valuation would impact on the carrying amount of the pension liability.

2 Donations and capital grants

	Restricted funds £ 000	Restricted fixed asset funds £ 000	2020/21 Total £ 000	2019/20 Total £ 000
Capital grants	-	5	5	1
Other donations	1	-	1	-
	1	5	6	1

3 Funding for the Academy Trust's educational operations

	Restricted funds £ 000	Total 2020/21 £ 000	Total 2019/20 £ 000
DfE/ESFA revenue grants			
General Annual Grant (GAG)	598	598	456
PE and Sports	17	17	17
Pupil Premium	30	30	21
Universal Infant Free School Meals (UIFSM)	34	34	33
Post Opening Grant	42	42	56
Other DfE Revenue Grant	18	18	5
Covid catch up	11	11	-
Teachers Pension Grant	19	19	14
	769	769	602
Other government grants			
High Needs Funding	22	22	9
Total grants	791	791	611

Following the reclassification in the Academies Accounts Direction 2020/21 of some grants received from the Department for Education and ESFA is no longer reported under the Other DfE Group grants heading, but as separate lines under the Other DfE/ESFA Grants heading. The prior year numbers have been reclassified.

4 Other trading activities

	Unrestricted funds £ 000	Restricted funds £ 000	2020/21 Total £ 000	2019/20 Total £ 000
Hire of facilities	15	-	15	-
Recharges and reimbursements	-	1	1	3
Other income	17	15	32	52
	32	16	48	55

Notes to the Financial Statements for the Year Ended 31 August 2021 (continued)

5 Expenditure

		Non Pay Expenditure			
	Staff costs £ 000	Premises £ 000	Other costs £ 000	2020/21 Total £ 000	2019/20 Total £ 000
Academy's educational operations					
Direct costs	449	-	85	534	402
Allocated support costs	210	287	85	582	519
	659	287	170	1,116	921

Net income/(expenditure) for the year includes:

	2020/21 £ 000	2019/20 £ 000
Fees payable to auditor - audit	9	9
- other audit services	1	3
Amortisation of intangible fixed assets	1	1
Depreciation of tangible fixed assets	217	211

6 Charitable activities

	Total 2020/21 £ 000	Total 2019/20 £ 000
Direct costs - educational operations	534	402
Support costs - educational operations	582	519
	1,116	921

	Educational operations £ 000	Total 2020/21 £ 000	Total 2019/20 £ 000
Analysis of support costs			
Support staff costs	210	210	192
Depreciation	218	218	212
Premises costs	69	69	48
Other support costs	62	62	47
Governance costs	23	23	20
Total support costs	582	582	519

7 Staff

Staff costs

	2020/21 £ 000	2019/20 £ 000
Staff costs during the year were:		
Wages and salaries	475	369
Social security costs	40	23
Pension costs	158	130
	673	522
Supply teacher costs	-	4
Staff restructuring costs	-	1
	673	527

	2020/21 £ 000	2019/20 £ 000
Staff restructuring costs comprise:		
Severance payments	-	1

Non statutory/non-contractual staff severance payments
Included in staff restructuring costs are non-statutory/non-contractual severance payments totalling £Nil (2020: £1,000).

7 Staff (continued)

Staff numbers

The average number of persons (including senior management team) employed by the Academy Trust during the year expressed as full time equivalents was as follows:

	2020/21 No	2019/20 No
Charitable Activities		
Teachers	6	8
Administration and Support	9	5
Management	2	1
	17	14

Staff numbers

The average number of persons (including senior management team) employed by the Academy Trust during the year expressed as average headcount was as follows:

	2020/21 No	2019/20 No
Charitable Activities		
Teachers	7	9
Administration and support	20	14
Management	3	2
	30	25

Higher paid staff

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

	2020/21 No	2019/20 No
£60,001 - £70,000	1	-

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 £111,000 (2020: £85,000).

8 Related party transactions - Trustees' remuneration and expenses

Dr P Fitch (CEO - United Schools Trust):

Remuneration: £60,000 - £65,000 (2020 - £55,000 - £60,000)
Employer's pension contributions: £10,000 - £15,000 (2020 - £10,000 - £15,000)

Mrs K West (Deputy Head Teacher):

Remuneration: £5,000 - £10,000 (2020 - £5,000 - £10,000)
Employer's pension contributions: £0 - £5,000 (2020 - £0 - £5,000)

No other remuneration or expenses have been paid to any directors in the period.

Other related party transactions involving the Trustees are set out in note 22.

9 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.

10 Intangible fixed assets

	Software £ 000	Total £ 000
Cost		
At 1 September 2020	7	7
Disposals	(2)	(2)
At 31 August 2021	5	5
Amortisation		
At 1 September 2020	4	4
Charge for the year	1	1
Eliminated on disposals	(2)	(2)
At 31 August 2021	3	3
Net book value		
At 31 August 2021	2	2
At 31 August 2020	3	3

11 Tangible fixed assets

	Leasehold land and buildings £ 000	Furniture and fixtures £ 000	Plant and equipment £ 000	Motor vehicles £ 000	Total £ 000
Cost					
At 1 September 2020	6,263	142	238	19	6,662
At 31 August 2021	6,263	142	238	19	6,662
Depreciation					
At 1 September 2020	183	47	135	6	371
Charge for the year	113	35	65	4	217
At 31 August 2021	296	82	200	10	588
Net book value					
At 31 August 2021	5,967	60	38	9	6,074
At 31 August 2020	6,080	95	103	13	6,291

12 Debtors

	2021 £ 000	2020 £ 000
Trade debtors	-	4
Prepayments	67	17
Accrued grant and other income	121	122
VAT recoverable	13	15
	201	158

Notes to the Financial Statements for the Year Ended 31 August 2021 (continued)

13 Creditors: amounts falling due within one year

	2021 £ 000	2020 £ 000
Trade creditors	55	47
Other taxation and social security	21	17
Accruals	14	17
Deferred income	24	19
	114	100

	2021 £ 000	2020 £ 000
Deferred income		
Deferred income at 1 September 2020	19	16
Resources deferred in the period	24	19
Amounts released from previous periods	(19)	(16)
Deferred income at 31 August 2021	24	19

At the balance sheet date the Academy was holding income in advance in relation to UIFSM funding for the academic year 2021/22 of £18,000 and income in advance in relation to Rates Relief of £6,000.

Notes to the Financial Statements for the Year Ended 31 August 2021 (continued)

14 Funds

	Balance at 1 September 2020 £ 000	Income £ 000	Expenditure £ 000	Gains, losses and transfers £ 000	Balance at 31 August 2021 £ 000
Restricted general funds					
General Annual Grant	103	598	(504)	23	220
Pupil Premium	-	30	(30)	-	-
PE and Sports	10	17	(27)	-	-
UIFSM	-	34	(34)	-	-
High Needs Funding	-	22	(22)	-	-
Trips	3	-	(3)	-	-
Clubs	34	15	(49)	-	-
Post Opening Grant	71	42	(113)	-	-
Other Restricted Income	-	20	(16)	(3)	1
Teachers' Pension Grant	-	19	(19)	-	-
COVID catch up	-	11	(11)	-	-
	221	808	(828)	20	221
Restricted fixed asset funds					
ESFA - Free School Building Grant	6,206	-	(213)	(2)	5,991
Capital expenditure from GAG	81	-	-	(13)	68
ESFA Capital Funding	112	5	(5)	(5)	107
	6,399	5	(218)	(20)	6,166
Restricted pension funds					
Defined Benefit Pension Liability	(185)	-	(52)	(86)	(323)
Total restricted funds	6,435	813	(1,098)	(86)	6,064
Unrestricted funds					
Unrestricted general funds	5	32	(18)	-	19
Total funds	6,440	845	(1,116)	(86)	6,083

Notes to the Financial Statements for the Year Ended 31 August 2021 (continued)

14 Funds (continued)

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

	Balance at 1 September 2019 £ 000	Income £ 000	Expenditure £ 000	Gains, losses and transfers £ 000	Balance at 31 August 2020 £ 000
Restricted general funds					
Start up Grant	115	-	-	(115)	-
General Annual Grant	93	456	(513)	67	103
Pupil Premium	-	21	(21)	-	-
PE and Sports	3	17	(10)	-	10
UIFSM	-	33	(33)	-	-
High Needs Funding	1	9	(10)	-	-
Trips	3	1	(1)	-	3
Clubs	27	45	(38)	-	34
Post Opening Grant	15	56	-	-	71
Other Restricted Income	4	5	(9)	-	-
Teachers' Pension Grant	-	14	(14)	-	-
	261	657	(649)	(48)	221
Restricted fixed asset funds					
ESFA - Free School Building Grant	6,393	(4)	(181)	(2)	6,206
Capital expenditure from GAG	43	-	(16)	54	81
ESFA Capital Funding	128	5	(17)	(4)	112
	6,564	1	(214)	48	6,399
Restricted pension funds					
Defined Benefit Pension Liability	(56)	-	(53)	(76)	(185)
Total restricted funds	6,769	658	(916)	(76)	6,435
Unrestricted funds					
Unrestricted general funds	1	9	(5)	-	5
Total funds	6,770	667	(921)	(76)	6,440

Notes to the Financial Statements for the Year Ended 31 August 2021 (continued)

15 Analysis of net assets between funds

Fund balances at 31 August 2021 are represented by:

	Unrestricted funds £ 000	Restricted general funds £ 000	Restricted fixed asset funds £ 000	Total funds £ 000
Intangible fixed assets	-	-	2	2
Tangible fixed assets	-	-	6,074	6,074
Current assets	19	335	90	444
Current liabilities	-	(114)	-	(114)
Pension scheme liability	-	(323)	-	(323)
Total net assets	19	(102)	6,166	6,083

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

	Unrestricted funds £ 000	Restricted general funds £ 000	Restricted fixed asset funds £ 000	Total funds £ 000
Intangible fixed assets	-	-	3	3
Tangible fixed assets	-	-	6,291	6,291
Current assets	5	321	105	431
Current liabilities	-	(100)	-	(100)
Pension scheme liability	-	(185)	-	(185)
Total net assets	5	36	6,399	6,440

16 Capital commitments

	2021 £ 000	2020 £ 000
Contracted for, but not provided in the financial statements	-	1

Notes to the Financial Statements for the Year Ended 31 August 2021 (continued)

17 Reconciliation of net expenditure to net cash inflow/(outflow) from operating activities

	2020/21 £ 000	2019/20 £ 000
Net expenditure	(271)	(254)
Amortisation	1	1
Depreciation	217	211
Capital grants from DfE and other capital income	(5)	(1)
Defined benefit pension scheme cost less contributions payable	52	53
(Increase)/decrease in debtors	(43)	42
Increase in creditors	14	21
Impairment	-	2
Net cash (used in)/provided by Operating Activities	(35)	75

18 Capital expenditure and financial investment

	2020/21 £ 000	2019/20 £ 000
Purchase of intangible fixed assets	-	(5)
Purchase of tangible fixed assets	-	(56)
Capital grants from DfE Group	5	1
Net cash provided by/(used in) investing activities	5	(60)

19 Analysis of cash and cash equivalents

	2021 £ 000	2020 £ 000
Cash in hand and at bank	243	273
Total cash and cash equivalents	243	273

20 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.

21 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 Devon County Council. Both are multi-employer defined benefit schemes.

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

Contributions amounting to £11,000 (2020 - £7,000) were payable to the schemes at 31 August and are included within creditors.

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 member and employer makes contributions, as a percentage of salary - these contributions are credited to the Exchequer. Retirement and other pension benefits are paid by public funds provided by Parliament.

Valuation of the Teachers' Pension Scheme

The Government Actuary, using normal actuarial principles, conducts a formal actuarial review of the TPS in accordance with the Public Service Pensions (Valuations and Employer Cost Cap) Directions 2014 published by HM Treasury every 4 years. The aim of the review is to 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% administration levy)
- total scheme liabilities (pensions currently in payment and the estimated cost of future benefits) for service to the effective date of £218,100 million and notional assets (estimated future contributions together with the notional investments held at the valuation date) of £196,100 million, giving a notional past service deficit of £22,000 million
- the SCAPE rate, set by HMT, is used to determine the notional investment return. The current SCAPE rate is 2.4% above the rate of CPI. Assumed real rate of return is 2.4% in excess of prices and 2% in excess of earnings. The rate of real 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 result is due to be implemented from 1 April 2023.

21 Pension and similar obligations (continued)

The employer's pension costs paid to TPS in the period amounted to £64,000 (2020: £49,000).

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

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

Local government pension scheme

The LGPS is a funded defined-benefit scheme, with the assets held in separate trustee-administered funds. The total contribution made for the year ended 31 August 2021 was £54,000 (2020 - £37,000), of which employer's contributions totalled £42,000 (2020 - £28,000) and employees' contributions totalled £12,000 (2020 - £9,000). The agreed contribution rates for future years are 17.6% plus £301 per month for employers and 5.5% - 12.5% for employees.

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

Principal actuarial assumptions

	2021 %	2020 %
Rate of increase in salaries	3.90	3.20
Rate of increase for pensions in payment/inflation	2.90	2.20
Discount rate for scheme liabilities	1.70	1.70

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

	2021	2020
Retiring today		
Males retiring today	22.70	22.90
Females retiring today	24.00	24.10
Retiring in 20 years		
Males retiring in 20 years	24.00	24.30
Females retiring in 20 years	25.40	25.50

21 Pension and similar obligations (continued)

Sensitivity analysis

	At 31 August 2021 £000	At 31 August 2020 £000
Discount rate +0.1%	474	266
Discount rate -0.1%	513	288
Mortality assumption – 1 year increase	511	286
Mortality assumption – 1 year decrease	475	268
CPI rate +0.1%	513	288
CPI rate -0.1%	474	266

21 Pension and similar obligations (continued)

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

	2021 £ 000	2020 £ 000
Equities	106	55
Gilts	22	3
Other bonds	3	4
Property	14	7
Cash and other liquid assets	1	1
Other	24	22
Total market value of assets	170	92

The actual return on scheme assets was £24,000 (2020 - £Nil).

21 Pension and similar obligations (continued)

Amounts recognised in the statement of financial activities

	2020/21 £ 000	2019/20 £ 000
Current service cost	113	79
Net interest cost	3	1
Total amount recognised in the SOFA	116	80

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

	2020/21 £ 000	2019/20 £ 000
At start of period	277	97
Current service cost	113	79
Interest cost	5	2
Employee contributions	12	9
Actuarial (gain)/loss	86	90
At 31 August	493	277

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

	2020/21 £ 000	2019/20 £ 000
At start of period	92	41
Interest income	24	-
Actuarial gain/(loss)	-	14
Employer contributions	42	28
Employee contributions	12	9
At 31 August	170	92

The net position deficit as at 31 August 2021 was £323,000 (2020: £185,000).

22 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.

There were no related party transactions in the year, other than certain trustees' remuneration and expenses already disclosed in note 8.

Notes to the Financial Statements for the Year Ended 31 August 2021 (continued)

23 Analysis of changes in net debt

	At 1 September 2020 £000	Cash flows £000	At 31 August 2021 £000
Cash	273	(30)	243
	-	-	-
Total	273	(30)	243