



ACHIEVING MORE TOGETHER

Annual report

and financial statements, year ending 31 August 2023





Our mission is to become the trust that makes the biggest difference, both inside and outside the classroom.

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Reference and administrative details

Members	The Ormiston Trust Peter Murray Diana Murray
Trustees	Dr Paul Hann (chair of trustees, resigned 28/02/23) Dr Julius Weinberg (chair of trustees, appointed 08/12/22) Peter Murray (founding chairman) Frances Hall Nick Hudson (accounting officer, resigned 31/08/23) Tom Rees (accounting officer, appointed 01/09/23) Andrew Jones (resigned 31/08/22) Bal Samra Karen Bramwell Janet Renou Alistair Thom Dr Maria Reraki (resigned 30/11/22) Stuart Ross (appointed 08/12/22) Tariq Syed (appointed 13/07/23) Dr Elizabeth Walton (appointed 01/11/23)
Executive team	Chief executive officer: Nick Hudson (to 31/08/23) Chief executive officer: Tom Rees (from 01/09/23) National director of education: Robert Pritchard National director of finance: Joanne Dawson National director of estates and technology: James Miller National director of people and culture: Justine Kenny
Company secretary	Sunita Yardley-Patel (resigned 26/06/22, appointed 15/05/23) Sharon Warmington (appointed 27/06/22, resigned 14/05/23)
Company registration number	06982127 (England and Wales)
Principal address and registered office	Unit G.05B, Assay Studios 141 Newhall Street Birmingham B3 1SF
Independent auditor	RSM UK Audit LLP 103 Colmore Row Birmingham B3 3AG
Internal auditor	Mazars LLP 2 Chamberlain Square Birmingham B3 3AX
Bankers	Lloyds Bank Units 2 and 3 Caxton Gate 36/38 New Street Birmingham B2 4LP
Solicitors	Stone King LLP Boundary House 91 Charterhouse Street London EC1M 6HR

Statement from the chair of trustees



Dr Julius Weinberg
Chair, Ormiston Academies Trust board of trustees

I was delighted to join the trust in December 2022 and take on the role of chair of trustees in March 2023. Dr Paul Hann, my predecessor, had been in post since May 2012 and brought a wealth of experience and knowledge, providing invaluable insight, support, and guidance to the trust leaders during his tenure.

Strong governance is synonymous with strong trusts.

Nick Hudson joined OAT in June 2017, and, between them, Paul and Nick oversaw the development of the OAT 2019–23 strategy, launched in early 2019. This set out a pathway for OAT to continue on its journey as a trust that inspires, educates, supports, and develops all our pupils so that they are empowered with the knowledge, skills, confidence, and resilience to live happy and fulfilling lives.

Neither of them could have foreseen what would follow, with Covid-19 (and the long shadow that it continues to cast over the education sector) creating unprecedented challenges. However, a strong overarching strategy, combined with the dedication and resourcefulness of our staff, has enabled us to weather this tempestuous time and come through it stronger and more determined than ever to deliver for our pupils.

Coming out the other side of the pandemic, 81% of our schools are now classified as **good** or **outstanding**, with

100% of our primaries, APs and special schools rated as such. Our pupils on roll have increased by 16% since 2019, with our workforce growing 10% over the same timeframe.

At the same time, the trust's finances have been stabilised and managed securely during a period of wider economic uncertainty, with enhanced financial planning across the trust. We have continued to make significant improvements across our estate, with a particular focus on sustainability measures which is a testament to our commitment to providing optimal learning environments.

We have continued to make significant improvements across our estate, with a particular focus on sustainability measures.

Having overseen a period of growth and improvement, Nick decided to retire at the end of the 2022–23 academic and financial year, shortly after Paul stepped down. Both he and Paul have left the trust with strong foundations on which a new strategy can be developed.

I am delighted that Tom Rees joined the trust at the beginning of September 2023. Tom has already made a huge contribution to the sector during his 25 years in education, working across a range of roles, including 10 years as a headteacher and seven years in executive roles. I am looking forward to working with him and the team to develop our strategy for the next five years and embark on a path of achieving and sustaining excellence.

Strong governance is synonymous with strong trusts. Recognising this, we have sought to refresh the membership of the trust board and are delighted that Stuart Ross, Tariq Syed, and Elizabeth Walton have joined us as new board trustees. I would also like to take the opportunity to thank Maria Reraki and Andrew Jones, who stepped down in autumn 2022, for their service to OAT.

Finally, I'd like to take this opportunity on behalf of the board to thank every member of the OAT team – every member of staff across our 43 schools and in the central team – for everything they do, day in, day out. Their efforts continue to shine through as tremendous examples of public service. I have every confidence that the trust will go from strength to strength over the coming years.

Dr Julius Weinberg
Chair of trustees



Trustees' report



Share what is best;
we achieve more from
working together.

The trustees of Ormiston Academies Trust (OAT) present their annual report together with the financial statements and auditors' report of the charitable company for the year ended 31 August 2023.

The annual report serves the purposes of both a trustees' report, and a directors' report and a strategic report under company law.

Constitution

Ormiston Academies Trust was established in 2009. It is a company limited by guarantee and an exempt charity that is incorporated under company number 06982127. The trust's *Memorandum and Articles of Association* are the primary governing documents of the trust.

As of 31 August 2023, the trust was made up of 43 academies. The financial statements, included within this annual report, aggregate the activities of the 43 academies, The OAKS, and the central team. The trustees of Ormiston Academies Trust are also the directors of the charitable company for the purposes of company law.

Details of the trustees who served during the year, and to the date these accounts are approved are included in the reference and administrative details on page 3.

Members' liability

Every member of the company undertakes to contribute an amount, not exceeding £10, to the company's assets, should it be wound up while he or she is a member or within one year after he or she ceases to be a member. This would be used for payment of the company's debts and liabilities arising before he or she ceases to be a member, for the costs, charges, and expenses of winding up and for the adjustment of rights of the contributories among themselves.

Public benefit

The trust has charitable purposes and applies them for public benefit. In setting the vision and agreeing the objectives, the trustees have considered the charity commission's general guidance on public benefit and its supplementary public benefit guidance on advancing education.

We are a values-led organisation,
educating over 30,000 young
people across the country,
achieving more together.

The trust has a public interest duty to conduct its affairs in a transparent and responsible way, in accordance with "Nolan Principles", and to meet regulatory requirements of relevant statutory bodies.

The trust is transparent about its corporate governance arrangements and provides detailed information about those arrangements on the trust website.



Organisational structure

The chief executive officer (CEO), who is also the accounting officer, has general responsibility for ensuring that public funds are properly used and that, in its activities, the trust achieves value for money.

The CEO is supported by the executive team and by a clear management structure that allows the effective delivery of the trust's strategy and mission.

Providing OAT pupils with excellent learning opportunities inside and outside the classroom.



Under powers delegated by the board of trustees, the CEO exercises a key role in terms of development of the trust's strategy, the identification and planning of new developments and the shaping of the trust's ethos and culture. Ultimate responsibility for the management of the trust and conduct of its business sits with the board of trustees.

The trustees give their time freely and receive no remuneration in their role as trustees or other financial benefits, other than the CEO who also serves as a trustee. Further detail on the trustees is included on pages 8 to 10.



Board of trustees

The board of trustees is the governing body of the trust, responsible for the strategic development and overall achievement of the trust's mission and purpose.



Peter Murray, OBE
Founding chairman, member and trustee, member of school improvement committee.

Peter Murray founded Ormiston Trust in 1969 in memory of his sister, Fiona Ormiston Murray. His experience in commercial property

investment enabled him to grow his original donation of £500 into a financially strong, proactive grant-making trust. He founded Ormiston Families in 1980, assisting them to develop its charitable programmes across East Anglia. In 2009, Peter sponsored Ormiston Trust's first academy (The Gateway Academy – now the independent GLC) followed by Birmingham Ormiston Academy (BOA, Ormiston Stage and Screen and Ormiston Digital). He then founded Ormiston Academies Trust. In 2018, he formed a link with the National Lottery which resulted in a £4m programme for social action by pupils in their communities. In his early career Peter was a Samaritan, chair of Westminster Volunteer Bureau and All Stars Youth Club. He was also joint founder of the Association of Charitable Foundations.



Dr Paul Hann, OBE
Chair of the board of trustees. Resigned as chair of trustees 28/02/23 and resigned as a trustee 28/02/23.

Dr Paul Hann, OBE, was a teacher and school inspector before joining the Department

for Education as an adviser at the very beginning of the academies programme. Until his retirement he headed up education advice for many years to ministers on academies nationally and has wide experience of successful school improvement and innovation in a variety of settings



Dr Julius Weinberg
Chair of the board of trustees from 01/03/23, ex-officio member of all board committees.

Dr Julius Weinberg was a physician specialising in public health and clinical infectious disease. He moved into higher education and

became vice chancellor of Kingston University. He believes in lifelong learning and holds degrees in physiology, medicine, education, psychology, and humanities with art history. Julius has extensive governance experience including chairing Ofsted and sitting on the boards of Ofqual, Buckinghamshire Culture, the Public Interest News Foundation and Beaconsfield High School.



Tom Rees
Chief executive and accounting officer, member of finance and capital, school improvement, and people committees. Appointed 01/09/23.

Tom Rees joined OAT in September 2023 as chief executive

officer. He is responsible for leading the organisation, working closely with the board of trustees and national directors to deliver OAT's mission and strategy. Tom was previously executive director at Ambition Institute, where he led professional development programmes for over 50,000 teachers nationally. Tom was a headteacher for ten years and education director of a medium-sized multi-academy trust. He has served on various reference groups including the Headteacher Standards Review Group, was a member of the Regional School Commissioner's headteacher board and has held several trusteeships



Nick Hudson
Chief executive and accounting officer, member of finance and capital, school improvement, and people committees. Retired 31/08/23.

Nick Hudson was formerly Ofsted's regional director for

the north-east, Yorkshire, and Humber region, and for a period of time, also assumed responsibility as Ofsted's national director for early education. At Ofsted Nick was responsible for all inspection work across his region and was a member of the Ofsted executive board. Having started his career as a secondary school teacher, Nick is an outstanding educational leader having built his career working in senior roles within local authorities, including his time as director of children's services in Wigan. Nick also spent two years working abroad in West Africa as an education management consultant working for the United Nations Association International Service.



Frances Hall
Vice-chair of board of trustees, chair of the people committee, member of the audit and risk committee, and the finance and capital committee.

Frances Hall originally qualified as a chartered accountant

before moving into training and human resources. She became director of human resources for a global professional services firm, before leaving to set up a consultancy practice. She acts as an adviser to several boards across sectors and is an executive coach as

well as delivering strategic HR guidance and training to organisations. She is also a director of CharterGroup, an alliance of accountancy firms across the UK. Frances acts as consultant to a number of professional bodies as a specialist in professional education. She has been involved in school governance for over 30 years and is passionate about every child having the opportunity to succeed and reach their potential.



Janet Renou
Chair of school improvement committee, member of people committee. Link trustee for safeguarding and SEND.

Janet Renou recently completed a five-year contract as regional school's commissioner for the

north of England, having oversight through the DfE team in Darlington of some five hundred academies across fourteen local authority areas. During 40 years in secondary education, she has worked in Leicestershire, Nottinghamshire, Derbyshire, and North Yorkshire. Her 25 years in senior roles included experience as vice principal, headteacher, executive head and chief executive officer of a multi-academy trust. She was a trained Ofsted inspector, and as a national leader in education (NLE), contributing to major school improvement projects in Manchester and Humberside.



Alistair Thom
Chair of finance and capital committee, member of audit and risk committee.

Alistair Thom is a chartered accountant, qualifying at Sky where he began his career. He then worked for KPMG where he advised

a range of FTSE-listed organisations on a wide range of complex issues, often involving strategy development or finance-specific challenges. More recently, Alistair was the CEO of Freesat, a satellite television company.



Stuart Ross
Chair of audit and risk committee, member of finance and capital committee, and people committee. Appointed 08/12/22.

Stuart Ross is a chartered accountant and a non-executive

director of businesses in the finance sector. Stuart has held CFO roles in large UK businesses in the energy and telecommunications sectors and, more recently, in international media and technology businesses backed by private equity. These roles have typically been in businesses which have undergone significant change as a result of market developments, requiring re-engineered business models and operational capabilities. He also has extensive experience of corporate treasury and financing and mergers and acquisitions.



Bal Samra
Member of the people committee.

Bal Samra is a media professional and entrepreneur with over 30 years of experience in the media industry. He works closely with a number of creative businesses

helping them to grow and accelerate their potential. During his long career at the BBC, Bal worked in television, news, radio and online, in commissioning, production and operational areas - he's led editorial, commercial, finance, technology and strategy teams. Bal is a champion of inclusivity and social mobility within the media industry. As managing director of BBC Television he oversaw significant changes to the commissioning system to promote more diversity on and off screen. He was instrumental in developing the BBC's network of production bases out of London and a big supporter of fair access for small independent production companies.



Karen Bramwell
Member of the school improvement committee.

Karen Bramwell is founding CEO of Forward as One CE Multi-Academy Trust and was a member of the Lancashire and West Yorkshire advisory board

for five years. During a long career in education, Karen has predominantly worked in Greater Manchester as a CEO, leadership director and headteacher. Karen's key specialisms are system and school leadership, curriculum development and school self-evaluation. Karen is a member of a number of boards, partnerships and steering committees, including, most recently, the Priority Investment Board for Greater Manchester. She is a trained Ofsted inspector and was designated a national leader in education (NLE) in 2009.



Dr Elizabeth Walton
Appointed 01/11/23.

Elizabeth Walton D.Ed. is a professor of education at the School of Education, University of Nottingham. Elizabeth is South African born, and spent 20 years working in the compulsory

schooling sector in South Africa, as a secondary English teacher and school leader. Her work in higher education, both in South Africa and the UK, has been in teacher education and includes teaching, research, and service activities aimed at the realisation of more inclusive and equitable education systems. Her expertise in inclusive education is recognised internationally through visiting appointments and affiliations, and she co-convenes the UNESCO chair in teacher education for diversity and development.



We are a national education charity, underpinned by our founder’s belief that every child should be given a chance to thrive.



Tariq Syed
Appointed 13/07/23

As CEO of RVU, Tariq Syed is responsible for the leadership and strategic direction of the group, which operates a portfolio of brands including Uswitch, confused.com and money.co.uk,

tempcover and Mojo Mortgages. His focus is first and foremost on ensuring that every part of the business lives up to RVU’s mission of empowering people to make confident decisions. Tariq joined Red Ventures in 2017 to lead the inception and growth of their European operations, which included the joint acquisition with Silver Lake of the ZPG Group in 2018 and subsequently the creation of RVU, now with over 700 employees. He also sits on the board of ZPG which includes businesses such as Zoopla and Hometrack. With a BSc in mathematics and management studies from King’s College, London, and an MBA from IESE Business School, Tariq has held numerous executive roles in the media, telecoms and digital industries, including MD roles at Antenna Group and NBC Universal. Earlier in his career, he had a focus on M&A with experience at companies including BT, NBC Universal and Bear Stearns.

Maria Reraki
Resigned 30/11/22.

Equal opportunity policy

The trustees of our organisation adhere to the principle that equal opportunities must be an integral part of sound workplace practice. Within OAT, we have established a commitment to equal opportunities throughout our trust, both in our academies and within head office. Our stated objective is to cultivate a working environment that places genuine value on the contributions and needs of each individual, recognising that we can achieve more together.

Our trust actively supports the employment of individuals with disabilities, both through our recruitment processes and the adjustments we put in place for those in our employment. We also provide comprehensive training programmes and robust career development initiatives that incorporate equality, diversity, and inclusion. Our ultimate aspiration is to ensure that every member of our community experiences an equitable and inclusive journey within OAT.

Employee engagement

Staff engagement surveys were performed during 2022-23.

The trust meets with trade unions on a termly basis via the joint consultation committee.

Further detail on ‘our people’ can be found on pages 59 to 64.

Engagement with suppliers, customers and others with a business interest in the trust

The trust continues to work and communicate with suppliers to ensure strong and effective relationships are built. The trust has engaged with suppliers throughout the year outlining any changes in policies and procedures.

Further detail can be found in the Value for taxpayers section on page 32.

The trust’s main commercial base relates to its letting facilities. There are a number of schools in the trust who offer a significant community offering with the use of 3G pitches or the hiring of indoor space. Communication with these customers is carried out at academy level.

Trade union facility time

The *Trade Union (Facility Time Publication Requirements) Regulations 2017* require relevant public sector employers to publish specified information related to facility time provided to trade union officials. The trust gathers data from the representatives and academies annually to calculate and publish the summary data on the government site. The cost of the facility time is set by the relevant local authority (LA) and can vary from £1,500 to £10,000 according to school size and location. Academies receive an allowance as part of their funding to cover these costs in their delegated budgets. As part of the TURA agreement, we have signed up to supporting the contribution to maintain good working relationships with the trade unions and to ensure staff are able to access representation when required.

Recruitment and appointment of trustees

Trustees are appointed in accordance with the *Articles of Association*. They are appointed every four years and may be re-appointed. In selecting new trustees, the trust seeks to identify people who are willing to commit their time and skills for the advancement of the purpose of the trust, adding value to the leadership of the trust and ensuring robust governance. All trustees are either sponsor-appointed (Ormiston Trust) or co-opted by the trust board.

Policies and procedures adopted for the induction and training of trustees

Following appointment, all new trustees receive an introduction to their role from the chair and the chief executive officer. This introduction includes the opportunity for tours to school sites and to meet members of the academies senior leadership teams. The trust's head of governance ensures new trustees receive sufficient support and information to enable them to discharge their role.

Arrangements for setting pay and remuneration of key management personnel

The pay and the remuneration of the OAT executive team, including the CEO are reviewed and approved by the people committee and signed off by the main board of trustees. Executive remuneration, individually and in totality, is regularly reviewed and compared to peer size MATs and other similar sized organisations

Trustees' indemnities

In accordance with normal commercial practice the trust has purchased insurance to protect trustees, governors and officers from claims arising from negligent acts, errors or omissions occurring whilst on trust business. The insurance provides cover up to £5,000,000 on any one claim.

Related parties

Our parent organisation is Ormiston Trust. The trust board includes three members who are appointed by Ormiston Trust. We share this parent organisation with Gateway Learning Community Trust and Birmingham Ormiston Academy Trust. Details of transactions with Ormiston Trust are disclosed in note 31.

Post balance sheet events

On 1 September 2023 Ormiston Courtyard Academy amalgamated with Ormiston Bridge Academy.



Energy efficiency – streamlined energy and carbon reporting

UK greenhouse gas emissions and energy use data for 1 September 2022 to 31 August 2023

	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23
Energy consumption used to calculate emissions (kWh)	31,923,892	39,452,541	42,468,604
Gas	20,991,000	25,050,345	26,039,131
Oil	1,322,727	0	8,501
LPG	31,783	220,699	15,363
Electricity	0	0	0
Electricity renewables	9,189,638	13,391,385	15,133,618
Transport fuel	388,744	790,112	1,271,991
Scope 1 emissions in metric tonnes CO₂e	3,938.40	5,197.50	5,362.95
Gas consumption	3,859.62	5,066.93	5,266.67
Oil consumption	20.01	0.00	2.42
LPG consumption	5.84	50.83	3.53
Owned transport – mini-buses	52.97	79.74	90.33
Scope 2 emissions in metric tonnes CO₂e	0.00	0.00	0.00
Purchased electricity	0.00	0.00	0.00
Purchased electricity renewables	0.00	0.00	0.00
Scope 3 emissions in metric tonnes CO₂e	43.60	135.80	253.43
Business travel in employee owned vehicles [petrol/diesel]	43.60	135.80	253.43
Business travel in employee owned vehicles [electric]	0.00	0.00	0.00
Total gross emissions in metric tonnes CO₂e	3,982.60	5,333.30	5,616.38
Total number of pupils within the trust	32,406.00	32,532.00	34,117.00
Intensity ratio tonnes CO₂e per pupil	0.12	0.16	0.16

Quantification and reporting methodology

We have followed the 2019 HM Government Environmental Reporting Guidelines. We have also used the GHG Reporting Protocol – Corporate Standard and have used the 2023 UK Government's Conversion Factors for Company Reporting.

Intensity measurement

The intensity measure we are using as a trust assessed the Tonnes of CO₂e emitted per pupil, which is the recommended ratio for the sector.

Measurement planned to improve energy efficiency

- We have invested in LED lighting across the trust estate with the aim of reducing energy consumption by over 20%
- We are installing PV panels on the roofs of the trusts academies with the aim of reducing energy consumption by over 20%
- We have installed smart meters across all sites to improve our understanding of energy consumption



Strategic report

Key facts and figures

The trust continued its sustained growth with student numbers increasing by 795 (2.7%) between autumn 2022 and autumn 2023. Over the five-year period, our student numbers have increased by 4,599 (15.6%) and our staff number grew by 372 (10.5%) with teacher numbers growing by 190 (10.0%).

Student and staff FTEs as per the workforce census

FTE	Students	Workforce	Teachers
2018-19	29,518	3,559	1,909
2019-20	31,156	3,421	1,880
2020-21	32,882	3,585	1,960
2021-22	33,108	3,732	2,012
2022-23	34,117	3,931	2,099

Ofsted figures



Financial

- Strong balance sheet with £34.3m cash and £12m of short-term investments (cash deposits). The trust's operating cashflow remains strong, as do our increased investments in school improvements and Ofsted outcomes.
- Healthy revenue reserves of £20.1m. £507.7m capital reserves and a £2.4m deficit on the pension reserve. As a trust, we like to get the most out of every penny in order to make the biggest difference. This is balanced with a need to hold reserves in order to manage long term investments, manage risks and ensure long term viability.
- Focused investment on front-line resources of £262.2m of revenue income. The majority (96.4%) of our income comes from the government. £161.4m of this is spent on teaching and educational support staff and a further £103.9m is spent on academy based resources.
- Targeted £7.5m of capital investment. In the last year we have invested £5.9m in maintaining our estate and making it more efficient with £0.5m relating to sustainability projects.



Student artwork by
Camilla Wakula
Ormiston SWB Academy

Highlights from our OAT community

In 2022-23, many members of the OAT community were in the spotlight. Here are just a few examples.

Community trust of the year - winner

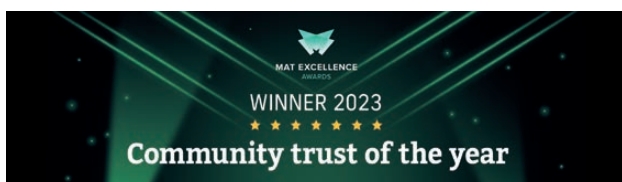
The MAT Excellence Awards is a unique event that gives trusts the opportunity to celebrate their achievements and recognise their impact on pupils, staff and the wider community. They are highly prestigious, coveted awards – and this year, OAT was proud to be shortlisted for three of them, and to win the title of **Community trust of the year**.

Nick Hudson, CEO at the time, said:



I am so thrilled the trust's work in supporting our communities, having an impact on the environment, and committing to positive growth has been recognised in this way.

[It is] truly a testament to the hard work of our dedicated staff and reflects our trust-wide commitment to both enhancing the educational opportunities we are providing our pupils and leaving a positive mark on the communities we serve.



Education standards - 17 Ofsted visits in one year

During another challenging year in education, the trust received 17 Ofsted visits. National director of education, Rob Pritchard, commented, "It is pleasing to see the steady improvement in our Ofsted gradings over the last five years. In January 2019, we set out on our five-year strategy, and we believe that this improvement reflects the results of the delivery of many aspects of this strategy."

With so many visits and reports, it is always hard to choose one or two to highlight but we feel the following are worthy of particular note.

Cowes Enterprise College, An Ormiston Academy - extracts from Ofsted school report, March 2023

- Pupils benefit a great deal from coming to this school. Leaders' aspirations for them are uncompromising.
- Pupils are prepared well for their future, both academically and personally. A thoughtful and comprehensive personal development programme nurtures their understanding of the world beyond the school and the island that they live on.
- Leaders give careful thought to the whole curriculum, not just the academic subjects that pupils learn. They strive to expand pupils' horizons way beyond their local community through a rich diet of carefully planned experiences that are captured in the school's enrichment charter. Leaders make effective use of local expertise about apprenticeships, recognising the diversity of opportunity that is available locally.



Youth social action has always mattered at OAT and we are proud of how our young people engage in different projects to support their communities.

- Staff value the way that leaders involve them in improving the school while being mindful of their wellbeing. Leaders invest deliberately in coaching, training, and time for staff to make improvements that benefit pupils. Staff are exceptionally positive about working at this school and about the support that they receive.

George Salter Academy – extracts from Ofsted school report, May 2023

- Leaders aim to ‘defy disadvantage’ and address any barriers pupils may face. This underpins both the curriculum and the personal development offer.
- Pupils are achieving increasingly better outcomes. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) follow the same ambitious curriculum as their peers.
- Through the Salter Scholar programme, all pupils access an impressive range of opportunities which support their character development. These include trips and visits, inspirational speakers and supporting the local community.
- The school’s work to support pupils’ personal development is commendable.
- Staff feel valued and appreciate the quality of the professional development they receive.

Impact through growth

We were delighted to be formally recognised as a finalist in the growth and impact category at the MAT Excellence Awards. In September 2021, OAT London was formed as a cluster of alternative provision academies, managed intervention centres and outreach.

Over the first year of operation, our people worked tirelessly to stabilise OAT London and to develop strong

relationships proactively and collaboratively with all key stakeholders. We are proud of what has been achieved by our London academies and central team to sustain this provision, in order to provide a good education to some of our most vulnerable learners.

Investing in our people

Autumn 2023 saw the launch of our *People Strategy* aimed at investing in our talented team, enabling them to flourish both day-to-day and in their long-term careers.



Sustainability

OAT has been committed to sustainability for many years. Over the years, we have implemented measures to understand our energy consumption and reduce usage. We have also installed green technology across our estate to increase the efficiency of our buildings and operational systems. We are justifiably proud of our low carbon footprint, and we were pleased to receive recognition for this when we were shortlisted for the Environmental Trust of the Year Award. We continue to drive for sustainability in everything that we do.

Youth social action continues to thrive in OAT

Youth social action matters to OAT and we are proud of how our young people engage in different projects to support their local communities. #WeWill was the second phase of our long-running youth social action programme. Using our learning from the first phase and input from our National Student Council, OAT developed nine youth social action projects, focusing on making our local communities feel connected as they recovered from the pandemic. General themes were based on supporting physical health, mental wellbeing, community cohesion, arts and culture, the local environment and inclusion, diversity, and equality. More than 9,647 students participated in delivering over 272,689 hours of social action with 43 OAT academies engaging in project work alongside 50 non-OAT schools from within our communities. The legacy of #WeWill will continue to build on the successes achieved, over the years to come.



272,689

hours of youth social action



9,647

students participated



43

OAT academies



50

non-OAT schools

Leading on gender equality in schools

Ormiston Herman Academy in Norfolk has been awarded the 2023 Good Practice Award by Lifting Limits, an education equality charity. The academy was commended for their work and initiatives to foster equality for all students in the school. Another member of the OAT family, Packmoor Ormiston Academy in Stoke-on-Trent also received particular praise.

Sporting accomplishments

Ormiston Park Academy has continued to achieve sporting excellence this year, with the under 16s basketball team taking home gold at the all-England Basketball Dynamik Competition and the under 14s team reaching the top four teams in England. Alongside this, two exceptional students, Oskaras Visockas and Emilis Zibuda, have been selected for the national team after being trained by Park's head coach Diana Naydenova, a European Championship finalist, who received the Enrichment Champion award, in recognition of her commitment to the basketball programme.

The basketball programme has been a true passion project, promoting a sense of belonging, respect, and determination to succeed in all areas of school and life as part of OAT's continuing work to inspire students to take up a new sport, learn valuable skills, and venture outside of their comfort zones.

Cowes Enterprise College creating a maritime legacy

In October 2023, Rachel Kitley, principal of Cowes Enterprise College, was awarded the Maritime UK Solent Legacy Award. This prestigious award is given to an individual who has a legacy of achievements that include having had a positive impact on the regional sector, having constructively supported young people and apprentices, having had a clear bearing on economic development and having been an ambassador for the Solent's maritime sector.

Rachel's pioneering work on the Maritime Futures curriculum (an embedded curriculum approach that teaches national curriculum subjects at Key Stage 3 using maritime as a lens) and her contribution to the UK Shipbuilding Skills Taskforce impressed the judging panel. Rachel and the team at Cowes Enterprise College



Rising star, Lenny Rush
Ormiston Rivers Academy

Ormiston Rivers Academy student and BAFTA winner **Lenny Rush** hosted the OAT Annual Conference in 2021.

are disseminating the Maritime Futures approach to other UK schools, particularly in coastal areas, as a means of raising engagement and attainment in education.

Ormiston Rivers' student Lenny Rush scoops BAFTA

Ormiston Rivers student Lenny Rush wowed the nation and won a Best Male Comedy Performance BAFTA for his role in the BBC's *Am I being Unreasonable*. Lenny's star has been on the rise in recent years, having secured multiple theatre and TV roles, including stints on the BBC's series *Apple Tree House* and *The Dumping Ground*.

This isn't Lenny's first award win - he received a breakthrough award at the 2023 National Comedy Awards, as well as winning two awards at the 2023 Royal Television Society Programme Awards - the Breakthrough Award, and Best Comedy Performance (male). Lenny has also worked at the Old Vic theatre in London for several years, where he is an access ambassador for people with disabilities. Lenny has become a real inspiration for his fellow students. He also won the trust's Make Yourself Heard competition and got to perform his speech when he co-hosted the OAT Annual Conference in 2021.

City of Norwich School success at the Shine School Media Awards

The Shine School Media Awards is a national competition that rewards a diversity of talent from secondary schools across the UK who work on the writing, editing, design and fund-raising for a school newspaper, magazine or multimedia project such as a podcast or digital publication. OAT is extremely proud of the talented team

at City of Norwich School (CNS) who were nominated for four Shine Media Awards and went on to win:

- Editor of the year
- Best print design
- Best magazine

They also achieved a Highly Commended award for their podcast *The Lion's Den*.

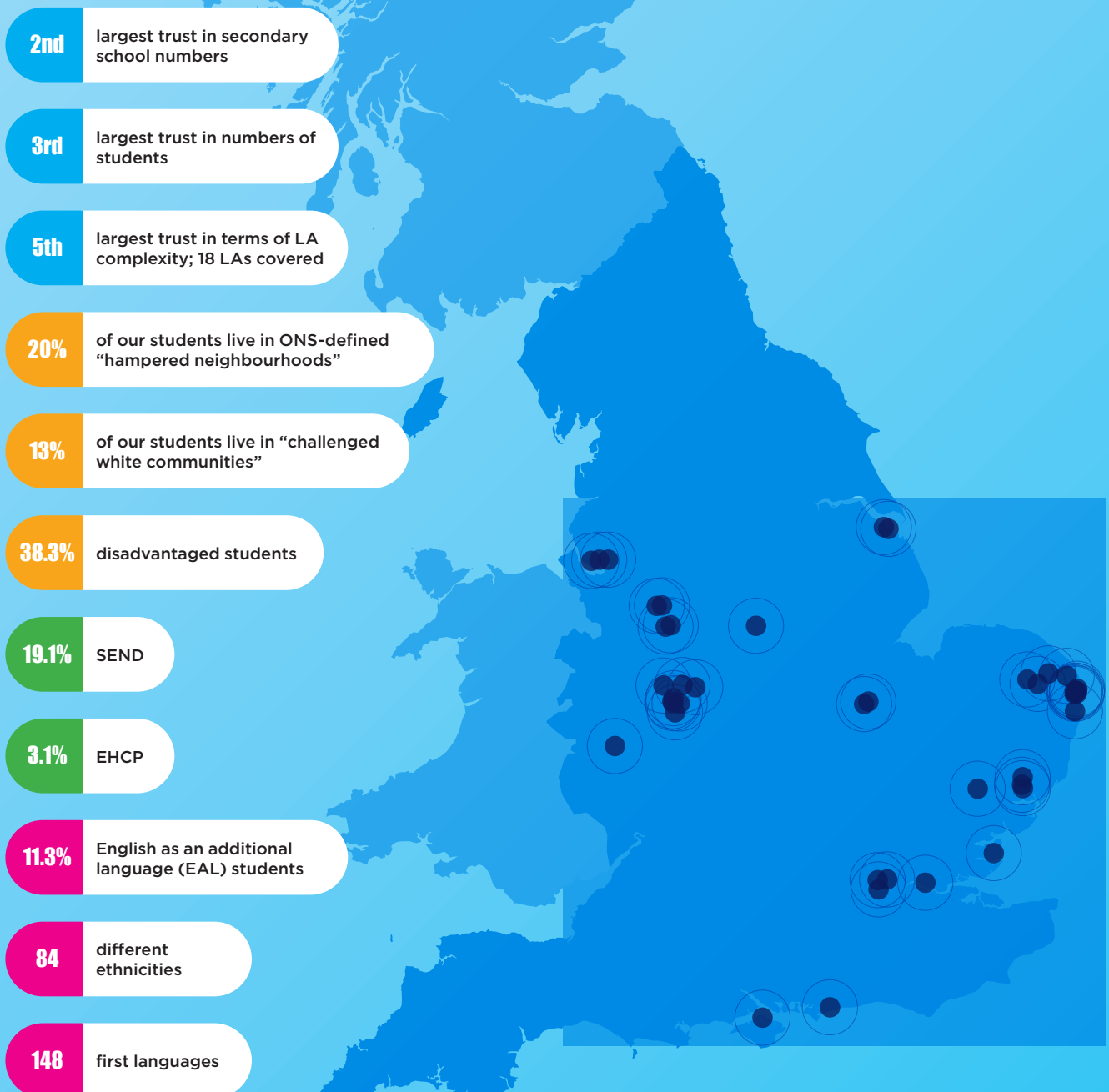
The judges commended "the intelligent blend of content, design and philanthropy" and applauded the "understanding and appreciation of design with panache and a different tone between creative expression, fashion and news-magazine type pieces".



CNS won best magazine at the Shine School Media Awards

Student demographics: the children we serve

As a national trust and education charity, we serve pupils from many communities, all with their unique character, strengths, and challenges. We have new schools and ones with a long history. Our pupils speak a wide variety of languages and represent many different ethnicities, social classes, and religions. One of our values is to 'be inclusive', and we live this through our mission to make the difference to all our pupils, whoever they are.





Making the biggest difference, both inside and outside the classroom.

Our mission, vision and strategy

In accordance with the trust's Articles of Association, the objectives of the trust are to advance for the public benefit education by establishing, maintaining, and developing schools offering a broad and balanced curriculum.

Our mission, as set out in our strategy 2019–23, is to make the biggest difference, both inside and outside the classroom. Written and launched a year before the start of the Covid-19 pandemic, the strategy talked about our core purposes being to **teach, develop, change** and **support**.

- **Teach:** We will teach all our pupils the knowledge and skills they are entitled to, and how to apply this in how they think and work.
- **Develop:** We will develop all our pupils socially and emotionally so that they can make good choices about education and life.
- **Change:** We will aim to understand what is needed for any pupil to excel, so we can create schools where no one is disadvantaged
- **Support:** We will support this work by being efficient and by investing in getting the best from our people, resources, estate and technology

In January 2019, our priorities for change were our focus and they shaped our investment planning at the time.

- Curriculum and teaching
- Specialist practitioners
- Learning time
- Knowledge for opportunity
- Focus on education

In summer 2022, following the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic, we refreshed the focus of our strategy to ensure that it addressed the emerging issues around attendance and behaviour, whilst continuing to be underpinned by our core values. The trust will be undertaking a full review of its strategy in 2023–24.



Teach



Develop



Change



Support

Our operating context

The operating context for all MATs has remained extremely challenging, with the impact of the pandemic continuing to cast its shadow over the education sector. Despite all the ongoing challenges that can sometimes feel relentless, our pride in our students, staff and volunteers is unwavering. They have shown so much strength and resilience over the last few years and continue to inspire us to work harder and be better for them.



After three years of alternative arrangements, this summer was the first time that children have sat formal exams – a stressful experience at any time, but especially so given this particular circumstance. There was a widely publicised “grade deflation” applied this year, which led to a heightened sense of anxiety for many students. We are extremely proud of how well our young people and staff handled this situation and of the results that they achieved through their hard work and determination.

As schools have emerged from the pandemic and returned to normal classroom provision, the sector saw a notable deterioration in national attendance rates and pupil behaviour. This is believed to have a causal link with the impact of lockdown on young people, with those already experiencing disadvantage being the most affected. The impact on the mental health and wellbeing of our children, following the prolonged experience of the pandemic, will be something we continue to monitor and respond to.

We are also acutely conscious of the increasing attainment gap that has resulted, initially from school closures during lockdown and now, from the impact of the cost-of-living crisis that is impacting the least well off, the most. Many of the families we serve are from disadvantaged backgrounds and the unprecedented rise in inflation is having a devastating effect. We are passionate in our belief that where a child starts in life should not dictate where they end up and we will continue to work with our schools to support the most vulnerable students in every way open to us. The challenge that we face in this is exacerbated by inequalities that continue to be seen in the way funding is allocated, particularly in alternative provision and special school settings and across the country including coastal areas, where many of our students live.

The unprecedented rise in inflation, with increases in food and energy costs, have placed significant pressures on individuals, families, and institutions alike.



We are passionate in our belief that where a child starts in life should not dictate where they end up, and we will continue to work with our schools to support the most vulnerable students in every way open to us.

These financial pressures, exacerbated by ongoing dissatisfaction about consecutive below-inflation pay rises, led to the first industrial action for many years. A pay deal of 6.5% for England's teaching staff has now been agreed.

Despite the agreed pay settlement, we remain concerned about the numbers of vacancies that we have across our schools and the pipeline of teachers coming through. OAT is predominantly a Secondary MAT and, looking at data from the ONS, there has been a significant decrease in the number enrolling for Initial Teacher Training in secondary subjects. OAT must therefore continue to explore ways to attract and retain the best staff. This year saw the launch of our new People and Culture Strategy, aimed at providing greater benefits and flexibility to the staff at OAT. We will continue to work hard to ensure that all our staff feel valued. Our intention is to make OAT the best MAT for which to work.

We take our responsibility to respond to the challenge of climate change seriously.

The impact of climate change is becoming ever more obvious, with alarming stories about fires, floods, and devastating extreme weather events from around the world reported on a near-daily basis. The UK government has set a target of achieving Carbon NetZero by 2050. At OAT, we take our responsibility to respond to the challenge of climate change seriously and we continue to invest in green technology and estates improvements to ensure that we remain on track to meet our obligations in this matter.

The pace of technological change continues to pose threats and opportunities. The last year has seen the rapid development of AI, in particular ChatGPT. As a sector, we are still exploring and debating how to use this technology to the advantage of our students, whilst mitigating the obvious risks that it poses.

Sustainability, economic security, equality of access to learning and the wellbeing of both staff and students will remain a priority, as we continue to navigate our way beyond the pandemic. Realising our ambitions means investing in our core activities and building on our strengths. We will ensure that we do this by continuing to focus on the five quality pillars, as defined by the DfE:

High quality and inclusive education

Providing **high quality and inclusive education** is what we do best at OAT. We have a reputation for delivering excellent learning opportunities, both inside and outside the classroom, that are motivating and ambitious for the children in our care. We constantly seek to build on this, to find ways to improve our offer to our students and to help them make the right choices to achieve the goals they set themselves. Our children are at the centre of every decision that we take. We will enhance our efforts to prepare our students for their future, helping them develop the skills and provide experiences that will serve them in their studies and beyond.

School improvement

School improvement is an ongoing journey that we support our academies on through self-evaluation, challenge, support, and appropriate action. OAT academies are supported by a team of education directors (EDs) and lead practitioners (LPs) who help develop high quality curriculum material and act as "critical friends" to ensure that constructive challenge drives a culture of continuous improvement. Curiosity, excellence, and innovative teaching are the bedrock of our MAT. To meet our students' diverse needs and empower them to flourish, we will create a dynamic,

flexible, and inclusive learning environment and build a sense of community that provides a high-quality student experience where everyone feels safe, accommodated, and welcomed.

Workforce

The tightest labour market for 47 years and the highest percentage salary growth since records began is challenging our staff recruitment fulfilment rates. We recognise that developing our **workforce** to ensure they are operating within a high-performing work culture is critical if we are to appeal to and retain the best staff. We need to attract and support a diverse, adaptable, and resilient workforce that reflects the communities we serve. By investing in our people and nurturing their career choices, we will foster an innovative, inspiring, and supportive workplace that will give every child in our care a brilliant educational journey. Taking care of people's wellbeing, rewarding their endeavours, and empowering them to reach their full potential will be key to our collective success.

Finance and operations

Finance and operations will continue to be a key focus for OAT. A period of rapid inflation has placed significant pressure on our students and staff and on the MAT's operating and infrastructure investment costs. We recognise the importance of effective and efficient use of resources for the benefit of all schools in the trust and have invested significantly in our head office support infrastructure over the last few years. This means that OAT is now well-placed to ensure that we can support our schools to reach a robust and stable position,

regardless of the challenging economic circumstances that are currently being faced. Ensuring we remain financially resilient will be central to our future success, whilst meeting our obligations to our students, staff, and stakeholders. We will actively seek new opportunities to generate income through partnerships, philanthropy, and commercial sponsorship. We will continue to monitor the external environment – local, national, and international – in which we operate, so that we can make the best decisions and ensure our MAT is equipped to thrive in the future.

Governance and leadership

The pandemic had significant consequences for the education sector and strong, focused leadership was crucial to see us through this period. Looking forward, we will continue to have a strong focus on **governance and leadership** to ensure that the development and execution of our strategic plans best meet the needs of our students. The approaching general election provides additional uncertainty around the economic and political landscape that we may be facing in the near future. To manage these risks, clarity about our strategic direction will be a priority for the trustees and executives.

Despite all the ongoing challenges that can sometimes feel relentless, our pride in our students, staff and volunteers is unwavering. They have shown so much strength and resilience over the last few years and continue to inspire us to work harder and be better for them. Time and again, we hear stories of group and individual acts of kindness, compassion and community spirit that remind us how important our work is and of the shared purpose across the trust.





Student artwork by
Emily Mehedintu
Ormiston Bushfield Academy



Student artwork by

Esha Kaur

Ormiston Bushfield Academy

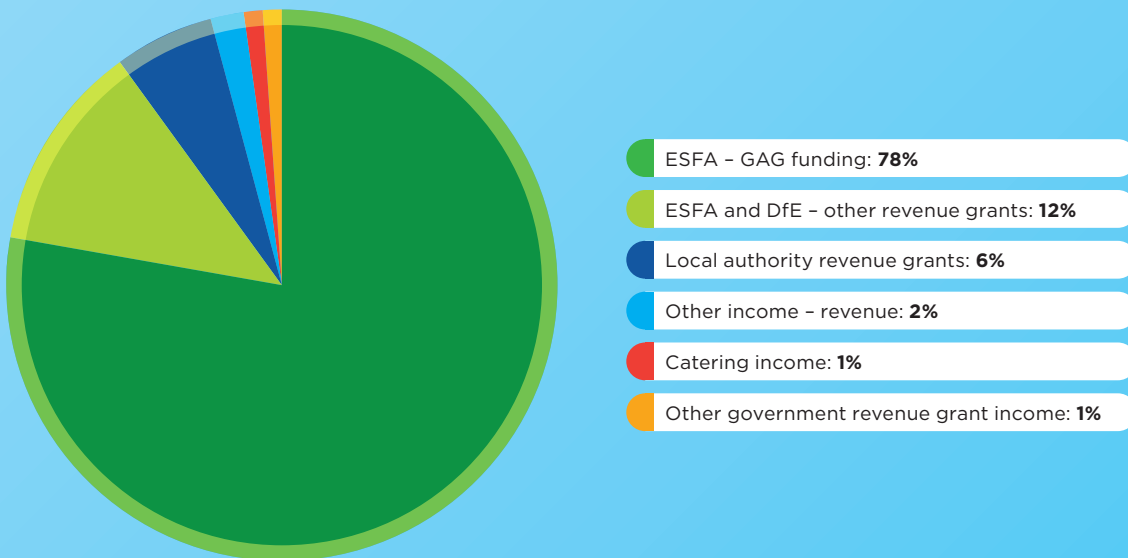
Our value model

This section demonstrates our ongoing commitment to delivering value and impact for money, using our available resources to ensure the best possible educational outcomes.

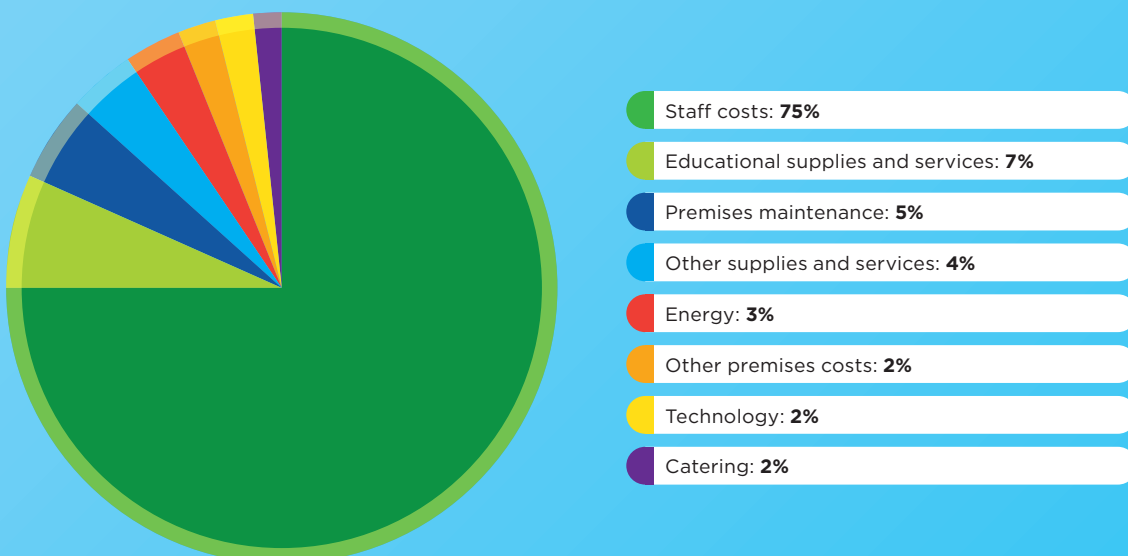
Our mission is to make the biggest difference, inside and outside the classroom, and we are committed to deepening the trust's impact on children and young people through improving our schools.

Over the coming years we want this impact to be realised in tangible improvements to outcomes. We aim to invest as much of our income as we can to ensure that we are delivering the highest quality education. This approach helps to ensure that we deliver value for money to our students, communities and stakeholders.

Revenue funding



Equivalent funding spend per pupil, total



Value for money report

As a publicly funded organisation, OAT has a responsibility to ensure value for money for taxpayers, ensuring that the level of resource provided by the trust to support an activity is appropriately aligned with the quality of the outcome. The primary activities of the trust are to safeguard, educate and enrich the students in our care.



The trust has a series of key performance indicators (KPIs) that are agreed with the board of trustees. These focus mainly on the effectiveness of our education provision and the efficiency with which we deliver it.

Value for our students

Academic outcomes and Ofsted results

Overall, trust results for primary, KS4 and post 16 have improved over the last five years. However, we recognise that there is still a gap between our ambition for our children and our current position and we will continue to work towards closing this, as our number one priority.

Attendance and standards of behaviour continue to be a concern across the education system as a whole, with notable deteriorations in both since the pandemic.

Whilst attendance levels at our schools were in line with national figures, they were low when compared to pre-pandemic times. Given the recognised link between attendance, behaviour and attainment, tackling the high levels of absence and poor behaviour across all of England's schools will remain paramount for the sector and OAT will continue to implement measures to address these issues within our own academies.

We will also continue to work with our schools in using feedback from regulators to drive improvements in outcomes. Whenever there is an Ofsted visit, OAT ensures that our principals and school staff are supported by teams from OAT's head office, including education



Our primary activities are to safeguard, educate and enrich the students in our care.

directors and specialist practitioners. The inspection regime, whilst challenging at the time, provides a useful framework for schools to understand what is working well and where more attention needs to be focused.

By the end of the 2022-23 academic year, we had had 17 inspections, six of which were graded inspections, nine were ungraded inspections and two were monitoring visits. Of the 15 visits that reviewed a school's Ofsted rating, 13 either maintained or improved their positions. Of our 41 academies with current inspections since joining OAT, 34 (81%) are now judged to be **good** or **outstanding**, and 100% of our primaries, special and alternative provision schools reach this benchmark. Since joining OAT, 39 of our academies have maintained or improved their Ofsted judgement, with 54% improving.

Curriculum development and support

Our central team of lead practitioners was established to provide a group of subject experts who could help drive school improvement through the support and enhancement of middle leadership, curriculum, and teacher development.

The current team consists of over 40 specialists who work both regionally and nationally across the full range of subject areas.

Our lead practitioners work across all 43 academies, providing both hands-on and online support. The deployment of our lead practitioners is based on a detailed analysis of the strengths and areas for development within each academy, considering a wealth of data and evidence from principals, education directors, and the academies' own self-evaluation.

When deployed to an academy, the lead practitioner agrees specific actions that align with the academy development plan, considering the context and journey of the individual specialist areas they work in. The type of

support depends on the specific needs of the academy, but it will focus on the following areas:

- Improving outcomes through targeted leadership support
- Coaching, mentoring and induction of teachers, including trainees and ECTs
- Curriculum area teaching and learning support for a whole team or an individual
- Supporting and developing teachers' expertise and pedagogy
- Disseminating materials and advising on best practice, research and CPD provision
- Developing an ambitious trust-wide curriculum and supporting academies with the implementation
- Support in the implementation of whole academy initiatives such as reading and oracy

Our team of lead practitioners consists of over 40 specialists who work both regionally and nationally across the full range of subject areas.

In addition, lead practitioners also:

- Co-ordinate subject networks and subject-specific CPD across the trust
- Enhance and broaden the trust enrichment and extra-curricular opportunities
- Support with strategies to improve recruitment and retention of subject specialists

Over the last few years, the lead practitioner teams have been researching and developing high quality curriculums which can be adopted by schools. In the core subjects these are well sequenced and coherent curriculums that have been fully resourced and come with teacher implementation support.

Senior lead practitioners oversee a wide range of programmes and initiatives designed to enhance student learning.

There has also been extensive work across several subject areas to ensure our academies are compliant with the demands of the national curriculum, with high-level curriculum plans and sequencing available in all other subjects, supported by a lead practitioner.

The senior lead practitioners oversee a wide range of programmes and initiatives designed to enhance student learning. One such example is the OAT Read Aloud programme. Launched in 2021, this is now used at 26 out of 32 of our secondary academies, allowing students to access novels and stories that they may not otherwise experience. This is having an impact on students' vocabulary knowledge, reading fluency and cultural enrichment. In 2022-23, this was complemented by our adoption of Lexonik, a literacy and oracy platform. Together, these programmes have delivered impressive results. The most dramatic improvements have come at Cliff Park, where students have made an average of 59 months of progress, Stoke High where they have averaged 60 months progress and Bolingbroke, where students have made an incredible 66 months of progress.

Improving outcomes through targeted school improvement

Over the academic year 2022-23, lead practitioners spent over 2,500 days providing on-site support across the 43 academies. The targeted, in-person and curricular support has seen outcomes rise in individual subject areas and academies. Ormiston Ilkeston Enterprise Academy, Cowes Enterprise College, Sandymoor Ormiston Academy, Ormiston Denes Academy, Ormiston Forge Academy, Ormiston NEW Academy, Cliff Park Ormiston Academy, Stoke High School and Ormiston Bushfield Academy are notable examples, where targeted intervention has seen progress of between +0.4 and +1 in subjects including maths, science, humanities, and the foundation subjects.

Subject networks and subject-specific CPD

Lead practitioners have shown a significant commitment to providing high quality professional development and



training opportunities to leaders and teachers across the trust. The maths team have uploaded over 40 hours of maths-specific CPD to the National College website and our English team successfully launched the OAT oracy strategy in July 2023. The science team introduced the Ormiston Teacher Offer, as a result of a substantial Enthuse Partnership bursary from STEM learning and, to date, over 60 staff have engaged in at least one full day of science CPD in addition to the numerous online professional development opportunities. Our humanities team has seen a significant increase in the number of leaders participating in network and subject knowledge enhancement days and subjects like modern foreign languages (MFL) and art have introduced subject-specific newsletters, sharing regular best practice.

In addition to these examples, our talented team have provided resources and training via OAT TV, and they continue to support the work of The Ormiston and Keele SCITT (OAKS) and the delivery of the National Professional Qualifications.

Enrichment

In 2022–23, we continued to deliver on our strategy pledge to provide OAT pupils with excellent learning opportunities, inside and outside the classroom. At all key stages, we have worked to provide our students with an education and student experience that enables them to thrive and achieve their full potential. When asked to sum up our sole purpose, in one sentence, OAT's response is:



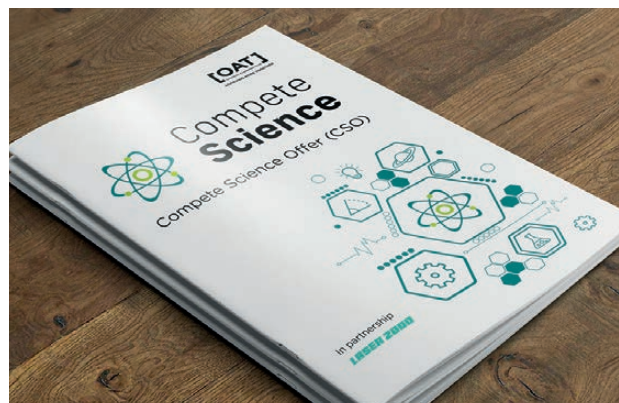
...to provide OAT pupils with excellent learning opportunities, inside and outside the classroom.

We know that what happens outside of the classroom is just as important and valuable as what happens inside it. Giving our young people the opportunity to discover their own personal goals and have the confidence to shine in different ways is core to our approach.

To deliver on this promise, OAT has created a dedicated enrichment team, headed up by a senior lead practitioner for personal development. The senior lead practitioner is supported by four regional enrichment and social action co-ordinators (RESAs), a lead practitioner for careers and eco, and two lead practitioners for the Duke of Edinburgh's Award.

Our lead practitioners play a valuable role in providing OAT's young people with exciting enrichment opportunities that build cultural capital. This year, pupils across all our academies have experienced an outstanding breadth of enrichment opportunities, including a range of national competitions, that are detailed later in this report.

The science team have been working with several external funding agencies to provide exceptional opportunities for our pupils. The Compete Science Offer, or CSO was launched ready for a September 2023 start. The CSO has been and will continue to be closely supported by our national partner Laser2000. The CSO will allow students from across the trust to engage in international trips to Miami, Paris, and CERN in addition to a number of domestic trips/residential experiences, including Year 6/10 summers camps and Year 12 field trips.



Wellbeing and mental health support

It is widely recognised that the health of the nation has been profoundly impacted, first by the pandemic and more recently, by the cost-of-living crisis. This has been particularly pronounced amongst children and young people, with significant evidence confirming a notable decline in the mental health and wellbeing of many children in the UK.

Schools across the country are reporting an increase in children presenting with high levels of anxiety, emotionally based school avoidance, and increased numbers of children requiring SEND support for social, emotional, and mental health needs. Growing numbers of young people are unable to cope with the demands of school life, which is translating into behaviours including internal truancy and other externalised and internalised actions.

OAT is far from immune to this phenomenon. Indeed, given the demographic makeup of our schools, many of which are in the least socially advantaged areas of the country, we have been facing increasing behavioural challenges and demand for mental health support.

Prior to the pandemic, the government's 2017 green paper, *Transforming children and young people's mental health provision*, highlighted three key roles for schools, in promoting mental health and wellbeing. These were:

- promoting and protecting children's mental health and wellbeing
- early identification and providing a graduated approach to children's mental health.
- providing a non-stigmatising environment which is more acceptable to children and their parents or carers.



Work is underway to enhance links between our academies and their local mental health support teams and LA commissioners

The green paper also introduced the role of the senior mental health lead to provide strategic direction and oversight in the development of a whole-school approach to mental health and wellbeing. The trust adopted this guidance and introduced identified mental health leads to each academy. However, post-pandemic, the need for a trust-wide mental health strategy and structure has become clear, so in January 2023, OAT appointed a new head of mental health.

Following this appointment, an OAT whole-school approach framework has been developed. This is underpinned by the DfE's eight key principles:

- Leadership and management
- Culture and ethos
- Curriculum teaching and learning
- Student voice
- Staff development
- Identifying need and monitoring impact
- Targeted support, working with parents and carers.

Following this appointment of a new head of mental health in January 2023, an OAT whole-school approach framework has been developed.

This framework will offer academies guidance on how to develop their whole-school approach and provide practical ideas and advice.

The head of mental health is also working on a centralised mental health policy, in consultation with a range of stakeholders, to promote consistency and equality of access across the trust.

To support this, work is underway to enhance links between our academies and their local mental health support teams and LA commissioners. This process is at an early stage and will continue to be built on throughout the next academic year, along with increased collaboration between the mental health leads and special educational needs co-ordinators (SENCOs), designated safeguarding leads (DSLs) and behaviour and attendance leads.

Value for taxpayers

Procurement/purchasing

The trust recruited a regional commercial procurement manager during 2022-23 to assist with driving value for money faster. This doubled the size of the procurement team and made it more consistent with peer trusts. This additional resource will enhance our ability to deliver economies of scale and ensure compliance.

The commercial procurement team has successfully delivered significant savings in-year, via a prioritised tender programme. £59m of contracts commenced in 2022-23 with comparable savings of £1.53m identified over the same period. Specific projects in-year included the competitive tendering of a staff benefits scheme to provide OAT staff with cost effective car leasing, cycle



schemes and financial services, as well as discounts in many shops and leisure outlets.

Multiple “big ticket” contracts, including gas, electricity and broadband, have been centralised across the trust in recent years, resulting in reduced costs and greater efficiencies. The team will continue to identify and support opportunities to centralise further, where it will enable money to be saved and re-invested in making the biggest difference to children. There is currently a ‘pipeline’ of 19 aggregated and centralised projects in process, including waste, off-site construction, legal services, and supply teacher provision.

A range of new procurement templates, guidance and training was developed and launched via OATnet. These drive a greater focus on impact on children; value for money and enhanced compliance. Metrics are used to monitor the status and progress and report on these to trust leaders. A range of new procurement templates, guidance and training was developed and launched via OATnet.

The procurement team launched a new three-year strategy, focusing on six strategic themes with associated objectives. This includes plans to work collaboratively with other trusts and the further development of our social values, which have the potential to provide added value into the communities and economies in which OAT’s academies are located.

The commercial procurement team has successfully delivered significant savings in-year, via a prioritised tender programme.

In March 2022, the team took steps to protect the trust from fluctuating energy prices by setting up a flexible utilities buying model. The model allowed the trust to take advantage of market conditions. The team also helped the trust to fix non-commodity transport fees for supplying the utilities to OAT academies. It is estimated that this approach has saved the trust over £0.5m.

The development of in-house contracting terms and conditions has led to increased consistency and efficiency.



Our fundraising and partnerships

Ormiston Academies Trust seeks out individuals and organisations that share our vision and values and can help us improve the life-chances of the young people we are privileged to serve.

A full-time development manager leads on this work, supported by members of the executive team and staff from across our 43 academies.

During the last academic year, we have developed significant new partnerships and built on existing relationships with external organisations. These relationships will improve the lives of both students and staff within OAT and make a valuable contribution to the broader education sector.

Example of working in partnership: managed intervention centres

In September 2021, Ormiston Academies Trust took on four London alternative provision schools that were previously part of the TBAP Trust. TBAP had created a programme called managed intervention centres (MICs), a trauma informed approach to improving behaviour, working alongside mainstream schools to prevent young people being excluded and moved into alternative provision.

Having demonstrated our commitment to disseminating evidence-led best practice, OAT was successful in our application to the Education Endowment Foundation and Youth Endowment Fund's 'Improving attendance and reducing exclusions in schools' funding round. A pilot, commencing in 2024, will assess the impact of two newly created managed intervention centres. If the pilot shows promise, a full randomised control trial of the approach may be implemented.

Our managed intervention centres in London have proven to be effective in keeping vulnerable young people in mainstream education and we are excited to see whether they merit wider roll-out within OAT and the sector more widely.



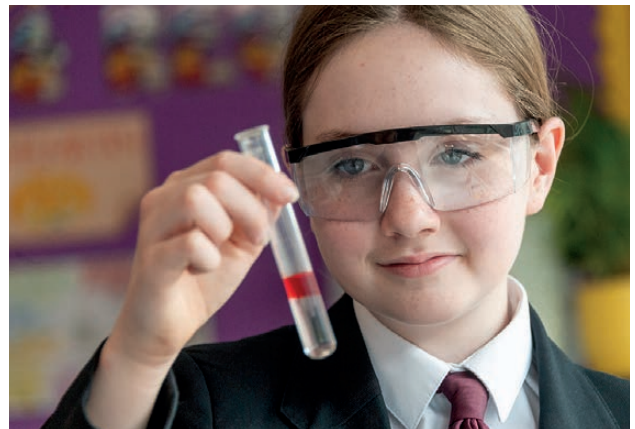
During this financial year, no external professional fundraisers or commercial participators have been engaged in fundraising for OAT. The fundraising function of the trust is monitored through regular line management, the review of grant applications and the monitoring and evaluation of grants received. No complaints were received in the year.

We are immensely grateful to all the generous trusts and foundations that make such a positive difference and help support our young people. We welcome discussions with individuals, trusts and foundations that share our vision about how we can work together to improve outcomes for the young people in our care.

If you are interested in working with OAT, please contact us at partnerships@ormistonacademiestrust.co.uk.

Alternatively, if you would like to donate to our trust, this can be done via our JustGiving page at [justgiving.com/ormistonacademiestrust](https://www.justgiving.com/ormistonacademiestrust).

We are immensely grateful to all the generous trusts and foundations that make such a positive difference and help support our young people.

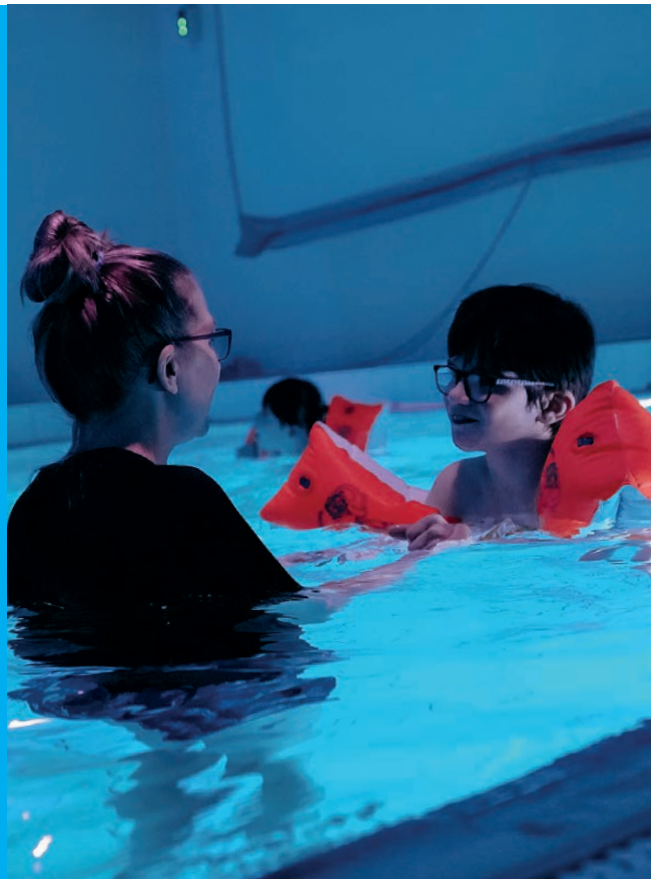


Example of working in partnership: Thomas Wolsey Ormiston Academy

Thomas Wolsey Ormiston Academy is a special school in Ipswich that supports young people with severe and complex learning and physical difficulties.

Special schools require extensive equipment to assist with movement and handling, improving the wellbeing and sensory needs of young people and enhancing learning outcomes. The specialist nature of the equipment means it is expensive and wears out quickly because of heavy use. Government funding does not cover the level of investment needed to maintain and improve the physical environment.

We were approached by a generous grant making trust who asked us to list the most pressing needs of the school. Following a review, the trust agreed to all our requests, allowing Thomas Wolsey Ormiston Academy to undertake a raft of improvements that included replacing lifting equipment in the hydrotherapy pool, replacing worn out hoists in the classroom and creating a canopy that will allow disabled young people to enjoy the outdoors all year round.



Strategy updates

Our trust strategy has continued to play a pivotal role in our efforts to reset after the challenges brought about by the Covid-19 pandemic.

Rooted in our belief that “anyone can excel”, our strategy has allowed us to re-centre our efforts on ensuring that every pupil can reach their potential, despite the disruptions caused by the pandemic. We have leveraged our resilience and determination and have strived to create an environment where everyone who attends our academies feels safe and supported in order that they have the foundations to thrive.

Our commitment to “share what is best” has played a vital role in delivering our strategy, fostering greater collaboration between our academies, our head office staff, and other stakeholders. Together, we have worked towards paving the way for a brilliant journey for pupils and staff alike, one that is characterised by resilience, adaptability, and the pursuit of excellence, both in terms of academic achievement and personal growth and development.

Rooted in our belief that “Anyone can excel,” our strategy has allowed us to re-centre our efforts on ensuring that every pupil can reach their potential.

In the aftermath of Covid-19, we have recognised an ever greater need to be even more inclusive, celebrating our diversity and ensuring equity for all, particularly those

who were and continue to be disproportionately affected by the pandemic.

As we continue on our journey towards excellence, with our new CEO at the helm, our strategy remains focused on ensuring that our reset after Covid-19 is comprehensive, inclusive, and forward-thinking, keeping our children and young people at the heart of our decision making and ensuring the best possible outcomes for those in our care.



OAT primary

A family within a family

Whilst the majority of OAT academies are secondary, we have a small but highly valued group of primary schools. Described as “a family within a family”, our primaries are offered support tailored to their individual needs. To help meet these specific requirements, OAT has set up a structure around each of our primaries to offer both support and challenge, enabling them to grow and improve, whilst acknowledging each school's individuality. We understand that the route to providing an outstanding education is different for each academy.

We believe in aligned autonomy, with consistency and alignment in some areas (eg. the OAT PSHE curriculum, which is in place from early years foundation stage (EYFS) to sixth form across our trust) and autonomy in other areas. At the core of everything we do is a sense of collaboration; collaboration between our primaries and, when closely located, between our primaries and our secondaries. This helps to ensure a strong and supportive framework.



Being part of Ormiston Academies Trust provides us with a sense of being part of a wider family, and gives us the opportunity to contribute to a team approach whilst maintaining our local community identity.

Kelly Moore, Principal, Ormiston Meadows Academy.

Our principals know their own schools best, so they set the agenda and priorities for their schools in collaboration with the primary education director. OAT then works with them to achieve these goals through strategic, facilitative, and practical support.

In practice, this means that membership of OAT enables schools to access a wide range of professional advice

and guidance in all areas, when and where they need it, with tailored assistance to match the needs of the school. Strong operational support is readily available, including finance, estates management, HR, and IT, helping to ensure effective and efficient use of resources and our educational offering provides subject expertise to support ongoing curriculum development. Whether operational or educational, our economies of scale allow OAT primaries to access a level of expertise that would generally not be available to them if they were operating on an individual basis.

This strategic support and careful planning have enabled significant investment to take place, whilst allowing the day-to-day running of schools to remain unaffected. One such example is seen at Ormiston Herman Academy, which will benefit from a new immersive classroom in the next academic year. Over the last year, the finance team has provided the necessary support to enable this large-scale expenditure, whilst ensuring that the school remained in budget. They also kept the whole process relatively stress free for the principal, which was greatly appreciated.

“We are very excited at the prospect of our new Immersive classroom as this will be a fantastic learning tool for all the pupils at Ormiston Herman. Not only will it allow them to have the opportunity to enrich their imaginations through this powerful stimulus, but it will also create a calming atmosphere for some of our most vulnerable pupils. We are sure that this will have a really positive impact on the pupils’ attitude to learning and therefore further improve outcomes. The trust has been a huge support in getting this off the ground.”

Kristy Redhead, Principal, Ormiston Herman Academy

Support from OAT has also allowed our schools to act quickly and decisively when necessary. Ormiston Cliff Park Primary Academy benefitted during the academic year, from support from the central estates team, when they had to react quickly to the needs of SEND pupils,



but no funding was made available from the LA. The trust stepped in and supported this unanticipated need within the necessary timeframe, creating a high-quality wet room and changing facility with appropriate access.

“At OCPPA we have appreciated the practical and financial support from the trust in enabling us to develop specialist provision to meet the needs of our most vulnerable learners.”

Kate Rutherford, Principal, Ormiston Cliff Park Primary Academy.

The trust has also helped to strengthen governance and oversight arrangements across our primary schools. The trust’s central governance team provides support and expertise to all governors and academies. They support with the recruitment of governors and provide ongoing administration around this. In addition, the trust provides clerks for primary academies who offer expertise and guidance to the local governing bodies (LGBs).

These operational and strategic support structures have allowed a real focus on school improvement and the provision of high quality and inclusive education.

The trust has a particularly strong level of support for SEND pupils, because inclusion and equality of access are at the heart of what we do. All OAT primary academies have an above average level of SEND and disadvantaged pupils on roll and these pupils are well supported in our care. The trust’s SEND lead practitioners provide ongoing advice and guidance to schools in support of their SEND strategy and work with SENCOs to ensure systems are in place support the SEND need within a school. Where academies have identified a growing or specific area of need, the trust’s SEND LPs are able to offer advice around the provision and have helped settings to develop and tailor this to ensure the needs of the child are understood and fully met. There are numerous examples where this approach has enabled many pupils to stay in full-time mainstream education where they may otherwise have ended up excluded or on part-time timetables.

School improvement receives an equally focused and structured approach within our primary schools. There is a primary improvement team that consists of the primary director and two part-time primary standards partners. All principals are directly line managed by the primary director to ensure consistency and an overarching understanding of school performance. A key process within the school improvement cycle is the school progress board (SPB). The SPB meets four times a year and looks at standards, priorities, and ongoing actions. The meetings are chaired by the primary director, with the chair of governors in attendance. This creates a holistic approach to quality assurance and an ongoing collaboration between the trust and the governing body.

The school improvement team works with school leaders to quality assure the provision that is in place. This includes in-depth reviews to gain greater insights into specific areas and coaching and mentoring for senior and middle leaders to provide ongoing development of capacity and expertise.

The trust’s LPs are appointed for their expertise in their subject areas and work with schools to develop and review curriculum areas. The OAT ‘Principles of teaching’, that were developed in conjunction with the teaching and learning leads across the trust, ensure consistency in approach to pedagogy and standards.

At OAT we understand that education is a journey and is about more than just outcome measures. However, we are proud that our primary academies do perform highly in national outcome measures, with our averages outperforming the national picture in all areas.

All of this is having tangible benefits, with individual schools receiving recognition from Ofsted, such as:

“Pupils at this school are surrounded by warmth and kindness. All the adults care about pupils’ wellbeing. Pupils know that staff will always listen to their worries and concerns. Pupils are and feel safe.”

Edward Worlledge report

“Skilled leaders have overseen the school’s transition from a junior school to a primary school that provides education for 540 pupils. Leaders have redesigned the curriculum. It is anchored in leaders’ high expectations and their commitment to inclusivity. Pupils with SEND are supported to access the same curriculum as their classmates.”

Cliff Park Primary report

Our ambition now is to build on the success already achieved with our primary schools and look to bring new primaries into our “family within a family”.

100% of our primary schools are rated as **good** or **outstanding** by Ofsted.



Student artwork by
Gabby Holmes
Ormiston Bushfield Academy



Student artwork by
Tare-Anna Holmes
Ormiston Bushfield Academy

OAT secondary

The second largest secondary education provider

Over the past five years, we have seen improvements in academic results across our trust, reflecting our ongoing commitment to delivering a high-quality education. It acknowledges the dedicated work of our educators and the determination of our students to succeed.

Our results this year have improved from 2019, following a return to pre-pandemic marking standards in England. Whilst we want to see improvements in our outcomes, it is worth noting that we have maintained the 2019 outcome levels, despite an increase in our student numbers and a strategic shift to a more academic mix of subjects in our secondary schools at Key Stage 4.

At the end of 2022-23, our combined pupil numbers for secondary education totalled 31,337, reflecting an overall growth of 4,027 students compared to our 2018-19 cohort. The proportion of disadvantaged students in our schools has risen by around 8% over the same timeframe.

Additionally, in 2018-19, it was recognised that there was a need for significant curriculum transformation. Our commitment to provide the best possible education for our students has seen strong growth in the number of students participating in the Ebacc as a result. In 2019-20, 30% of our students participated in the Ebacc. This figure increased to 37% in 2022-23. Whilst this is broadly in line with the national average, we will continue to promote the more academic path for our students, whilst acknowledging and supporting students who choose to undertake more vocational subjects.

Worthy of particular mention this year is Ormiston Bushfield Academy, whose Attainment 8 figure for the year went up 3.5pts on the 2019 position. This is equivalent to a $\frac{1}{3}$ of a grade improvement in every subject. Their Progress 8 also showed strong improvement from 2019, with disadvantaged pupils recording a positive Progress 8 score of half a grade better than the national position for disadvantaged children. Basics 94 is up around 15%, with both English and maths achievement rates up on 2019, with Basics 95 showing 25% increase on the 2019 position.

Despite our progress in increasing our academic rigour, we recognise that a gap persists between our current performance and our aspirations for our students. Closing this gap remains our top priority.

As a trust, we have implemented a number of measures over the last academic year to help drive improvements.

We introduced a new structure aimed at providing increased support and challenge to our secondary schools. Education directors now oversee a smaller and more targeted portfolio of schools than was previously the case and report into a new director of secondary post. This restructuring is intended to support all levels of leadership within our trusts and provide consistency and succession planning.

We will continue to promote the more academic path for our students, whilst acknowledging and supporting students who choose to undertake more vocational subjects.

Whilst good progress has been made during recent years to drive curriculum improvements, we recognise that improving the standard of teaching is crucial to realising our ambitions for our students. We have introduced common 'Principles of teaching' across our schools, to help elevate the quality of teaching in our academies. To support this effort, we have formed a partnership with StepLab, a professional development platform designed

to support teacher development systematically through peer coaching and mentoring.

To drive improvements further, we have introduced the more consistent use of the Fisher Family Trust (FFT) across OAT. FFT is a respected education charity that allows multi-academy trusts to benchmark their performance on a national scale. It provides us with forward estimates to assist in setting ambitious but achievable targets our schools and for the children in our care. Combining this information with our own data ecosystem ensures an evidence-based approach to decision-making and priority-setting.

The steps we have taken to enhance our academic curriculum and teaching quality, along with the use of data to understand the areas of greatest need will help to lift the academic attainment of our students and improve outcomes going forward.

We recognise that feedback from regulators plays a significant role in assisting us to achieve educational excellence. The inspections undertaken were rigorous but served as a valuable framework for evaluating

the strengths and areas requiring improvement in our academies.

Our school principals and staff received ongoing support from our head office, including education directors and specialist practitioners. This collaborative effort was instrumental in ensuring our schools were well-prepared to meet the standards set by Ofsted.

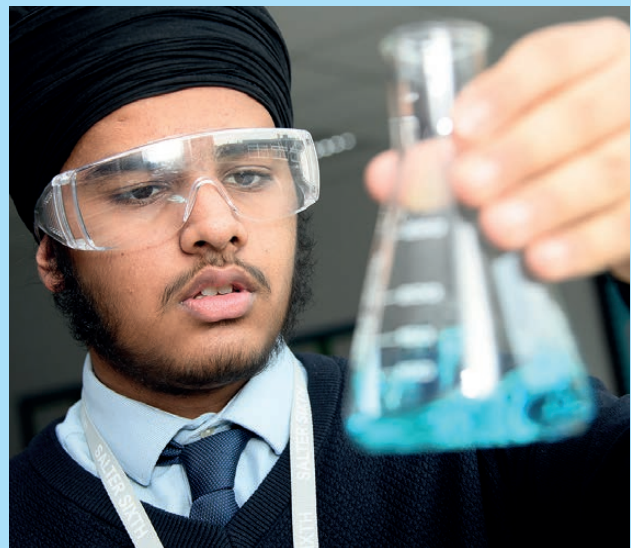
The insights derived from these inspections are invaluable for enhancing the quality of education within our trust, informing our strategic decision making and helping to refine and elevate educational standards.

We have been very pleased with much of the feedback that has been received from Ofsted, which has recognised the hard work and dedication of our teachers and students. Some notable examples this year have been the reports following visits to Cowes Enterprise College and George Salter Academy, both of which were recognised for the ambition that the staff have for their students and the way that the curriculum and personal development aims to broaden horizons:

“Despite the strengths evident in the curriculum, leaders and teachers are ambitious to do more for pupils...”

“Leaders give careful thought to the whole curriculum, not just the academic subjects that pupils learn. They strive to expand pupils’ horizons way beyond their local community through a rich diet of carefully planned experiences that are captured in the school’s enrichment charter...”

Cowes Enterprise College Ofsted response



“Leaders have made sure that teachers are clear about the key knowledge and important skills pupils will need to be successful. They have also identified ways for pupils to develop their vocabulary and oracy skills. Leaders have built greater diversity into the curriculum, through the books pupils read in English or the artists that they study...”

“Teachers use their strong subject knowledge to help pupils makes sense of new concepts and ideas. They regularly check that pupils have understood their learning. This helps teachers to identify what needs to be revisited in a later lesson. Pupils know how to improve their work because of the quality of the feedback they receive...”

George Salter Academy Ofsted response

Ormiston post-16

OAT has 12 secondary schools that offer post-16 provision; 11 of these are mainstream, with one SEND specialist provider. Each of our sixth forms is unique in terms of its culture and character, reflecting its geographical and local community context, but every one of them is also very much part of the OAT family, with significant levels of support and sharing of best practice between the schools. This network makes a significant difference to our academies.

This is especially valued by our sixth form leaders in the context of the safe space we create, allowing teachers to explore strengths and weaknesses and identify ways to drive improvement.

As the heads of sixth form at Ormiston Bushfield Academy and City of Norwich School (CNS) have described it:

“Being part of a wider network and information sharing team has provided me with the support and confidence to make strides with our sixth form. The benefit of having a platform where uncertainties can be clarified particularly during times of great change is immensely important and crucial in being armed with the support needed to continually provide our students with the most up to date and effective guidance.”

Head of sixth form, Bushfield

“At CNS, we have certainly benefitted from being part of OAT. Through meetings with the other eleven sixth forms each year, it is useful to be able to discuss strengths and weaknesses in a safe environment. On a local scene this is not possible to do as often there is strong competition between institutions for students and sharing best practice isn’t always in your interest. LPs in A-level subjects have also been useful. With subjects like law and product design, there are not always experts out there able to offer the level of guidance and support that we have.”

Head of sixth form, CNS

Two of our sixth forms are purely academic in their offer, teaching A-levels only, with the others offering a combination of A-levels and vocational courses. Each curriculum offer is kept under review to ensure that it remains appropriate for the student cohort and reflects any DfE reforms.

Each of our sixth forms are supported by the senior lead practitioner for post-16, as well as by the wider team of lead practitioners who provide subject specialisms. The support offered is bespoke to meet identified needs and includes development of leadership and management, work to build a strong culture, support with marketing, recruitment, and the retention of students, as well as maximising academic standards and outcomes.

Our sixth form leaders are well supported prior to and during Ofsted inspections, with OAT-led reviews carried out and constructive feedback given, to help drive improvements. This has had a significant impact on overall sixth form performance, with 92% of our post-16 providers now rated as good or outstanding, including two recently inspected sixth forms that were previously categorised as requires improvement.

The benefits of this approach are highlighted by the head of sixth form at City of Norwich School, below.



In working with our OAT post-16 lead, we have been able to hone our practice. Very early on we took part in a sixth form review in an Ofsted style. This helped us to write an action plan to support our vision. Two years later and with follow up visits, we have been able to develop and showcase a VESPA programme, improvements in SEN, and reshaped student leaders and has resulted in a much more fluid personal development programme across our sixth form.”

Equally, Ormiston SWB Academy, another of our sixth form schools, received bespoke support that drove improvements in their marketing and admissions strategies, resulting in significantly improved student numbers. Ongoing support in improving the culture and raising standards has resulted in students making substantial progress, with the average grade achieved by the 2023 cohort reaching B-.

Indeed, there have been some pleasing A-level results across all regions this year, with around 90% of our students achieving their destination of choice and almost all of the remaining students securing appropriate destinations.

This is, in part, a reflection of the trust-wide support that students in OAT sixth forms receive with careers and destination choices. We have an Oxbridge Scholars

Programme, with support for students undertaking the Oxbridge application process funded by the trust. There is also support for students in getting exciting work placements. From next year, all schools will have access to the market-leading careers portal, Unifrog, which will provide additional advice and guidance on next steps for the young people in our care.

We are passionate about social mobility and work closely with partners including Zero Gravity and the 93% Club to support our students, not only in securing places at top universities, but also in ensuring that those places are sustained. We are very proud of the fact that the proportion of our disadvantaged students going on to study at university is above national average and will continue to build on this success over the next few years.



Ormiston alternative provision

and managed intervention centres (MICs)

Inclusion is at the heart of OAT. For this reason, we are committed to the delivery of high-quality alternative provision (AP) as part of our vision. We strive to ensure that all the children in our care, including those outside of mainstream education, can access the best educational opportunities.

The working principles and processes of AP are very different to mainstream education. Traditionally, AP has been defined by the scale of need and vulnerability of the children referred to its services, where extreme statistics speak for themselves.

There are nearly four times the number of children eligible for free school meals attending AP schools than mainstream schools.

81% of pupils in AP are on the SEND register, which is almost six times more than in mainstream schools. There are nearly four times the number of children eligible for free school meals attending AP schools than mainstream schools. The scale and complexity of mental health and behavioural problems that prevent these pupils from successfully engaging in mainstream education is significant, with many underlying conditions still needing to be diagnosed, prioritised, and addressed.

When OAT took on four London-based AP academies from TBAP in September 2021, they faced multiple challenges in areas including governance, school improvement and financial sustainability. AP is expensive

to do well but we were determined that, if we were to deliver AP, it was going to be the best quality and sustainable in the long term.

To achieve this, OAT needed to ensure financial stability across the London AP locations. As two of the AP academies (The Courtyard and The Bridge) were closely located, a decision was taken to merge them into one site meaning that as of September 2023 OAT will run three AP academies in London; Ormiston Bridge, commissioned by the London Borough of Hammersmith & Fulham (LBHF), Ormiston Beachcroft, commissioned by Westminster (LBW) and Ormiston Latimer, commissioned by the Royal Borough of Kensington & Chelsea (RBKC).

Within each of the AP academies, there is a managed intervention centre that forms part of each secondary AP academy within their London borough. The MICs provide a five-week intervention programme aimed at children at risk of permanent exclusion from mainstream education. This is included in OAT's service level agreements with each local authority, as well as terms of reference for governance at each academy.

To drive improvement, works are underway to upgrade the facilities on offer at our AP schools. Significant capital works are underway at Ormiston Bridge, funded by the DfE and managed in partnership between OAT and the DfE. This will enable dedicated spaces to be created to cater for the merged Courtyard/Bridge primary academy and the Childerley MIC, creating efficiency and operating savings that will result in a more stable financial environment. The capital works are due to be completed in spring term 2024, when a new 125-year lease will be agreed.

Capital works have also been agreed at Ormiston Latimer Academy. The majority of local authorities are facing significant overspends on their high needs budget. This is largely due to the increasing number of children with education, health and care plans (EHCPs) and escalating placement costs at independent providers. Supporting pupils in a local school offers better value for money than



100% of our alternative provision schools are rated as good or outstanding by Ofsted.

more expensive, non-maintained or independent sector provision, so over the last 12 months, OAT has worked in partnership with LA officers to redesign the offer and service at Ormiston Latimer Academy in RBKC.

Strong partnership working with key partners in the LA has been crucial from the outset. OAT education and central teams worked collaboratively with local authority commissioners to ensure that effectiveness, efficiency, and transparency were the foundation stones of our work with these particularly vulnerable children. This collaborative approach embedded strong relationships based on trust and secured commitments designed to optimise outcomes for the children.

Two years on, OAT has demonstrated that AP and mainstream schools can cohabit and thrive in the same MAT to the benefit of all students. Contracts agreed with local authorities have ensured that each AP academy now has a balanced budget, with new strands of specialist service developed to meet the needs of the pupils in the community, especially those with SEND. This has meant that our AP academies, supported by OAT, are now fully aligned with their respective local authority inclusion agendas.

The DfE SEND and AP Improvement Plan highlights the role of alternative provision in supporting children and young people to stay in or re-integrate back into mainstream education. Integral to the vision for the reformed role of alternative provision is its delivery across three tiers of support, rather than focussing on long-term placements outside mainstream settings. The proposal is a delivery model based on a three-tier system of support, as follows:

- Targeted support in mainstream schools
- Time-limited placements in alternative provision
- Transitional placements for young people who will not return to their previous school

Working in partnership with each local authority, OAT aims to deliver this system of support including an integrated behaviour outreach offer. This includes the delivery of in-school targeted interventions at mainstream schools, supporting transition to secondary school, and reintegration support for children at the AP academies, including those with EHCPs.

The OAT primary outreach team offers support to schools around how aspects of social, emotional, and mental health can impact on behaviour. During 2022-23, the team supported over 53 primary schools across the three London boroughs. The team uses the 'behaviour for learning' conceptual framework to help teachers understand pupil behaviours, detail their concerns and plan for change.

In addition to the outreach work, the MICs at each AP academy have delivered tangible success in their work with pupils at risk of exclusion from mainstream schooling. During 2022-23, the MICs collectively supported 315 pupils across 26 mainstream secondary schools with a 70% success rate, where pupils continued to attend their mainstream school after the MIC intervention. Each MIC is jointly funded by both local authorities and the mainstream schools using the service. Feedback from schools has been extremely positive, with comments such as, "students return with clear expectations..." and "students report that their time at the MIC is positive and that they felt safe and happy". Parents have also commented that they have "felt included and supported throughout the placement".

Working in AP can be particularly challenging. The scale of the challenge can quickly seem insurmountable if there is no mechanism for frequent review or reflection on the efficacy of the strategies being employed. When the key people in an AP academy become overwhelmed by the behavioural challenges they face, there is a risk that they will set targets that are not sufficiently challenging or will have low expectations of staff and pupils.



Pupils enjoy coming to this school. They said that staff listen to them and help them to learn well.

Being part of the trust has addressed these risks. The AP academies have become part of a supportive and collaborative family that is bound by shared values. The staff now have access high-quality CPD, curriculum resources and subject lead practitioners who offer support and facilitate networks of shared good practice. This, in turn, has significantly improved outcomes for the children in our care and has reduced NEET (not in education, employment or training) figures across the AP academies.

Our guiding principle for school improvement is to make the biggest difference to the life chances of the pupils in our schools. This model is used to drive continual improvement, recognising that school improvement is the responsibility of everyone at OAT.

The benefits of bringing AP schools into the OAT family are not all one-way. Our mainstream academies have benefitted from the expertise that our AP staff offer. Training has been provided to all principals on how to respond to poor behaviour and actions that can be taken to reduce suspensions and permanent exclusions. The AP education director has also been able to offer tailored support to specific academies with challenging cohorts. The launch of two new MIC projects in Stoke and Norfolk, overseen by the AP education director, will offer dedicated support to 10 surrounding OAT academies in their response to poor behaviours and efforts to reduce suspensions and exclusions.

These strategies have supported tangible improvements in the quality of education across our AP schools. All three AP academies have received Ofsted inspections since OAT took over in September 2021 and all three are categorised as **good**, with comments including, “staff

have high expectations of all pupils...” and “pupils enjoy coming to this school. They said that staff listen to them and help them to learn well...”.

Individual AP school improvement strategies are developed in co-operation between the school principals and the alternative provision education director (APED), with quality assurance formally delivered through strategic progress board meetings that occur four times a year. The outcomes of these meetings are shared and discussed in detail with the OAT Central Team. This ensures a shared understanding of the individual strengths and challenges of each AP school within the context of the MAT, allowing targeted support and improvement work to meet trust-wide standards. Schools are also supported via academy/peer reviews and additional guidance and encouragement is provided to principals through half-termly principal forums.

Whilst each school has its own identity, everyone works towards the same ethos.

Whilst each school has its own identity, everyone works towards the same ethos. This allows resources to be used flexibly and deployed across schools as required. This model allows clarity about what makes the most difference in each school and to each pupil and acts as a benchmark to measure progress, helping to drive school improvement.

Through robust challenge, supportive networks and clear frameworks, OAT continues to grow and develop our AP academies, ensuring better opportunities and outcomes for some of our most vulnerable children.

100% of our alternative provision schools are rated as **good** or **outstanding** by Ofsted.

Ormiston special schools

We are proud of our personal development curriculum and the strong career and pathway links that we have developed.

We have a number of special provisions. The main one is at Thomas Wolsey Ormiston Academy. This continues to be commissioned for 105 places for children with profound and multiple learning difficulties (PMLD).

We are proud of our personal development curriculum and the strong career and pathway links that we have developed. All Year 11 pupils have access to a

comprehensive transition package to post-16 education. Key Stage 4 pupils have also accessed a wide range of opportunities via the 'Experience of work' programme. Enrichment opportunities are both built into and complement the curriculum. New opportunities for pupils such as participation in the Duke of Edinburgh's Award for Year 10 pupils, working with a professional



orchestra and participating in Ormiston's Got Talent, sit alongside established, enrichment opportunities such as sailing and performing at Snape Maltings. The number of trips and visits are continuing to increase across the school with four classes in the secondary department having a weekly visit as part of their curriculum offer.

Funding for special schools continues to be challenging and we proactively and collaboratively work with local authorities to create sustainable models for the continued delivery of high-quality education.

100% of our special schools are rated as **good** or **outstanding** by Ofsted.



Inclusion

At the heart of OAT's vision and values is the drive to be inclusive. In recognition of this, a new post of director of inclusion was established in September 2022 to lead a dedicated inclusion team across the remits of safeguarding, SEND, mental health, attendance, behaviour and EAL.

Improving outcomes for children with SEND remains a key focus for OAT. While numbers of children with SEND are increasing nationally, OAT numbers are both increasing and are above national average figures. In 2022 17.5% of all children in OAT academies had a SEND compared to 15.1% nationally. In 2022-23, this had increased to 18.2% in OAT and 17.3% nationally. The difference is most pronounced in secondary children, and in 2022-23 there were 2.6% more children with SEND in OAT academies compared to the national picture.

These increasing numbers place even more pressure on a system that is already significantly challenged. As in all schools, OAT academies often struggle to meet the increasingly complex needs of growing numbers of children, with reduced funding and reduced services. This is particularly acute within our primary academies, which are receiving high numbers of children with EHCPs or, increasingly, seeing children with very complex needs who are entering reception without local authority assessment and support.

The OAT SEND team has provided bespoke guidance and advice to academies in adapting the curriculum and environment to meet these increasingly challenging needs. 2023 outcomes for primary children with SEND have been strong across the trust, with more children with SEND meeting the expected standard in reading, writing and maths, both combined and in individual subjects, than has been the picture nationally.

A core element of the work of OAT's SEND team has been to ensure that children with SEND are identified early and accurately. This has led to the development of a screening and assessment toolkit for SENCOs, used in conjunction with extensive training. The team, working collaboratively with the head of mental health, has focused on ensuring

that SENCOs are alert to possible unidentified learning needs for those children categorised as having social, emotional and mental health difficulties (SEMH).

Once children are accurately identified, it is important to remove barriers to successful outcomes and support the whole child in their development. The SEND team has created bespoke training and intervention packages to help support academies to achieve this.

The SEND team also works closely with academy SENCOs to review and support effective provision and practice. Driving this has been the development and use of a SEND self-evaluation form (SEF) to reflect on and review key areas of SEND practice. This forms the basis of academy SEND action plans, with key priorities feeding into the overall academy development plan.

Recruitment and retention of SENCOs is challenging, both within OAT and nationally. To help address this, the team delivers intensive support and coaching to new SENCOs and high quality continuous professional development for all SENCOs. The team also developed a SENCO line management toolkit to provide advice and guidance to senior leaders on how best to support SENCOs and maximise their impact.

Opportunities for SENCOs to collaborate and share best practice through the OAT SENCO leaders' network, together with regular regional SENCO forums and an annual face to face forum are also highly valued. The team is currently developing content for OAT's new "Into SENCO" leadership course, to identify and develop a new cohort of SENCOs, in time for the DfE's new NPQ in SEND which commences in September 2023.

The continuous professional development of support staff has also been a focus of the academic year. Using the EEF's "Making Best Use of Teaching Assistants" the team has provided bespoke training to academy staff and quality assured provision throughout OAT academies. To further enhance this, the team are developing a six-part toolkit for support staff and is working with Maximising the Impact

of Teaching Assistants (MITA) to ensure OAT support staff contribute to improved outcomes for children with SEND.

Despite the wide range of support and guidance offered, academies continue to face challenges. Work has focused on providing SEND legal advice to ensure that local authorities are fulfilling their statutory duties together with providing bespoke advice to academies to support responses to complaints, as parents face an increasingly adversarial national system.

The attendance of children with SEND remains a key focus across the trust. OAT attendance for all children was 90.18% in 2022-23 but for all children with SEND the figure drops to 85.29% and even further to 81.9% for those children with an EHCP. While this is in line with national trends, it is necessarily an urgent issue, and the team regularly reviews attendance data with individual academies and works with staff to identify and mitigate barriers for individual children. They are also alert to the fact that low attendance may indicate safeguarding concerns and quality assure systems for safe and well checks and potential risk factors. The reasons for low and non-attendance of children with SEND can be complex

and have undoubtedly been exacerbated by the Covid-19 pandemic. Attendance will remain a high priority for the inclusion team in the next academic year.

Listening to the voice of children is essential to ensure that OAT builds on its inclusive environments and practices. In September 2022, it was decided to expand the reach of the child's voice by establishing a subcommittee of OAT's National Student Voice. The Student Inclusion Advisory Board (SIAB) focuses specifically on issues relating to inclusion within the areas of behaviour, SEND and mental health. OAT children have made a demonstrable contribution to the way the trust approaches inclusion, for example, by co-producing the behaviour policy, by advising on anti-bullying strategies and by helping to produce a whole school approach to mental health. This important work will continue as the SIAB expands into the next academic year.

Despite the many challenges, provision for children with SEND is now generally very strong across the trust and SENCOs have worked exceptionally hard to ensure successful outcomes and destinations for children, as evidenced by recent Ofsted inspections.



The work of the inclusion team will continue to focus on removing barriers to success and ensuring that the children in our care are safe. This will include improving behaviour, increasing attendance, supporting children with SEND and mental health challenges and ensuring that all staff feel well supported to meet individual needs.



Student artwork by
Lewis Mayo
Ormiston Sheffield Community Academy

An enriching student experience

Student voice

OAT is passionate about giving our students a voice. We believe that this helps to make our schools outstanding places to learn and work and supports our young people to become effective members of society.



OAT has a formal student voice programme that consists of three distinct tiers. This enables pupils across the OAT network to have a say in what our trust does and how it operates.

Academy Student Voice teams enable pupils to take on direct responsibilities within their school communities, speaking on behalf of their classmates and highlighting issues at the regional level. Elected representatives from each academy form **Regional Student Voice** teams, sharing good practice and working co-operatively to act on various topics. These regional teams then feed into the **National Student Voice** team that meets with OAT's executive team and trust board to advocate on behalf of all OAT pupils.

National Student Voice chair Jack Driscoll and vice chair Polly Hume, co-presented the OAT Annual Conference in November 2022. Members of the National Student Voice have been consulted as part of the Student Inclusion Advisory Board (SIAB) on mechanisms to support positive social, emotional, and mental health across the trust.

Additionally, members of the National Student Voice network with Ormiston Trust's Youth Advisory Council (OT YAC) which includes alumni students from Ormiston academies.

Youth Social Action - #WeWill

#WeWill is OAT's social action project that was launched in 2021-22 through the generous funding of Ormiston Trust and the National Lottery Community Fund.

Building on the success of #iwill, the enrichment team, working with OAT's National Student Voice, designed a range of social action projects that were fully resourced and capable of being adapted to meet the requirements of each school and its community. Each #WeWill project had clear learning outcomes aligned to project activities, with all students aiming to undertake 25 hours of youth social action to achieve the **Murray Award**. Wherever possible, project delivery activities were designed to align with national curriculum expectations and evidencing outstanding personal development experiences to assist schools in meeting Ofsted requirements.

The legacy of the #WeWill project is that over 90 schools have provided 272,689 hours of social action activities in conjunction with 58 community partners, delivering a total of 52 projects across our network. This represents youth social action on an unprecedented scale in the world of multi-academy trusts and is a solid foundation for OAT to build on for years to come.

Eco-schools

Participation in the Green Flag scheme has resulted in several tangible outcomes, across different environmental and sustainability areas. During the year, 305 young people have become members of eco-committees across the trust and over 500 students have participated in global citizenship projects, demonstrating wider learning and awareness.

EXiA

CNS success at the Shine Media Awards



A source of great pride amongst many pupils at CNS is the strength of our student voice. Over the last few years, it has truly bloomed into a force to be reckoned with, establishing an atmosphere of celebration around our interests and passions. This is only our second edition of EXiA magazine, and it has rapidly become one of the most valuable and exciting spaces for student expression within our community.

EXiA was founded on exactly that - a wave of impassioned upstanding across our student body. In our award winning edition, we wanted to celebrate empowerment of the self and the diversity of our passions. These foundational values have shone through our magazine this year in so many interesting ways, from activism and politics to artistry and podcasting. We have welcomed many new members to our collective specialisms and walks of life. Each member of this year, from a variety of ages, subject-hardworking, creative and outspoken group has defined their own self-expression differently through these pages, with a vibrancy that proudly reflects our community.

As a result, of our hard work we were nominated for four Shine Media Awards. We won the following awards: Best Editor, Best Print and Design and Best Overall Magazine with a Highly Commended Award for our Podcast 'The Lion Den'.

We are very proud of our achievements given this is a global competition and we ourselves competing against schools from Japan and America as well as a plethora of schools from the UK.

The judges said the following in their publication, 'the intelligent blend of design and philanthropy endeared this magazine of the year. Editor's eye above and beyond with challenging organisations that mirror our own, extremely well presented and extremely well presented verbal.'

We hope to attend again next year with our team.

EXiA

EXIA

1. Photograph from the 'Shine Media Awards' by Lucy Young

2. 'Identity in Colour' by Olivia White

3. Greek Goddess by Rosa Hardy-Brownlie

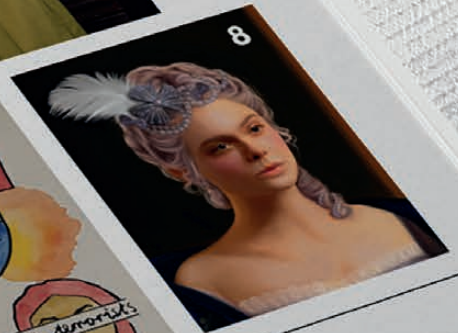
4. Pencil drawing by Darcie Fitzpatrick-Warnes

5. Photograph from the 'Shine Media Awards' by Lucy Young

6. 'The Bell Jar' inspired shoot by Alex Sleeuw

7. 'We are not terrorists' by Vian Muhammed

8. 'Marie Antoinette' by Lily Crawford



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EXIA

Student voice in action: A spread from the award-winning EXIA magazine, by City of Norwich School

Tackling litter was a key ambition of the students, with 438 litter-picks organised, 19 of which were community-based. These involved over a thousand litter-pickers who gave up their time to collect 550 bags of litter.



Students also put time and effort into improving the amount of nature found in the school grounds, with hundreds of trees and thousands of plants introduced onto sites across the trust and the creation of over 1,350m² of new natural habitat. The students created 113 habitats for insects, 63 bird baths, and 172 animal feeders and houses.

Participation in the Green Flag scheme has resulted in several tangible outcomes, across different environmental and sustainability areas.

Students have actively supported the efforts of the estates team in driving down energy usage, by participating in an energy reduction competition that was rolled out across the trust. This resulted in 133,740 kWh less usage compared to electricity consumption over the same period last year, and a 10.3% reduction in gas usage across our schools.

Winners of the OAT energy reduction competition were:

- **1st place:** Six Villages with a 55% reduction.
- **2nd place:** Victory with a 49% reduction.
- **3rd place:** Cliff Park Primary with a 48% reduction.

Adam Flint, education manager at Keep Britain Tidy, recognised the efforts of the OAT academies, stating:



Once again, Ormiston is one of the nation's leading MATs when it comes to enabling their young people and staff to make positive impacts on our planet. The group has shown a great commitment to the future of its pupils, placing faith in them to act on climate change across its sites, achieving 21 Eco-Schools Green Flags. Eco-Schools is proud to call Ormiston a friend and partner.

Duke of Edinburgh's Award

OAT has successfully applied for, and received, additional funding to support DofE provision at academies across the trust. In 2022-23, OAT saw an increase in the number of pupils enrolling on DofE Awards with 1,352 pupils starting a DofE Award during the year. Of these, 407 (30.1%) were from disadvantaged backgrounds.

As a result of this, OAT students have undertaken 9,958 hours of social action through the volunteering section of the award, worth approximately £50k to our communities, based on a figure of £4.81 per hour, which is the young workers' national minimum wage for 2022. This increased to £5.28 from April 2023.

Some notable examples of community engagement work included the pupils at Ormiston Horizon Academy, who collected significant levels of donations for their local food bank. Pupils at Ormiston Ilkeston Enterprise Academy created 15 large blankets for a local homeless charity.

OAT pupils were supported by more than a hundred highly trained adult volunteers from across our academies to take on the challenges that make up the five different elements of the award schemes. The expedition section is the most well-known of these, and many pupils took part in classic DofE hiking and camping expeditions across England and Wales. Others were involved in the new category of 'restricted spaces' expeditions, which allow leaders to choose a challenge for young people that can be tailored to the space available, the number of groups and the individual participants. Sharing the ethos of a traditional expedition, it aims to inspire young people to develop initiative, a spirit of adventure and discovery. Pupils are required to plan, train for, and complete an adventurous self-sufficient journey, as part of a team. In this way, access is opened up to more young people, allowing them to complete their DofE Award. Thomas Wensley Ormiston Academy used this option to enable SEND pupils to take part in their first ever DofE expedition.

Looking forward, OAT has a clear goal to establish sustainable DofE programmes in all OAT secondary schools, with greater overall participation. We will explore options to raise additional funding to ensure equity of access to this enrichment opportunity.

The DofE Awards are a key tool to support pupils' personal development – improving physical and mental health, increasing attendance in school, and recognising the individual and team successes beyond the academic.

National enrichment competitions

Our national enrichment competitions provide further opportunities for pupils to find their passion or demonstrate hidden talents outside of the classroom.



In 2022-23, OAT saw an increase in the number of pupils enrolling on DofE Awards, with 1,352 starting an award during the year.

During the 2022-23 school year, pupils were able to participate in 20 competitions, ranging from online chess tournaments to spelling bees held in French and Spanish.

Some of the highlights are detailed below:

The Great Ormiston Bake

In September 2022, the Great Ormiston Bake was launched by TV chef Tom Kerridge; it is the largest single enrichment competition ever run by OAT, involving pupils from 38 OAT schools. Regional finals were judged by Michelin star chef Rob Thompson and the grand final was held at St Andrews football stadium in Birmingham, in front of a live audience. More than 3,000 students competed for the top prize and the winner was Ella from Broadland High Ormiston Academy.

Interfaith Harmony Week

RE students from across OAT were tasked with creating a multi-faith space for prayer and reflection to suit the

needs of all members of the community. Creativity and imagination went into the designs, resulting in solutions that successfully combined the needs of all different user groups, creating spaces to pray, reflect and bring people together.

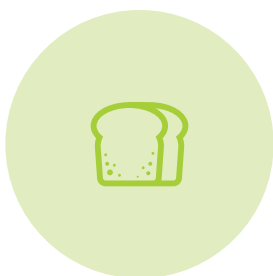
Make Yourself Heard

Over 20 schools took part in the Make Yourself Heard 2023 competition. The final showcased the best talent from all four regions with far-ranging topics including mental health in the modern world.

Ormiston's Got Talent

OGT returned this year, allowing students to showcase their talents in front of a live audience at the Old Rep Theatre in Birmingham. "OGT Celebrates SEND" was held at Thomas Wolsey Ormiston Academy, where seven acts performed to an audience of staff, students, and parents.

The Great Ormiston Bake



Largest

ever enrichment competition by OAT



38

OAT schools participated



3,000

pupils competed for the top prize



TV chef

Tom Kerridge launched the competition



Student artwork by
Aleks Mydlowska
Ormiston Bushfield Academy



Our people

Every pupil has the right to thrive, regardless of their background. If we are to succeed in delivering for our pupils, we have to support our people in delivering the very best outcomes. Our people are what makes our organisation.

OAT employs amazing people who are genuinely passionate about improving outcomes for the children we serve – whether they’re teachers, principals, teaching assistants, caterers, cleaners, IT staff, or one of the many other professions that make up our teams. Our commitment to our people is that we strive to offer every person in OAT a workplace that enables them to thrive. Our ongoing ambition is to be a place where people love to work.

Our people strategy, launched in January 2023, is the first strategy that OAT has had focussing solely on our people. It considers how we will attract, lead, and develop them, how we support them through their career and how we will work collaboratively to deliver excellence.

We are committed to looking after the wellbeing of our staff, listening to, and addressing their concerns, and ensuring that they are recognised and rewarded for their work. We strive to provide clear, effective paths to progression and career development and continue to build on our ambition to make OAT a values-led trust that is efficient, effective, and inclusive, with clarity of purpose that can inspire and motivate others to deliver for our 30,000+ pupils.

Our people strategy sets out our aims to improve employee wellness. The ambition we have set is for us to be a trust where we achieve individual and team health, contentment, and resilience, and enable people to flourish. We recognise that wellbeing is not about gimmicks or one-off benefits. It is about strong leadership, treating people well and fairly, and creating an inclusive culture where people feel valued for the contribution they make.

Our strength and impact are undoubtedly maximised by working as one team, learning from, and sharing with

each other. This stems from our commitment to achieving more together, creating a culture that is **OneOAT**, underpinned by our values which inform all that we do as an organisation.

Personal OAT stories



Emma Gibson – CNS
Aspiring Leaders graduate, now head of MFL

“I was a part-time teacher of MFL before attending the Aspiring Leaders course. I’d been teaching for about 15 years, part-time while my children were small. I really enjoyed the initial part of the course when we got to meet and talk about the project and learn about leadership. I enjoyed the project about rewards and learnt a lot while carrying it out. My head was very supportive and encouraging and so was the trust’s professional development lead team.

“It definitely helped me on my journey to becoming head of languages – the project showed what I could do and gave me real experiences to use as evidence in my interview. Preparing and delivering presentations helped me to develop confidence in my abilities.

“Being part of OAT has given me opportunities to work with people in other schools. Apart from meeting the other aspiring leaders, I’ve worked with other MFL heads on a range of topics. I’ve also had the opportunity to present twice to the next cohorts of aspiring leaders, giving me a chance to have an impact beyond just my own school.

“Lastly, I have become a mentor which is helping me to support members of my own team on *their* journey, as individuals and as a team.”



James Crawley – SWB
Into VP graduate, now mentor on
Aspiring Leaders and associate VP

“I joined SWB in 2019 as an assistant principal and OAT has really helped my career to develop. I’m now fortunate to be an associate vice principal at SWB responsible for outcomes, achievement, and data. The CPD from OAT has been hugely beneficial. At interview, I was able to draw upon knowledge and skills that I’d developed from the Into VP course, particularly around managing and motivating staff as well as developing others.

“OAT has also helped informally through the different staff bodies that are in and out of school. The networks of headteachers, senior leaders and lead practitioners have helped to challenge me. On top of this, the brilliant staff body at SWB who are so keen to see their school improve and develop, have forced me to think deeply and strategically.

“For the last 12 months I have been fortunate enough to assist and then lead on the Aspiring Leaders course. Being a part of this team has meant I’ve been able to see talented people looking to step into their first leadership positions and gain the confidence, knowledge, and skills to progress. Being a mentor to four of those aspiring leaders has allowed me to hear about their personal journeys as well as develop my own skills in bringing the best out of others. I have loved this part of the job!

“I’ve really enjoyed my time at OAT and always found the systems and people supportive, both for SWB and myself personally. The leadership development offer is something that I haven’t experienced in other trusts, and I look forward to seeing this part of OAT continue to develop.”



Hannah Killigrew – Chadwick
From NQT to SLT, with responsibility
for personal development in her
academy

“I completed Aspiring Leaders in my NQT (ECT1) year. I was on the Teach First programme and was an English teacher at Ormiston Chadwick Academy (OCA). Around the same time as the aspiring leaders programme started in September 2019, I had applied for a TLR to lead form time in OCA. It just so happened that the Ofsted framework was changing to place more emphasis on personal development and so the role began to include additional PSHE-style content as well as a more whole-school focus.

“Aspiring Leaders definitely helped me with my progression. The trust’s professional development team, in particular, has delivered some of the most useful and memorable CPD I have been given. I had very little

understanding of how to lead anything when I began the programme, and they were so helpful in helping me develop my leadership skills in terms of everything from writing an action plan to measuring impact. The aspiring leaders programme also opened my eyes to the power of networking and capitalising on the brilliant network we have at OAT.

“I have definitely taken advantage of the leadership development opportunities offered by OAT and I would encourage (and have encouraged) anyone looking to develop to seize the opportunities offered. As already stated, the opportunities to network and learn from others is one of the things I love most about OAT. I have been lucky enough to be part of Aspiring Leaders, the Into SLT course and to attend the OAT conference, and the amount I have learned from all these experiences is immeasurable.

“Having lead practitioners is another brilliant benefit, as they are a beacon of knowledge and support, particularly when you are line managing departments or areas outside of your specialism. I also love the opportunities that OAT brings for our students, for example, our current Year 10 cohort have just achieved the Murray Award and others were lucky enough to go and talk about their experience of #WeWill at last year’s OAT conference.”



Hannah Cole – Sheffield
Aspiring Leaders graduate now leads
Key stage in her academy and head of
Year 8

“When I started the course, I was an assistant head of Year 8, then I gained promotion to become head of Year 8. Then, last June, I started my new role as head of Key Stage 4. Therefore, participating in the Aspiring Leaders course has had a significant impact on my career progression.

“The course equipped me with the skills and knowledge needed to take on the more senior leadership roles within my school. On the course I learnt about effective communication, strategic planning, team management, and problem-solving, all of which I have applied within my current roles.

“Working for OAT has allowed me to network, providing me with opportunities to speak with colleagues from other schools across the academy trust. This became extremely valuable to me for sharing ideas, best practices, and seeking advice as I have progressed within my career. (I am still in regular contact with my mentor from the course).

“In summary, participating in an Aspiring Leaders course and working for OAT can have several positive impacts on your career progression and personal development, because this course has provided me with valuable skills, networking opportunities, and a supportive environment that enhanced my chances of taking on more significant leadership roles (for example my new role as head of Key Stage 4).”



Becky Gregory-Tooke, central team
Business support analyst

“In my 15 years at OAT, I have found unwavering support and encouragement from my workplace, making my journey here incredibly rewarding.”



Justine Farnell - Central team
Curriculum, teacher, and personal development project manager

“I joined the team in September 2019 as project co-ordinator for #iwill, a trust-wide youth social action project. My role was temporary; an 18-month contract to support the delivery phase of the project and complete final reporting. A short-term contract appealed to me, as I had spent over 20 years in a corporate organisation and after my role was made redundant, I was looking for a new direction within an organisation that wasn't focused on sales and profit margins.

“The OAT role was interesting, and I felt I could add value to both the project and OAT during that time. I was excited by the opportunity to change direction where OAT's young people were the 'end user', and the focus was shifted from sales and profit, to experience and opportunity. The team were dedicated professionals, making a difference to young people. I was confident that it would be a good move for me, and it was. The role enabled me to contribute positively to both the team and the wider project and helped me to build lasting working relationships both within our academies and the central head office team.

“At the end of 2020, I was pleased to secure a permanent contract with OAT. My hard work had been recognised and I moved into the teaching and training team as a project manager, widening my reach within OAT's education team, working directly for the then national director of teaching and training, lead practitioners and personal development team.

“In 2021 OAT had the opportunity to design and deliver a second large scale youth social action project. Over the last two years I am pleased to have been the project manager of OAT's #WeWill project, an even bigger YSA project than the original #iwill, this time involving some 9,000 students and over 90 schools. In July 2023, OAT was awarded Community Trust of the Year for #WeWill at the MAT Excellence Awards. The hard work and

dedication by the OAT team, our academies and our brilliant young people was formally recognised. What an achievement!

“Suffice to say, I absolutely love my role, and love working for OAT. Those who have worked alongside me will know that I wear my heart on my sleeve and a smile on my face. I feel very fortunate that I have had the pleasure of working alongside some very talented professionals and that through my role, I get to be involved in many of the amazing opportunities that OAT offers our young people. I have just celebrated my four-year anniversary, and I am very excited at continuing my journey at OAT as it evolves and grows further.”



Becky Gregory-Tooke - Central team
Business support analyst

“In my 15 years at OAT, I have found unwavering support and encouragement from my workplace, making my journey here incredibly rewarding. As the longest-serving member of the OAT central team, I cherish the family atmosphere that has persisted, even as our central team has grown over the last couple of years.

“My colleagues, from my immediate team to the directors and executives, have always been incredibly appreciative and approachable. They not only listen but also value my contributions.

“The camaraderie within the wider OAT central team is exceptional, with everyone willing to lend a hand. What truly warms my heart is our shared dedication to our students, evident in every event and staff day. We all carry OAT's core values and ethos close to our hearts.

“An old colleague once joked that if you cut me in half I would read OAT through my centre like a piece of Blackpool rock! This captures the depth of my commitment and the immense support I have received throughout my time at OAT. I eagerly look forward to many more years of fulfilling service within this wonderful community.”

Professional development

Investment in our people and their development is critical. We aim to be a trust where individuals can grow and flourish, enabling them to deliver the best outcomes for our pupils. To drive this ambition forward, OAT appointed a new head of people development during the academic year, and, under her leadership, the trust offer to its staff is being refreshed and redefined.

Over the course of the last academic year, 239 employees have undergone some form of formal professional development via our leadership development cohorts, delivered both in-house and externally.

We have provided six development programmes internally - Aspiring Leaders, Into SLT, Into VP, Into Headship and two mentoring programmes. Additionally, we have worked with Education Development Trust to deliver all seven national professional qualifications (NPQs).

“The course has provided a sufficient grounding in tackling a range of whole school priorities and the sessions gave tangible actions that are transferable across academy settings.”

Into SLT graduate

“I’ve grown into the role throughout my time on the course and it has undoubtedly helped me on the way. It forced me to sit down and consider things on a granular level that in the day-to-day whirlwind of teaching I perhaps wouldn’t have had time for, so I found it really engaging too.”

NPQLT graduate

Our annual CPD calendar has provided teaching staff across the trust with supportive professional development in the form of network meetings, subject knowledge enhancement courses and drop-in sessions provided by OAT’s lead practitioners. Over the last academic year, personal development and enrichment opportunities were offered across 44 subjects, recognising the different needs of primary, secondary and AP providers and subject knowledge enhancement sessions were offered to all teachers in all core subjects.

We have also agreed a new partnership with the National Institute of Teaching (NlOT) for the delivery of our Teacher Training provision from September 2024. Through the collaboration of NlOT and ‘Ormiston Teacher Training’, we are looking forward to building on the work of The OAKS to maximise the number of people we can attract and train to be our teachers of the future.

Apprenticeships

We continue to be supportive of apprenticeship opportunities, both for our students and for our staff. Students looking to make the transition from education to work often find an apprenticeship to be a helpful way of achieving this, building technical skills and experience, and finding a pathway that works for them as an individual.

We have employed 65 apprentices during the academic year, across a range of apprenticeship standards. They have become integral parts of our teams quickly and easily and have added significant value and presence to our workforce.

Additionally, we have used the apprenticeship route to offer enhanced learning and development opportunities to our existing staff, allowing them to undertake valuable additional qualifications. This mutually beneficial approach is an area that we are keen to grow and develop.

Retention and recruitment

We aim to attract high calibre people, across all specialties and professions, who actively choose to join and stay working with OAT.

Our people strategy is designed to make OAT a place where people love to work, and its implementation forms a key part of our approach to achieving our ambitions in this critical area of work. We have also taken steps to refresh and restructure our approach to recruitment, intended to bring about a greater degree of professionalism, speed, consistency and clarity in our methodology.

Over the last academic year, we have welcomed a total of 579 new colleagues across the trust. This is made up of 222 teachers and 357 other staff across a range of roles. Whilst we celebrate these successes, we remain cognisant of the ongoing recruitment and retention challenges that are being faced across the whole Education Sector. We continue to work closely with colleagues in other large multi-academy trusts to influence positively the employment environment.

Recognition and rewards

We are a trust where achievements are celebrated and where people feel valued for the contribution they make. Ensuring this remains true is at the heart of our people



**FLEXIBLE
WORKING
AMBASSADOR
MATS AND
SCHOOLS**

Since 2018, OAT has been pioneering flexible working practices to improve the recruitment and retention of staff.

strategy. This includes appreciating the day-to-day efforts of all of our teams in delivering excellence across the trust, all the way through to formally recognising key achievements and outcomes at our annual awards ceremonies.

As part of our reward package, OAT has this year launched a range of new benefits for our teams. The Vivup platform offers a range of discounts and schemes including cycle to work and car lease schemes, helping us to support people to manage their physical, psychological, and financial wellbeing proactively.

Flexible workplaces

At OAT, we recognise that both people and organisations benefit hugely from increased flexibility in the workplace. Equally, we understand that this is something that can be difficult to achieve in education, creating barriers for high-calibre candidates who might otherwise want to enter the sector.

Since 2018, OAT has been pioneering flexible working practices to improve the recruitment and retention of staff, ensuring that our central function and schools are able to attract the brightest and best staff. We have implemented approaches such as job shares; compressed hours; part-time working; flexible hours and remote working.

42% of our people work less than full time and we have many options for alternative patterns of work. We are also working on more innovative and creative approaches for the future and were delighted to be recognised for this when we were appointed to become one of the Department for Education’s Flexible Working Ambassador Multi-Academy Trusts and Schools (FWAMS), providing support for other education providers who are keen to develop their approach. Specifically, Ormiston South

Parade Academy, have been selected to provide support to schools and MATs in the northwest around flexible working.

At OAT, we recognise that both people and organisations benefit hugely from increased flexibility in the workplace

We are looking forward to supporting the education sector more widely to develop its approach to flexible working, ensuring that young people, particularly from disadvantaged communities, have outstanding teachers who have proactively chosen education as a rewarding and supportive career.

Employee engagement

We are continuously seeking to implement initiatives that ultimately boost morale and foster a strong sense of belonging. To aid our understanding of what we need to focus on to achieve this, we have moved to run our full staff survey every two years, with ‘pulse’ surveys in-between, enabling us to assess the organisational mood through a concise questionnaire and act on the results quickly. The first of these enabled us to collect some baseline data, and a series of surveys throughout the year are scheduled around the strands of the people strategy. Further detail can be found on pages 10 and 11.



Additionally, we gather feedback and engage with our people through a range of other methods and understand that effective internal communication is integral to building trust. This approach is about agreeing what the overall framework is and then sharing the right information at the right time using the most appropriate targeted channel. Everyone across OAT has a role to play and a responsibility for delivering effective and efficient internal communications, which can only be achieved by working together. To ensure that we are as effective as possible in achieving this, we have reviewed our approach to internal communications and look forward to implementing new approaches over the coming year.

We also work closely with our trade union colleagues both nationally and locally, in the knowledge that working together ultimately results in stronger outcomes.

Equality, diversity and inclusion

Earlier in the year, our arrangements for EDI across the trust were reviewed by Mazars as part of the Internal Audit Operational Plan for 2022-23. The audit report acknowledged that the EDI delivery plan and people strategy has established a robust framework to ensure that we provide an inclusive environment to work and study, with elements already operating effectively. We

recognise however, that there are areas for improvement to address the gaps and fully embed EDI across the trust.

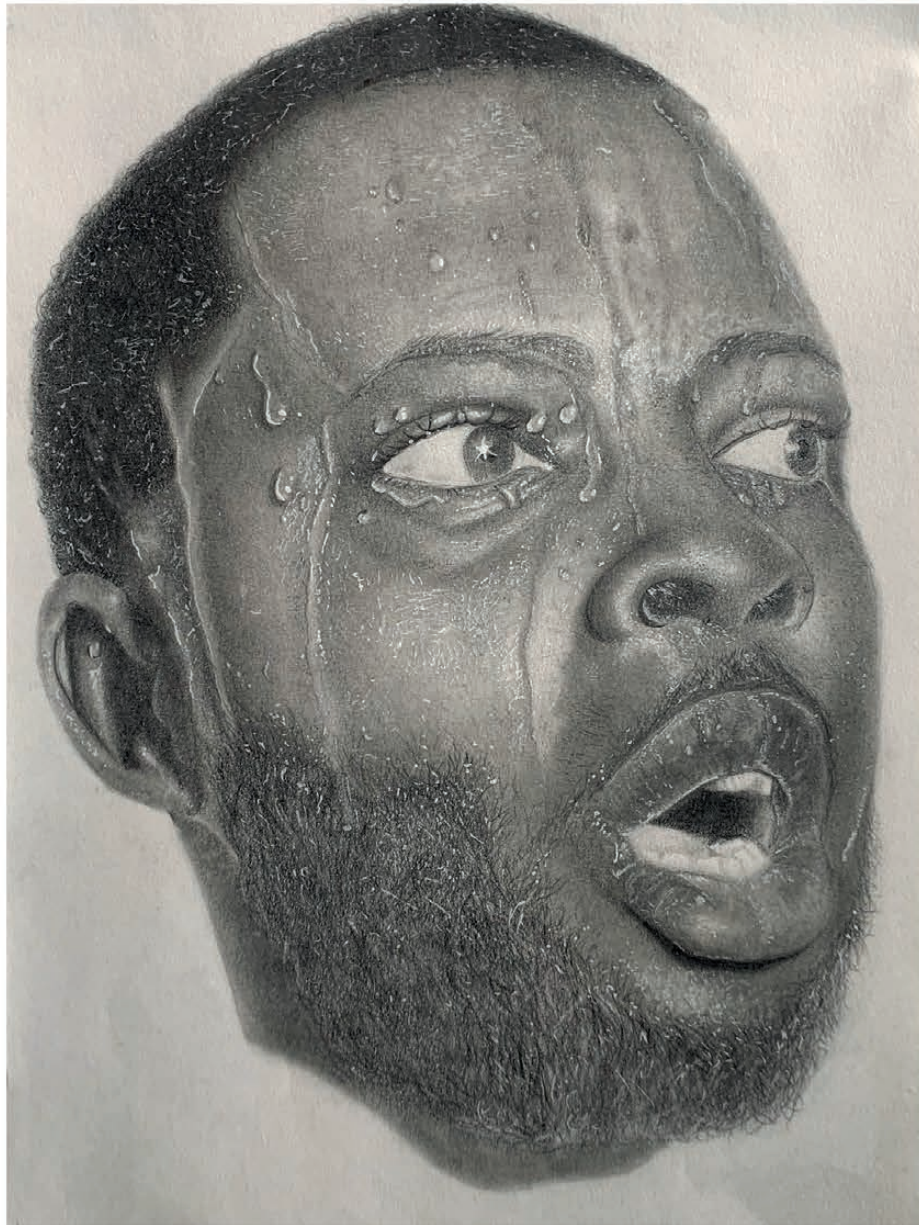
To assist this, we have implemented a new HR information system that will allow us to report EDI data more accurately and a new applicant tracking system for recruitment activity that will give central oversight and reporting functionality, allowing us to map trends and inform other areas of the business.

Additionally, EDI training is now mandatory for all staff across the trust, accessible via the National College learning portal.

We acknowledge that our gender pay gap is too high and remain committed to addressing this, with further investment planned for leadership development of women in our workforce.

Future focus

The strategy for 2024-29 will be developed during the spring and summer of 2024 ready for launch in September 2024. In the interim, the trust will focus on its' core priorities of attendance, behaviour and brilliant learning opportunities inside and outside the classroom.



Student artwork by
Lewis Mayo
Ormiston Sheffield Community Academy



Student artwork by
Thomas Whitworth
Ormiston Sheffield Community Academy

Infrastructure

Estates

Managing infrastructure risks – RAAC

Our continued focus on bringing the right expertise into the trust's estates team has empowered us to address challenges like RAAC (reinforced autoclaved aerated concrete) and asbestos efficiently and effectively. Our approach to maintenance planning means that we are proactively minimising risks. The estates team started working on an assessment of the risk of RAAC in our schools in autumn 2022, following a DfE request that responsible bodies complete online surveys to assess risk exposure. OAT did not identify any RAAC in our schools' estate, following the completion of all surveys as required. OAT academies were not directly affected by the emergency closures in September 2023. Despite this, the estates team remains vigilant to this issue and will continue to proactively manage estates maintenance in order to mitigate associated risks and be ready to react to any related issues swiftly. With this in mind, our business continuity plans have been updated to reflect this and other similar risks.

Premises development planning and delivery

Works progressed as planned during the summer break with all projects completing on programme and allowing normal operations to resume at the start of term. The estates team yearly budget to address condition issues and deliver major projects is £5.9m and by the end of August, 56% or £3.3m had been committed and delivered.

Decarbonisation investment

The estates team also made good progress in delivering the £3.8m decarbonisation investment agreed for the 2022–23 academic year. LED replacements, solar panel investments and renewed heating and controls are anticipated to deliver £1m savings per year.

Our approach to maintenance planning means that we are proactively minimising risks.

Technology

Our digital infrastructure strategy places a dual emphasis on embracing technology's opportunities whilst mitigating its risks to ensure a safe and enriching educational experience. We are investing in equipping our staff and students with essential digital skills, while focusing on cost-effective, adaptable, and sustainable technology implementation. This balanced approach aims to enhance educational offerings and community





safety, underpinned by a sustainable, responsible, and forward-thinking approach to technology use.

Over the last year, we have continued with our strategy to improve the efficiency, reliability, and governance of technology.

Over the last year, we have continued with our strategy to improve the efficiency, reliability, and governance of technology, through centralising our core systems and the line management of our academy IT teams, as well as upgrading significant elements of our academies' infrastructure.

Artificial intelligence (AI) has added further opportunities to increase effectiveness in curriculum delivery, assessment, and academy operations. How we decide to use AI – and guide our students on the use of AI – is a question that has entered discussion far sooner than most people anticipated. To successfully balance the wealth of learning opportunities presented by AI against the disruptive impact it has on assessment, is both a technical and an educational challenge we now face.

Whilst there are innumerable benefits to embracing the opportunities offered by IT developments, we must also remain vigilant to its threats. Compliance with online safety and data protection regulations remains a top priority and, like all education institutions, we continue to face malicious cyber-activity that threatens the safety and wellbeing of our staff and children, as

well as the continuity and availability of our data and systems. The 2023 Department for Science, Innovation and Technology cyber-breaches survey reported that education institutions are more likely to have identified cybersecurity breaches or attacks in the last 12 months than the average UK business.

To help us meet these challenges, our technology strategy has four pillars.

1. A shared, high-quality experience

Our primary objective is to ensure that every member of our academic community can access a high-quality experience. This experience extends to students, teachers, and support staff. We aim to create an environment where effective collaboration and productivity are possible for all, irrespective of their physical location, the time of day or their specific role. In an age where technology connects us, enabling seamless collaboration is not just a convenience, but an essential ingredient for enhanced educational outcomes. Whether it is students working on group projects, teachers collaborating on lesson plans, or administrators co-ordinating operations, a shared high-quality experience is fundamental.

2. A clear focus on quality of education

At the heart of our strategy is an unwavering dedication to providing a high-quality education for our students. We understand that the decisions we make and the resources we allocate have a direct impact on the quality of education. Every investment, whether in technology tools, teacher support, or infrastructure, is made with a single purpose – to improve the learning experience and educational outcomes of the children in our care.

3. A safe and skilled digital community

Our commitment to digital safety and proficiency is a cornerstone of our strategy. In a world where cybersecurity threats are ever-present, ensuring that our digital community is safe is paramount. We invest

in industry-standard security measures and provide ongoing training to ensure that our staff and students can navigate the digital landscape with confidence. A safe and skilled digital community means not only protecting sensitive information, but also empowering individuals to use technology effectively and securely. It is our mission to provide our academic community with the skills and knowledge they need to use technology to its fullest potential, whilst remaining safe.

4. A cost-effective, adaptable model for the future

As we navigate the digital age, we recognise the importance of maintaining a cost-effective and adaptable approach to our operations. The pace of technological change is rapid, and we must be agile in adapting to these changes. Our goal is to create a model that not only reduces costs but also allows us to adapt to new technologies and challenges as they arise. By moving towards more efficient cloud-based services, we both reduce energy consumption and enhance our cyber-resilience. This cost-effective, adaptable model ensures that our resources are used efficiently and that our academic community remains prepared for the ever-evolving digital landscape.

Significant developments this year

This year has been marked by a series of substantial advancements that underscore our commitment to modernising and fortifying our ICT infrastructure and data protection measures. Each of these developments has been implemented to ensure our academic community continues to thrive in a rapidly evolving technological landscape:

Cyber-strategy implementation

We have successfully developed and implemented our cyber-strategy. This will help to safeguard our digital assets and ensure that sensitive data remains protected from potential threats.

Unified digital ecosystem

A significant development this year has been the migration of all our academies to centralised systems. This strategic move streamlines our digital operations, fostering a more cohesive and efficient ecosystem that empowers collaboration and simplifies access to digital resources across our academies. This unification enhances our operational efficiency and supports a consistent, high-quality experience for all members of our academic community.

IT staffing changes

In our commitment to optimising operations, we have centralised the line management of our IT staff. This strategic shift ensures that our IT operations are managed with consistency and coherence and by consolidating our IT management, we aim to improve efficiency, reduce redundancy, and enhance our ability to deliver high-quality digital services.

With a skilled and dedicated team, we are better equipped to meet OAT's evolving technological needs.

Additionally, we have strengthened our team through new appointments, ensuring that we have the requisite expertise and resources to drive forward our digital initiatives effectively. With a skilled and dedicated team, we are better equipped to meet OAT's evolving technological needs.

DfE 'connect the classroom' funding

We were pleased to secure funding from the Department for Education (DfE) under the 'Connect the Classroom' initiative. This funding will enable us to upgrade the critical and ageing infrastructure in 20 of our academies, allowing us to provide a modern, reliable network that will enhance the learning and teaching experience.

Centralised management information system (MIS)

In line with our strategy for efficiency and consistency, we have renegotiated and streamlined the contract for our management information system (MIS). This centralisation aims to ensure that our data management processes are standardised, efficient, and closely monitored. It will enhance our capacity to manage and access academic data effectively, supporting informed decision-making.

Sustainability

As showcased throughout this report, sustainability is central to our thinking. This year, we've invested significantly in sustainability initiatives, including solar power adoption, LED lighting, insulation upgrades, and off-site construction to cut costs and carbon emissions, underlining our focus on environmental responsibility and financial prudence. To ensure clear, ongoing focus, we will combine various policies to create one overarching net zero strategic plan, setting out our comprehensive carbon reduction strategy, as we continue to work on embedding sustainability within our organisational ethos.

OAT takes its responsibilities in helping to achieve carbon reduction targets seriously and our students, who care passionately about climate change, make it clear that they expect nothing less from us.

OAT has already exceeded its nationally-set electricity target to help meet the country's NetZero 2050 commitment.

In recognition of the significant challenges faced by the education sector, The Trust Network group was established, and OAT is a leading co-ordinator of this group. Formally recognised by the DfE, it consists of estates specialists from over 700 academy trusts, working collaboratively to help address schooling estates issues. Estimates put the cost of bringing the schools estate up to modern standards to be in the region of £13.4bn, with 38% of school buildings past their design life and NAO data identifying that around 60% of schools were built before 1976, therefore constituting a high risk of asbestos use in their construction. By leading The Trust Network, OAT is proactively driving conversations about, and solutions to, the issues faced. By participating in specialist panels and presenting nationally on estates matters, OAT is helping to disseminate new and best practice in sustainability across the sector.

We continue to lead by example. We have been purchasing green electricity for several years, meaning that OAT has already exceeded its nationally-set electricity target to help meet the country's NetZero 2050 commitment and we have been rolling out green technologies, including solar PV, smart heating controls and LED lighting, across our estate, removing the use of oil for heating and hot water.

In 2022, the trust generated over 600,000 kwh of electricity and invested £3.8m in additional green technology for our academies. New school buildings and extensions have been delivered via energy-efficient off-site construction methods and, where suitable, biomass and heat pump technologies have been installed across the estate.

We have systematically moved IT services to the cloud and decommissioned unnecessary server equipment. We aim to complete this programme of work by December 2025, and, by December 2024, we will have a water monitoring system in place, helping us to drive down water wastage across our estate.

In the 2021-22 academic year, the OAT board agreed a Premises Development Plan that tracks the condition of all our buildings and maps out a 5-year investment cycle for OAT's estate. This is working effectively, allowing an evidence/risks-based approach to assess need and ensure appropriate prioritisation of expenditure.

During the 2022-23 academic year, the trust agreed a plan to invest £14.65m over two years to address a range of issues, including building condition and suitability and reduction of energy consumption. This programme of works addressed urgent issues such as roofing, facades, finishes and mechanical and electrical issues. This has reduced the failure rate of Ormiston buildings across the trust. Additionally, all estates work undertaken has included "consequential energy reduction" improvements wherever possible. This means that, rather than replacing like for like, remedial works have included sustainability improvements, such as ensuring improved insulation.

A strategy for overseeing building compliance, health and safety and preventative maintenance has also been introduced this year. A new online system, accessible via mobile devices, has significantly increased the intelligence about and the safety of our school buildings. Trustees and senior trust leaders now have access to real-time data to ensure that all our school buildings are safe, warm, and dry.

To help continue to drive improvements and deliver the development plan, the trust has also brought new specialist staff onto the estates team, providing additional capacity in the form of a regional estates manager and a building services engineer.

A number of projects were completed in-year that provide improved teaching, learning, and dining spaces:

- Roofing works at Flegg High Ormiston Academy and Brownhills Ormiston Academy.
- Replacement building façade at Broadland High Ormiston Academy.
- Dining room extension to provide more spaces for pupils at Ormiston Sandwell Community Academy, Ormiston NEW Academy and Ormiston Endeavour Academy.
- Classroom refurb projects at Edward Worlledge Ormiston Academy, Ormiston Forge Academy and Brownhills Ormiston Academy.
- Changing rooms and toilet refurbishments at Ormiston Maritime Academy, Ormiston Ilkeston Enterprise Academy and Ormiston Chadwick Academy.





OAT takes its responsibilities in helping to achieve carbon reduction targets seriously and our students, who care passionately about climate change, make it clear that they expect nothing less from us.

- Sports surfaces replacement at Ormiston Denes Academy, Ormiston Six Villages Academy, Ormiston Park Academy and Cliff Park Ormiston Academy.
- Academies receiving a full LED replacement programme by summer 2023, combined with additional investment in solar and renewed heating and controls over the next academic year will deliver £1m of savings per annum.
- Two other significant projects have been delivered: £1m of DfE funded investment in our London academies with works completed at Ormiston Courtyard Academy prior to returning to the LA and further work to develop a SEND space at Latimer; and £4.7m has been invested by the LA in the expansion of Meridian, a project procured and managed by OAT.

The board of trustees and executive team are committed to continually improving the trust's environmental performance.

The board of trustees and executive team are committed to continually improving the trust's environmental performance, whilst continuing to maintain high standards of health and safety and acceptable levels of comfort for all building users. Over the next academic year, to ensure that our efforts to reduce both our carbon footprint and our operating costs are as effective as possible, OAT will consolidate previous energy and environmental policies and will transform them into a coherent, joined-up strategy that will allow us to manage, educate and reduce the environmental impact

of trust activities, without compromising our day-to-day activities.

Civic responsibility and community action

Alongside inclusivity and sustainability, we are also a trust centred around social action and community. We take our civic responsibility seriously and we believe it is best delivered, in partnership, and at a community level. This way of thinking is built into our strategic planning and delivery as evidenced multiple times within this report.

However, it is also built into the ethos of OAT – it is part of who we are. As a trust, we contribute our support at sector level across a number of different areas and we never turn our back when asked to help those in need.

We were delighted that this was recognised when we won “Community Trust of the Year”.





Student artwork by
Shirong Chen
Ormiston Sheffield Community Academy

Financial review

Overview

For the year ended 31 August 2023 the trust recorded a net deficit of £2.9m (2022: net surplus of £2.2m), excluding donations on the transfer of academies into the trust of £nil (2022: £52.1m) and prior to defined benefit pension scheme adjustments of £2.6m (2022: £18.3m). The net result for the year represents a £0.4m deficit on restricted general funds (2022: £5.4m surplus), a £0.3m surplus on unrestricted funds (2022: £1.5m surplus) and a £2.8m deficit on restricted fixed assets funds (2022: £4.7m deficit).

Revenue funds

Restricted general reserves excluding pension and unrestricted reserves, as a proportion of total revenue income reduced to 7.7%, compared to 8.4% in 2022. The deficit was less than expected with expenditure budgeted to exceed income with a focus on post pandemic recovery work and the acceleration of school improvement.

During the year ended 31 August 2023, OAT has received income of £283.0m (2022: £304.1m) comprising:

- £256.7m (2022: £236.5m) from the trust's educational operations which can be further analysed as follows:
 - GAG funding of £204.9m (2022: £196.7m)
 - Other DfE grants of £24.5m (2022: £17.1m) which included the ESFA supplementary funding and main school additional grant of £9.0m (2022: £2.5m)
 - Covid 19 additional funding of £4.9m (2022: £4.0m)
 - Local Authority SEN grants of £8.0m (2022: £6.4m)
 - Other local authority grants and government grants of £8.5m (2022: £7.7m)
 - Other income of £5.9m (2022: £4.5m) this includes trips and visits and income generated from catering

- Donations and capital grants income of £21.0m (2022: £11.4m). The donations in the current year relate mainly to an extension at Ormiston Victory Academy donated by Norfolk County Council
- Teaching school income of £2.2m (2022: £1.9m)
- Interest income of £0.1m (2022: £0.0m)
- Hire of facilities and sundry income of £3.0m (2022: £2.2m)

The trust planned and monitored the use of revenue funding to manage the key risks of increasing staff costs and rising energy prices. The total expenditure from revenue funds of £263.4m (2022: £252.0m) includes staff costs of £203.9m (2022: £200.5m).

Staff costs include payroll costs of £197.4m (2022: £196.0m). Excluding the impact of adjustments for defined benefit pension scheme actuarial valuations, payroll costs have increased by 8.6%, from £180.3m in 2022 to £195.9m in 2023. The full-time equivalent (FTE) number of employees has reduced by 1.9%, from 3,967 to 3,891, however staff costs have increased as a result of the increases in teachers' and support staff pay scales.

In addition, agency costs have increased by £2.1m (50.6%), which includes investment in tutors to help our pupils to catch-up as we move out of the pandemic.

The increase in non-staff costs includes an increase of £3.7m, or 75%, in energy costs. The estates and finance teams have worked together to manage the volatility in energy prices and academies have worked hard to reduce their usage where possible.

Capital funds

During the year ended 31 August 2023, the trust recorded a £2.8m deficit on capital funds, after transfers (restricted fixed asset fund). The surplus of £53.0m which was recorded in 2022 included £57.7m of assets donated to



Anyone can excel;
unwavering belief that
everyone can achieve.

the trust on the transfer in of London academies from the TBAP Trust.

Capital grant income of £10.7m was received in 2023, representing a 55% increase on the 2022 funding level. Recurring ESFA capital funding has remained stable, however the trust received £1.4m of other DfE funding for energy efficiency projects and £2.3m of funding from local authorities to fund expansion projects in certain academies with rising pupil numbers.

Donated fixed assets of £10.1m represent new building extensions provided to Ormiston Meridian Academy and Ormiston Victory Academy by the relevant local authorities.

An impairment charge of £4.8m (2022: nil) has been recorded at the site of Ormiston Courtyard Academy, which was returned to the DfE on 1 September 2023. Ormiston Courtyard Academy amalgamated with Ormiston Bridge Academy with effect from 1 September 2023.

Total capital fund expenditure excluding impairment was £19.9m (2022: £16.1m). Capital maintenance project work is planned and delivered on a rolling two-year cycle; a number of planned capital projects were delayed from the previous year due to difficulties with the availability of contractors and materials, thereby increasing the spend during 2023.

Balance sheet

On 31 August 2023, the trust held cash of £34.3m (2022: £45.5m) and investments of £12.0m (2022: £nil), which represents an overall increase of £0.9m during the year.

Further details of the reserves held at the year end are included in the Reserves policy on page 75.

Pensions

For the year ended 31 August 2023 the pension reserve is a deficit of £2.4m (2022: deficit of £22.6m). There have been significant movements in the pension reserve over the last few years. For the year ended 31 August 2022 the discount rate, which is used in the calculation of scheme liabilities, increased from 1.65% to 4.25% which resulted in a large reduction in the value of the pension reserve to £22.6m. For the year ended 31 August 2023 the discount rate has further increased to 5.2%, which has decreased the pension reserve further to £2.4m. The actuarial valuations included pension assets of £13.7m and following sector guidance it was agreed to restrict the asset position to £nil in the financial statements.

The cash flow impact of the movement in pension balances will not be shown immediately to the trust, but could result in increased contributions in the future.

Going concern

At the time of approving the financial statements, the trustees have a reasonable expectation that the trust has adequate resources to continue in operational existence for the foreseeable future.

Following the uncertainty presented by the increased costs, management has reassessed the going concern assumption and confirms that it remains appropriate based on the strong cash and net asset position which enables it to meet its liabilities as they fall due.

The trustees make this assessment in respect of a period of at least one year from the date of authorisation for issue of the financial statements and have concluded that the trust has adequate resources to continue in



operational existence for the foreseeable future and there are no material uncertainties about the 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.

Financial and risk management objectives and policies

The trust's exposure to financial risks is minimal as the principal financial instruments which it deals with are cash balances, which are held at a main UK corporate bank, and are therefore considered to be low risk. Trade and other debtors are minimal.

Repayments of £0.2m (2022: £0.2m) have been made against a Salix loan and £0.1m (2022: £0.1m) against an ESFA loan which were previously advanced to fund a pilot project in energy efficiency. Processes are in place to ensure that there is close monitoring and management of cash flows in relation to these balances. Repayments of £0.3m (2022: £0.4m) have been made during the year against the ESFA loans.

Reserves policy

The trustees have reviewed the financial statements of the trust. The review encompassed the nature of income and expenditure streams, the need to match them with commitments and the nature of reserves.

Reserves are held as follows:

- To cover working capital requirements
- As a contingency to meet unforeseen expenditure (forming part of restricted and unrestricted general funds) eg. an unexpected large repair bill

- To fund planned and specific future capital expenditure (forming part of the restricted fixed asset fund)
- To cover a fall or rise in sources of income eg. non-renewal of a grant. Planned commitments, or designations, that cannot be met by future income alone, eg. plans for a major asset purchase or a significant project that requires the charity to provide 'matched funding', and
- The need to fund potential deficits in a cash budget, for example money may need to be spent before funding is raised or received.

The level of reserves is kept under review by the trustees, and they assess them in relation to these purposes.

The balance of the restricted reserve (excluding pension) at the year end was £16.2m (2022: £16.2m). The unrestricted reserve was £3.9m (2022: £3.6m).

The total funds held at the end of the year was £525.4 (2022: £508.0m).

Restricted fixed assets funds at the year end are £507.7m (2022: £510.5m) of which the net book value of fixed assets is £496.5m (2022: £500.4m) and the balance is unspent capital grants.

Included within restricted general funds are funds not for general use of £0.3m (2022: £0.7m).

Like other trusts, the support staff of the trust and its academies are members of various local government pension schemes (LGPSs), in which there are funding deficits. Details of these obligations and the actuarial assumptions applied in the valuation of the liability are included in the notes to the financial statements. Arrangements vary between the different LGPSs however the deficits on each scheme are being funded through additional contributions. The trustees are satisfied that the funding of the pension schemes does not represent a going concern risk for the trust.



Enjoy the challenge; perseverance pays dividends.

The sustainable long term target for revenue reserves as a proportion of total revenue income remains 3.5%-6.5%.

Income funds, as a percentage of relevant income, has decreased to 7.7% in the current year (2022: 8.4%). This small decrease was planned and is still slightly in excess of the reserves target of the trust.

We will continue to balance the need for financial sustainability with investing in school improvement and optimising outcomes for our pupils.

Investment policy

The trust does not hold any long-term investments. Cash surpluses may be placed upon overnight or fixed term deposit with the trust’s bankers. During the year as a result of the higher rates of interest, £12.0m of cash balances were placed in short term deposit accounts. This has resulted in additional interest income generated in the current year, whilst still maintaining a low risk approach to investments.

Key performance indicators

The trustees use certain high-level key performance indicators to monitor the overall financial position of the trust. These key performance indicators for the past five years have been as follows:

	2023	2022	2021	2020	2019
Net current assets	£33.0m	£32.7m	£25.5m	£16.2m	£12.1m
Income funds/funding for educational operations	7.7%	8.4%	6.1%	3.6%	3.1%
Staff costs/(funding for educational operations + trading income)	75.4%	81.5%	79.6%	81.7%	76.4%

Although staff costs as a percentage of funding has decreased than when compared with the prior year, this is partly due to the impact of the defined benefit scheme pension adjustment which had a smaller impact on costs this year. Excluding the impact of the defined benefit pension scheme adjustment in both years shows comparable results 74.8% in 2023 compared with 74.9% in 2022. Net current assets remain at an appropriate level. Our year end funds/income ratio was above our target range of 3.5 to 6.5%. This was a deliberate decision to manage the financial risks in 2022-23 and beyond.

Principal risks and uncertainties

The trustees assess, monitor, and manage risks through the audit and risk committee, the internal control framework, and internal audit with the intention of mitigating or eliminating risks. To do this, the risk management process involves the production of risk registers and risk management activities have been built into the planning process. Members of the executive committee are expected to manage risks within their discipline and ensure the policy framework is up to date to support this. The internal audit process is designed to test these mitigating strategies. Our key risks are set out below.

Risk	Mitigations
Failure to develop and communicate integrated strategic plans that target optimal outcomes for students.	Implement the Strategic Performance Report to act as the “master” version of OAT’s strategic implementation plans, maintaining “one version of the truth” through the key themes, aims and objectives of the Strategy, its expected outcomes, and the change activity to deliver them.
	Establish a project management office (PMO) environment where all proposed projects are reviewed and prioritised according to their impact in delivering strategic priorities. All strategically significant projects are sponsored at an executive level to ensure focused delivery.
	Formation of an oversight board to prioritise activity, allocate resource and monitor performance against strategic aims and objectives to ensure that the OAT strategy is implemented efficiently.
	Establish cross-functional teams for project delivery, involving stakeholders from different functions to collaboratively develop and refine strategic plans, ensuring diverse perspectives.
Failure to create an operating structure and culture that: reflects our values; enables the pace of change required to deliver strategic aims; and that is capable of adapting quickly to external factors.	Embed organisational values and behaviours into all aspects of operations, decision-making processes, and performance evaluations to reinforce a consistent culture that is both performance and values led.
	Provide leadership training that focuses on change management, adaptive leadership, and fostering an environment of innovation and continuous improvement.
	Establish feedback mechanisms to encourage staff to voice concerns and suggestions related to the organisational culture, fostering a culture of openness and improvement.
Failure to deliver education quality that meets the short and long-term needs of our students in terms of attainment and character development.	Roll out the use of StepLab across the trust to enhance the quality of pedagogy in OAT academies. Embed the ‘Principles of teaching’ across OAT to enhance the quality of teaching in all of our schools.
	EDs to work with lead practitioners on identifying priority areas across curriculum delivery. Lead practitioners to support schools with curriculum development, ensuring high quality content and sequencing.
	Ensure rigorous data quality to facilitate “one version of the truth” that will enable timely information-driven decision making, identify areas of improvement, track student progress, and adjust educational strategies based on real-time feedback.
	Ensure that enrichment remains at the core of the OAT educational delivery, allowing every child to enjoy a brilliant educational journey both inside and outside the classroom, regardless of background, helping to develop confident and resilient individuals.
Failure to safeguard student wellbeing.	Inclusion and safeguarding team to identify high risk situations and support down to an individual level via specific, targeted interventions. Enhanced use of data and rigorous monitoring of CPOMS entries to ensure comparable information across our MAT will allow clear understanding of where efforts need to be focused.
	Develop a framework for behaviour management that is consistently followed across the trust.
Failure to attract, recruit, develop, reward, engage, and retain diverse and high calibre teams across all parts of the trust.	Ensure that OAT terms and conditions of employment are sector-leading to attract and retain the best staff.
	Design, implement and work to continually improve high quality CPD to ensure continued learning and work satisfaction.
	Develop and communicate policies that promote diversity and inclusion in hiring practices and professional development opportunities.
	Ensure that onboarding processes and induction are well-defined and supportive. Implement mentorship initiatives that pair experienced staff with newcomers, facilitating knowledge transfer and fostering a sense of belonging.
	Create pathways for staff members to advance in their careers by offering leadership training and growth opportunities.

Risk	Mitigations
<p>Failure to create the right environment for people across the trust to flourish, therefore impacting negatively on outcomes for children.</p>	<p>Implementation of integrated student and curriculum led resource planning to ensure that it fit for purpose and that individual workload is effectively managed.</p> <p>Ensure staff are supported through a comprehensive programme of wellbeing support including but not limited to access to staff coaching, counselling and occupational health in addition to online health and wellbeing resources.</p> <p>Increased number of mental health champions across the MAT.</p> <p>Streamline and simplify our ways of working to make “working at OAT simple” to allow focus on the core priority of education.</p> <p>As part of the cultural development of the trust, cultivate an inclusive culture where each member of staff can thrive as an individual whilst also delivering in their own key role as part of the wider OAT team.</p>
<p>Failure to prevent an information security incident either through cyber-attack or otherwise.</p>	<p>Provide regular training to all staff members on cybersecurity best practices, phishing awareness, and safe online behaviour.</p> <p>Develop a well-documented incident response plan that outlines steps to take in the event of a security breach, minimising potential damage and downtime.</p> <p>Conduct routine security audits and vulnerability assessments to identify and address potential weaknesses in the information systems. Where deemed appropriate, undertake “war game” simulations to assess OAT’s readiness to respond to ICT failure/cyber-attack.</p> <p>Ensure cyber-liability insurance is in place.</p>
<p>Failure to proactively manage infrastructure planning (estates and ICT) so that it is: safe; supports optimal outcomes for children; compliant; effective and efficient.</p>	<p>Develop a comprehensive long-term infrastructure plan that aligns with the trust’s educational goals, growth projections, and technological advancements. Review and update the plan, as required, to ensure that it is aligned to evolving organisational needs.</p> <p>Conduct regular, thorough risk assessments to identify potential vulnerabilities, such as security risks or system downtime, associated with infrastructure components.</p> <p>Continue to integrate sustainable practices into infrastructure planning, such as energy-efficient building designs, renewable energy sources, and green building materials. Implement eco-friendly technologies and waste-reduction strategies, involving students and staff in our activities (e.g., “Switch it off” campaign).</p> <p>Ensure that we design infrastructure plans with scalability in mind to accommodate future growth and changes in technology requirements. Plan according to anticipated potential expansion.</p>
<p>Failure to deliver on our wider civic responsibility in terms of growth, sector development, sustainability, and social action plans.</p>	<p>Define clear and measurable objectives for trust growth, sector development work, sustainability, and social action plans, ensuring that progress can be tracked and evaluated. Develop KPIs to assess the impact and effectiveness of initiatives over time.</p> <p>Raise OAT’s profile at a national level to ensure that we have a “seat at the table” when key topics are discussed and agreed.</p> <p>Continue to develop different extracurricular activities and projects that allow students to actively contribute to social action initiatives.</p> <p>Support academies to establish partnerships with local organisations, governmental bodies, and community groups to leverage collective resources and expertise for sector development and sustainability initiatives.</p>
<p>Failure to effectively manage financial opportunities and risk so that it impedes delivery of strategy and or creates a long-term viability risk.</p>	<p>Understand and monitor key assumptions such as pupil numbers. Regularly assess potential risks and opportunities, conducting scenario analyses to prepare for different economic conditions.</p> <p>Diversify investments and revenue streams to mitigate the impact of inflation and economic fluctuations on the trust’s financial health.</p> <p>Where specialist knowledge is required and not available in-house, seek advice from external experts or consultants to ensure that decisions align with the trust’s strategic goals and long-term viability.</p>



Student artwork from
Ormiston SWB Academy

Section 172 Statement

In accordance with Section 172 of the Companies Act 2006, the directors (who form our board of trustees) complied with their duty to promote the success of OAT through their strong governance and oversight of the strategic development. All decisions are made with the long-term interests of the charity and its stakeholders in mind.

Culture, employee welfare and engagement are important to trustees. This is evidenced by the people committee which is dedicated to these areas. As a trust, we have established flexible working practices and are proactively working across the sector to improve these further.

Trustees understand the importance of maintaining productive relationships within stakeholders, underlined by a strong sense of purpose. Members of the executives proactively collaborate with a variety of stakeholders within the education sector to share knowledge and learnings as appropriate.

High standards of business conduct are always maintained. The trust holds regular meetings with suppliers and engages with them through different procurement processes to ensure good working relationships are developed and sustained.

Trustees are mindful of OAT's impact on the community and environment. Our communities, social action and enrichment sit at the heart of everything we do, and this is reflected in our curriculum. Environment matters form part of this work as demonstrated by the significant work performed across all aspects of the trust around sustainability.

As a registered charity, we are committed to making the biggest difference to all of our pupils, inside and outside the classroom. OAT's reputation and business conduct are paramount to its future success and ability to deliver value to its various stakeholders. OAT has an experienced Trustee Board who are responsible for ensuring corporate governance best practice is followed, supported by the audit and risk committee, finance and capital committee, school improvement committee and people committee.

Plans for future periods

The plans for the future periods are to develop the trusts strategy for the next five years and to therefore embark on a path of achieving and sustaining excellence. Investment will continue to be focused on all aspects of school improvement.

Funds held as custodian trustee on behalf of others

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

Auditor

RSM UK Audit LLP indicated their willingness to be reappointed for another term and appropriate arrangements have been put in place for them to be deemed reappointed as auditors in the absence of an annual general meeting.

Statement as to disclosure of information to auditor

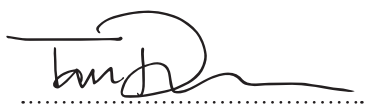
The trustees have confirmed that, as far as they are aware, there is no relevant audit information of which the auditor is unaware. Each of the trustees have confirmed that they have taken all the steps that they ought to have taken as trustees in order to make themselves aware of any relevant audit information and to establish that it has been communicated to the auditor.

The trustees' report is approved by order of the board of trustees and the strategic report (included therein) is approved by the board of trustees in their capacity as the directors at a meeting on 14 December 2023 and signed on its behalf by:



.....
WEINBERG

Dr Julius Weinberg
Chair of trustees



.....

Tom Rees
Trustee



Governance statement



Scope of responsibility

The board of trustees acknowledges overall responsibility for ensuring that Ormiston Academies Trust has an effective and appropriate system of control, financial and otherwise. However, such a system is designed to manage rather than eliminate the risk of failure to achieve business objectives and can provide only reasonable and not absolute assurance against material misstatement or loss. As trustees, we have reviewed and taken account of the guidance in the DfE's governance handbook and competency framework for governance.

The board of trustees has delegated the day-to-day responsibility to the chief executive officer, as accounting officer, for ensuring financial controls conform with the requirements of both propriety and good financial management and in accordance with the requirements and responsibilities assigned to it in the master funding agreement between Ormiston Academies Trust and the secretary of state for education. They are also responsible for reporting to the board of trustees any material weaknesses or breakdowns in internal control.

Governance

The information on governance included here supplements that described in the trustees' report and in the statements of trustees' responsibilities.

The trust's *Articles of Association* specify that the minimum number of members we must have in place is three. Ormiston Trust is the sponsor and there must be at least two other members, who are appointed by the sponsor. There is no specified maximum number of members.

The members formally met three times during 2022–23. Attendance at the meeting was as follows:

Member	Meetings attended	Out of a possible
Ormiston Trust (represented by James Murray)	0	3
Diana Murray	3	3
Peter Murray	3	3

Meetings of the board of trustees

The trust board is ultimately responsible for overall control and direction of the trust. The trust board provides strategic leadership to the trust, and establishes and fosters the trust's culture and sets and champions the trust strategy including determining what governance functions are delegated to the local tier. The trust board also provides accountability and assurance through having robust effective oversight of the operations and performance of the trust, including the provision of education, pupil welfare and ensuring appropriate use of funding and effective financial performance and keeping the estate safe and well maintained. The trust board is also engaged with, and has strategic oversight of the relationships with stakeholders which includes parents, schools and communities.

The board delegates other matters to its sub committees (as set out below) and these are all recorded in the scheme of delegation for the various committees.

During the year the trust has continued to undertake a comprehensive review of its governance structure and membership to the board and sub committees. In line with DfE best practice a self-assessment for all trustees is carried out each year.

The trust board is an effective unit across its large array of responsibilities and provides support and challenge throughout the year. The board takes full responsibility for the trusts financial position ensuring that spend is targeted to maximise pupil outcomes and experiences. Significant challenge was provided to the executive around ensuring that the spend was appropriately targeted on schools that are **requires improvement**, but also in schools where in

year deficit budgets are created. The data that has been provided to support these challenges and resulting actions is valuable and is of excellent quality and helps ensure that correct decisions are made.

The board ensure that they are compliant with the trust's charitable objects, with company and charity law and with their contractual obligations under the funding agreement. On an annual basis, to ensure compliance, the trustees review and monitor the 'must do's' that are included in the *Academy Trust Handbook*.

The board had four scheduled meetings and two extraordinary meetings. In addition to this, they also met twice for training and development. Attendance at the formal board meetings was as follows:

Trustee	Meetings attended	Out of a possible
Karen Bramwell	6	6
Frances Hall	3	6
Dr Paul Hann (chair of trustees; resigned as chair of trustees 28/02/23 and resigned as a trustee 28/02/23)	3	3
Nick Hudson (CEO and accounting officer; retired 31/08/22)	6	6
Peter Murray (founding chairman)	6	6
Janet Renou	6	6
Maria Reraki (resigned 30/11/22)	1	1
Stuart Ross (appointed 08/12/22)	4	5
Bal Samra	5	6
Alistair Thom	5	6
Dr Julius Weinberg	5	5

The committees

The board delegates its powers in accordance with the trust's *Scheme of Delegation* and much of the work of the board is carried out through its committees, all of which have terms of reference approved by the board and which report formally to the board.

The trust provides transparency regarding its governance arrangements through the terms of reference for the board and its committees, together with board and committee minutes (redacted as appropriate) which are publicly available on the trust's website.

During 2022-23, the following committees were in operation: audit and risk committee, finance and capital committee, school improvement committee, and people committee.

The audit and risk committee

The audit and risk committee is constituted in line with the *Academies Trust Handbook*. Senior executives participate in committee meetings but do not hold committee membership. The committee maintains a transparent two-way relationship with both external and internal auditors, allowing for their independent access and collaboration.

The core function of the committee is to provide the board of trustees with an assessment that centres on evaluating the sufficiency and efficacy of the executive's internal control measures, risk management procedures, governance practices, value for money considerations, and the management and quality assurance of data. It recommends the trust's financial statements to the board for approval and advises the board on the risk register.

It is responsible for overseeing internal audit arrangements and, post-appointment of external auditors by the board, facilitates the external audit process.

The audit and risk committee oversees that there are adequate and effective arrangements in place to ensure regularity and propriety in the use of public and other funding, ensuring transparency regarding value for money.

The committee meets with the external auditors to discuss their findings and to review and approve the audit aspects of the annual financial statements. It also considers and approves the annual audit plan prepared by the trust's internal

auditors and considers audit report recommendations for the improvement of the trust's systems of internal control. The committee reviews management responses to audit reports and monitors progress of the implementation of audit recommendations.

The committee monitors compliance with all regulatory requirements, with a particular focus on upholding the regulations outlined in the *Academies Trust Handbook*.

The committee met four times during 2022-23. Attendance at the meetings was as follows:

Committee member	Meetings attended	Out of a possible
Frances Hall	3	4
Dr Paul Hann	2	2
Peter Murray	2	2
Stuart Ross	2	2
Alistair Thom	4	4
Dr Julius Weinberg	2	2
Christopher Wada (adviser)	2	2

The finance and capital committee

The finance and capital committee is the body responsible to the board for ensuring that adequate and effective arrangements are in place to manage the financial position of the trust. It has delegated responsibility for ensuring the delivery of major capital projects, including oversight of IT capital expenditure and resource prioritisation.

The committee recommends the annual revenue and capital budgets to the board, monitors performance in relation to the approved budgets and monitors the execution of all financial policies adopted by the board.

The committee reviews and appraises capital schemes to ensure effective and efficient procurement and scrutinises strategic development and maintenance of the estate.

The committee met four times during 2022-23. Attendance at the meetings was as follows:

Committee member	Meetings attended	Out of a possible
Frances Hall	3	4
Nick Hudson	4	4
Stuart Ross	2	2
Alistair Thom	4	4
Christopher Wada (adviser)	1	2

The school improvement committee

The school improvement committee is the body responsible for education quality across the trust.

The committee met four times during 2022-23. Attendance at the meetings was as follows:

Committee member	Meetings attended	Out of a possible
Karen Bramwell	3	4
Nick Hudson	4	4
Dr Paul Hann	2	2
Peter Komolafe (adviser)	2	3
Peter Murray	2	4
Janet Renou	4	4
Maria Reraki	0	1
Dr Julius Weinberg	3	3

The people committee

The people committee is the body responsible for recruitment and retention, personal development and training, performance management, culture, and behaviours. It also oversees the *Equal opportunities policy*, and engagement with employees and trade unions.

The pay and remuneration of the OAT executive team, including the CEO are reviewed and approved by the people committee and signed off by the main board of trustees, following a benchmarking exercise.

The committee met three times during 2022-23. Attendance at the meetings was as follows:

Committee member	Meetings attended	Out of a possible
Frances Hall	3	3
Nick Hudson	3	3
Jan Renou	2	3
Bal Samra	3	3
Stuart Ross	2	2

Review of governance

Following the comprehensive review of governance undertaken by the Confederation of School Trusts in spring 2022 OAT has continued to work on implementation of the key recommendations including::

- increase the size of the trust board
- increase communication between trustees and local governing bodies and their respective chairs
- create and implement a trust-wide stakeholder engagement strategy

During 2022-23, to enhance and strengthen our governance arrangements the trust sought to refresh the membership of the trust board. The trust successfully appointed two new trustees, including a new chair and secured the services of two advisers. There were four resignations during the year including the chair of trustees, chair of finance and capital committee and the chief executive officer.

Additionally during 2022-23 in accordance with the internal audit plan, Mazars performed a review of the trust's governance arrangements.

The review focused on the following areas; governance structure, trustee training and recruitment, declarations of interest and coordination of sub committees. It was established that there is generally a sound framework of governance in place at the trust. Following the review actions were taken around recruitment and succession planning for trustees, submission of papers and the register of interests.

As is normal practice, the board performed an annual skills audit in spring 2023. Additional trustees have been recruited during autumn 2023.

Relationships between the board and the LGBs were strengthened during 2022-23 with the implementation of the following changes:

- a formal mechanism for escalating matters requiring the board's attention
- a chair review group was also established to enable chairs of governors to meet with the chair of the board
- regular communications from the chair of the board to governors via the governor newsletters and a direct email to chairs after each trust board meeting

Student voice attended the board meeting in September 2022 with the purpose of updating trustees on their strategy for the academic year. Student voice representation has been added to the board meeting calendar as an annual item. A further review of governance will be undertaken by the internal auditors in 2024.

Review of value for money

As accounting officer, the chief executive officer has responsibility for ensuring that the trust delivers good value in the use of public resources. The accounting officer understands that value for money (VFM) refers to the educational and wider societal outcomes, as well as estates safety and management, achieved in return for taxpayer resources received.

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

Throughout the year, the trust has established a robust framework for value for money (VFM) by:

- aligning procurement with strategic priorities, including value for money initiatives and social and environmental values
- using public sector knowledge to run competitive tenders and utilising public sector frameworks when appropriate for the best value
- ensuring strict adherence to public contract regulations, the *Academies Financial Handbook*, and the trust's own *Scheme of Delegation* for transparent and legal procurement activities
- providing ongoing staff training and guidance for proficient procurement practices
- vigilantly reviewing contracts to protect the trust's interests and prevent unnecessary risks or costs

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 the 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 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 Ormiston Academies Trust for the year ended 31 August 2023 and up to the date of approval of the annual report and financial statements.

Capacity to handle risk

The board of trustees has reviewed the key risks to which the trust is exposed together with the operating, financial and compliance controls that have been implemented to mitigate those risks. The board of trustees is of the view that there is a formal ongoing process for identifying, evaluating, and managing the trust's significant risks that has been in place for the year ended 31 August 2023 and up to the date of approval of the annual report and financial statements. This process is regularly reviewed by the board of trustees.

The risk and control framework

The 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. It includes:

- comprehensive budgeting and monitoring systems with an annual budget and periodic financial reports which are reviewed and agreed by the board of trustees
- regular reviews by the finance and capital committee of reports which indicate financial performance against the forecasts and of major purchase plans, capital works and expenditure programmes
- setting targets to measure financial and other performance

- clearly defined purchasing (asset purchase or capital investment) guidelines
- delegation of authority and segregation of duties
- identification and management of risks

The board of trustees regularly considers the need for a specific internal audit function. The use of an external firm to perform this function continues to be considered appropriate. The internal auditor’s role includes giving advice on financial matters and performing a range of checks on the trust’s financial systems. On a termly basis, the internal auditor reports to the audit and risk committee on the operation of the systems of control and on the discharge of the board of trustees’ financial responsibilities.

The programme of work by the internal auditors (Mazars) was agreed in advance with the audit and risk committee. In the current year Mazars focused their work on HR and payroll processes, whistleblowing, business continuity, IT, internal governance, health and safety and sustainability. All of the above audits were carried out in accordance with the plan to look at higher risk areas. The only change to the agreed plan was that the performance management audit was deferred to 2023-24 and this was replaced with an audit of trips. The recommendations arising from the reviews will be implemented and followed up during 2023-24, however no material control weaknesses were identified. The work and findings that Mazars have identified during the year has resulted in an overall ‘moderate assurance’ level being achieved.

Managing conflicts of interest

To facilitate the robust management of conflicts of interest, an up-to-date register of interests is maintained, with trustees, governors, executives, SLT and budget holders declaring any conflicts annually as a minimum. Any changes throughout the year are recorded in a timely fashion on the register.

Individuals involved in procurement tenders also complete a conflict-of-interest form as part of the process. This information is shared with the finance team to ensure that any potential conflicts of interest are managed carefully.

Review of effectiveness

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

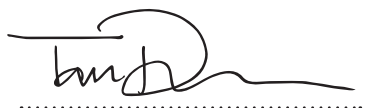
- the work of the internal auditor
- the work of the external auditor
- the financial management and governance self-assessment process
- the work of the executive team within the trust who have responsibility for the development and maintenance of the internal control framework

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

Approved by order of the board of trustees on 14 December 2023 and signed on its behalf by:



Dr Julius Weinberg
Chair of trustees



Tom Rees
Accounting officer

Statement of regularity, propriety and compliance

As accounting officer of Ormiston Academies Trust, I have considered my responsibility to notify the academy trust board of trustees and the Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA) of material irregularity, impropriety and non-compliance with terms and conditions of all funding, including for estates safety and management, under the funding agreement between the academy trust and the secretary of state for education. As part of my consideration, I have had due regard to the requirements of the *Academies Trust Handbook 2022*, including responsibilities for estates safety and management.

I confirm that I, and the trust's board of trustees are able to identify any material irregular or improper use of funds by the trust, or material non-compliance with the terms and conditions of funding under the trust's funding agreement and the *Academies Trust Handbook 2022*.

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.



Tom Rees
Accounting officer

14 December 2023

Statement of trustees' responsibilities

The trustees (who are also the directors of Ormiston Academies Trust for the purposes of company law) are responsible for preparing the *Trustees' report* (including the strategic report) and the financial statements in accordance with the Annual Accounts Direction issued 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 2022 to 2023
- make judgements and accounting estimates that are reasonable and prudent
- state whether applicable UK Accounting Standards have been followed, subject to any material departures disclosed and explained in the financial statements; and
- prepare the financial statements on the going concern basis unless it is inappropriate to presume that the charitable company will continue in business

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

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

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

Approved by order of the members of the board of trustees on 14 December 2023 and signed on its behalf by:



Dr Julius Weinberg
Chair of trustees



Tom Rees
Accounting officer



Financial statements

Independent auditor's report to the members of Ormiston Academies Trust

Opinion

We have audited the financial statements of Ormiston Academies Trust (the “charitable company”) for the year ended 31 August 2023 which comprise the Statement of Financial Activities (Including Income and Expenditure Account), the Balance Sheet, the Statement of Cash Flows and notes to the financial statements, including significant accounting policies. The financial reporting framework that has been applied in their preparation is applicable law and United Kingdom Accounting Standards, including FRS 102 “The Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland” (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice), and the Academies Accounts Direction issued by the Education and Skills Funding Agency.

In our opinion the financial statements:

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

Basis for opinion

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

Conclusions relating to going concern

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

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

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

Other information

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

Our responsibility is to read the other information and, in doing so, consider whether the other information is materially inconsistent with the financial statements or our knowledge obtained in the course of the audit or otherwise appears

to be materially misstated. If we identify such material inconsistencies or apparent material misstatements, we are required to determine whether this gives rise to a material misstatement in the financial statements themselves. If, based on the work we have performed, we conclude that there is a material misstatement of this other information, we are required to report that fact.

We have nothing to report in this regard.

Opinions on other matters prescribed by the Companies Act 2006

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

- the information given in the trustees' report, which includes the directors' report and the strategic report prepared for the purposes of company law, for the financial year for which the financial statements are prepared is consistent with the financial statements; and
- the directors' report and the strategic report included within the 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 the knowledge and understanding of the charitable company and its environment obtained in the course of the audit, we have not identified material misstatements in the directors' report or the strategic report included within the trustees' report.

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

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

Responsibilities of trustees

As explained more fully in the Statement of trustees' responsibilities set out on page 89, the trustees (who act as trustees for the charitable activities of the charitable company are also the directors of the charitable company for the purposes of company law) are responsible for the preparation of the financial statements and for being satisfied that they give a true and fair view, and for such internal control as the trustees determine is necessary to enable the preparation of financial statements that are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

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

Auditor's responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements

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

The extent to which the audit was considered capable of detecting irregularities, including fraud

Irregularities are instances of non-compliance with laws and regulations. The objectives of our audit are to obtain sufficient appropriate audit evidence regarding compliance with laws and regulations that have a direct effect on the determination of material amounts and disclosures in the financial statements, to perform audit procedures to help identify instances of non-compliance with other laws and regulations that may have a material effect on the financial

statements, and to respond appropriately to identified or suspected non-compliance with laws and regulations identified during the audit.

In relation to fraud, the objectives of our audit are to identify and assess the risk of material misstatement of the financial statements due to fraud, to obtain sufficient appropriate audit evidence regarding the assessed risks of material misstatement due to fraud through designing and implementing appropriate responses and to respond appropriately to fraud or suspected fraud identified during the audit.

However, it is the primary responsibility of management, with the oversight of those charged with governance, to ensure that the entity's operations are conducted in accordance with the provisions of laws and regulations and for the prevention and detection of fraud.

In identifying and assessing risks of material misstatement in respect of irregularities, including fraud, the audit engagement team:

- obtained an understanding of the nature of the sector, including the legal and regulatory framework that the charitable company operates in and how the charitable company is complying with the legal and regulatory framework;
- inquired of management, and those charged with governance, about their own identification and assessment of the risks of irregularities, including any known actual, suspected or alleged instances of fraud;
- discussed matters about non-compliance with laws and regulations and how fraud might occur including assessment of how and where the financial statements may be susceptible to fraud.

As a result of these procedures we consider the most significant laws and regulations that have a direct impact on the financial statements are FRS 102, Charities SORP (FRS 102), Companies Act 2006, Education and Skills Funding Agency's Academy Trust Handbook and Academies Accounts Direction. We performed audit procedures to detect non-compliances which may have a material impact on the financial statements which included reviewing the financial statements including the trustees' report.

The most significant laws and regulations that have an indirect impact on the financial statements are those in relation to the Education Inspection Framework under the Education Act 2005 (as amended), Keeping Children Safe in Education under the Education Act 2002, the UK General Data Protection Regulation (UK GDPR) and the Data Protection Act 2018. We performed audit procedures to inquire of management and those charged with governance whether the charitable company is in compliance with these law and regulations and inspected correspondence with regulatory authorities.

The audit engagement team identified the risk of management override of controls as the area where the financial statements were most susceptible to material misstatement due to fraud. Audit procedures performed included but were not limited to testing manual journal entries and other adjustments, evaluating the business rationale in relation to significant, unusual transactions and transactions entered into outside the normal course of business, challenging judgments and estimates.

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

Use of our report

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

Paul Oxtoby

Paul Oxtoby (Senior Statutory Auditor)

For and on behalf of RSM UK AUDIT LLP, Statutory Auditor

Chartered Accountants

103 Colmore Row, Birmingham, West Midlands, B3 3AG

20 December 2023

Date

**STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES
INCLUDING INCOME AND EXPENDITURE ACCOUNT
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2023**

	Notes	Unrestricted Funds £'000	Restricted General Funds £'000	Restricted Fixed Asset Funds £'000	Total 2023 £'000	Total 2022 £'000
Income and endowments from:						
Donations and capital grants	3	44	178	20,796	21,018	11,442
Donations - transfer of existing academy into the trust	3	-	-	-	-	52,080
Charitable activities:						
- Funding for educational operations	4	3,070	253,626	-	256,696	236,453
- Teaching school	4	-	2,165	-	2,165	1,956
Other trading activities	5	1,771	1,252	-	3,023	2,156
Investments	6	124	-	-	124	7
Total		<u>5,009</u>	<u>257,221</u>	<u>20,796</u>	<u>283,026</u>	<u>304,094</u>
Expenditure on:						
Raising funds	7	253	-	-	253	147
Charitable activities:						
- Educational operations	8	4,413	257,050	24,718	286,181	266,241
- Teaching school	8	-	2,039	-	2,039	1,725
Total	7	<u>4,666</u>	<u>259,089</u>	<u>24,718</u>	<u>288,473</u>	<u>268,113</u>
Net income/(expenditure)		343	(1,868)	(3,922)	(5,447)	35,981
Transfers between funds	21	-	(1,151)	1,151	-	-
Other recognised gains/(losses)						
Actuarial gains on defined benefit schemes	29	-	22,839	-	22,839	146,247
Net movement in funds		343	19,820	(2,771)	17,392	182,228
Reconciliation of funds						
Total funds brought forward		3,581	(6,020)	510,465	508,026	325,798
Total funds carried forward		<u>3,924</u>	<u>13,800</u>	<u>507,694</u>	<u>525,418</u>	<u>508,026</u>

BALANCE SHEET

AS AT 31 AUGUST 2023

	Notes	2023		2022	
		£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
Fixed assets					
Intangible assets	13		140		187
Tangible assets	14		496,521		500,398
			<u>496,661</u>		<u>500,585</u>
Current assets					
Stock		356		356	
Debtors	15	11,023		8,499	
Investments	16	12,000		-	
Cash at bank and in hand		34,338		45,471	
		<u>57,717</u>		<u>54,326</u>	
Current liabilities					
Creditors: amounts falling due within one year	17	(24,728)		(21,671)	
Net current assets			32,989		32,655
Total assets less current liabilities			529,650		533,240
Creditors: amounts falling due after more than one year	18		(767)		(1,300)
Provisions for liabilities	19		(1,096)		(1,273)
			<u>527,787</u>		<u>530,667</u>
Net assets excluding pension liability			527,787		530,667
Defined benefit pension scheme liability	29		(2,369)		(22,641)
			<u>525,418</u>		<u>508,026</u>
Total net assets			525,418		508,026
Funds of the Trust:					
Restricted funds	21				
- Restricted fixed asset funds			507,694		510,465
- Restricted income funds			16,169		16,621
- Pension reserve			(2,369)		(22,641)
			<u>521,494</u>		<u>504,445</u>
Total restricted funds			521,494		504,445
Unrestricted income funds	21		3,924		3,581
			<u>525,418</u>		<u>508,026</u>
Total funds			525,418		508,026

The financial statements on pages 94 to 129 were approved by the Board of Trustees and authorised for issue on 14 December 2023 and are signed on their behalf by:



Dr Julius Weinberg

STATEMENT OF CASH FLOWS

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2023

	Notes	2023 £'000	£'000	2022 £'000	£'000
Cash flows from operating activities					
Net cash (used in)/provided by operating activities	26		(6,088)		6,753
Cash flows from investing activities					
Interest received		124		7	
Capital funding received		10,717		6,918	
Purchase of intangible fixed assets		-		(10)	
Purchase of tangible fixed assets		(3,347)		(2,850)	
Deposit of cash on fixed-term investment		(12,000)		-	
Net cash (used in)/provided by investing activities			(4,506)		4,065
Cash flows from financing activities					
Repayment of Education and Skills Funding Agency loan		(375)		(473)	
Repayment of Salix loan		(158)		(158)	
Interest paid		(6)		(7)	
Net cash used in financing activities			(539)		(638)
Net (decrease)/increase in cash and cash equivalents in the reporting period			(11,133)		10,180
Cash and cash equivalents at beginning of the year			45,471		35,291
Cash and cash equivalents at end of the year			34,338		45,471

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2023

1 Accounting policies

General information

Ormiston Academies Trust ("the Trust") is a charitable company. The address of its principal place of business is given on page 3 and the nature of its operations are set out in the Trustees' Report.

A summary of the principal accounting policies adopted, judgements and key sources of estimation uncertainty, is set out below.

Basis of preparation

The financial statements of the Trust 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 financial statements 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 2022 to 2023 issued by the Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA), the Charities Act 2011 and the Companies Act 2006. The Trust is a public benefit entity under FRS 102 and has therefore applied the relevant public benefit requirements of FRS 102.

The financial statements are presented in sterling which is also the functional currency of the Trust.

Monetary amounts in these financial statements are rounded to the nearest whole £1,000, except where otherwise indicated.

Going concern

At the time of approving the financial statements, the trustees have a reasonable expectation that the trust has adequate resources to continue in operational existence for the foreseeable future. The Trustees have reassessed the going concern assumption and confirm that it remains appropriate based on the strong cash and net asset position which enables it to meet its liabilities as they fall due.

The trustees make this assessment in respect of a period of at least one year from the date of authorisation for issue of the financial statements and have concluded that the trust has adequate resources to continue in operational existence for the foreseeable future and there are no material uncertainties about the 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.

Transfer to an academy trust

Transfers of academies into the trust involve the transfer of identifiable assets and liabilities and the operations of the academies for £nil consideration. The substance of a transfer is that of a gift and it is accounted for on that basis as set out below.

Assets and liabilities transferred from a transferring trust are included at their fair value. The fair value has been derived based on that of equivalent items. The amounts are recognised under the appropriate balance sheet categories, with a corresponding amount recognised in Donations – transfer of existing academy into the trust in the statement of financial activities and analysed under unrestricted funds, restricted general funds and restricted fixed asset funds.

Income

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

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONTINUED)

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2023

1 Accounting policies (Continued)

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 period for which it is receivable, and any abatement in respect of the period is deducted from income and recognised as a liability.

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

Sponsorship income

Sponsorship income provided to the 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.

Gifts in kind, being the gift of a fixed asset, are measured at fair value, unless it is impractical to measure this reliably, in which case the cost of the item to the donor should be used. The gain is recognised as income from donations and a corresponding amount is included in the appropriate fixed asset category and depreciated over the useful economic life in accordance with the Trust's accounting policies.

Other income

Other income, including the hire of facilities, catering income and academy trips, is recognised at fair value of the consideration received or receivable in the period it is receivable and to the extent the Trust has provided the goods or services.

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.

Expenditure on raising funds

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

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONTINUED)

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2023

1 Accounting policies (Continued)

Expenditure (Continued)

Charitable activities

These are costs incurred on the Trust's educational operations to further its charitable aims for the benefit of the beneficiaries, including support costs and costs relating to the governance of the Trust apportioned to charitable activities.

Intangible fixed assets and amortisation

Intangible assets costing £10,000 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:

Purchased computer software - 20% straight line

Tangible fixed assets and depreciation

Assets costing £10,000 or more are capitalised as tangible fixed assets and are carried at cost, net of depreciation and any provision for impairment. Subsequent costs are capitalised only when it is probable that such costs will generate future economic benefits. All other costs of repairs and maintenance are charged to the statement of financial activities as incurred.

Where tangible fixed assets have been acquired with the aid of specific grants, either from the government or from the private sector, they are included in the balance sheet at cost and depreciated over their expected useful economic life. Where there are specific conditions attached to the funding that require the continued use of the asset, the related grants are credited to a restricted fixed asset fund in the statement of financial activities and carried forward in the balance sheet. Depreciation on the relevant assets is charged directly to the restricted fixed asset fund in the statement of financial activities. Where tangible fixed assets are gifted to the Trust, these are initially recorded at valuation which is treated as deemed cost.

Depreciation is provided on all tangible fixed assets other than freehold land, so as to write off the cost of assets less their residual values over their useful lives on the following bases:

Freehold buildings	2% straight line
Long leasehold land	125 years
Long leasehold buildings	2% straight line
Assets in the course of construction	nil
Computer equipment	20% straight line
Fixtures, fittings and equipment	10% straight line
Motor vehicles	15% 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.

Residual value is calculated on prices prevailing at the reporting date, after estimated costs of disposal, for the asset as if it were at the age and in the condition expected at the end of its useful life.

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONTINUED)

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2023

1 Accounting policies (Continued)

Tangible fixed assets and depreciation (Continued)

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.

With respect to the buildings from which three of the academies operates which are subject to a PFI agreement, these are legally owned by the Stoke on Trent Local Authority and Sandwell Local Authority and the relevant academies are able to use the buildings under the terms of a licence to occupy. The licence to occupy gives the right to use these buildings and the substance of the licence is that this will be on an ongoing basis reflecting the historic arrangements in place. Therefore substantially all the risks and rewards of ownership have not been transferred to the academies and the assets have not been recognised within tangible fixed assets.

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 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 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 as a financing cost in the period it arises in the statement of financial activities and is allocated to the appropriate expenditure heading.

Leased assets

Rentals payable under operating leases are charged against income on a straight line basis over the period of the lease.

Investments

Current asset investments relate to cash held on short term deposit and are initially measured at cost and subsequently measured at cost less impairment.

Stock

Unsold uniforms, catering and other stocks are valued at the lower of cost and estimated selling price less costs to complete and sell.

Financial instruments

The Trust has chosen to adopt Sections 11 and 12 of FRS 102 in full in respect of financial instruments.

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONTINUED)

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2023

1 Accounting policies (Continued)

Financial instruments (Continued)

Financial assets and liabilities

Financial assets and financial liabilities are recognised when the Trust becomes a party to the contractual provisions of the instrument.

Financial liabilities are classified according to the substance of the financial instrument's contractual obligations, rather than the financial instrument's legal form.

All financial assets and liabilities are initially measured at transaction price (including transaction costs), unless the arrangement constitutes a financing transaction. A financial asset or financial liability that is payable or receivable in one year is measured at the undiscounted amount expected to be received or paid net of impairment, unless it is a financing transaction. If an arrangement constitutes a financing transaction, the financial asset or financial liability is measured at the present value of the future payments discounted at a market rate of interest for a similar debt instrument.

Concessionary loans are initially measured at the amount received. In subsequent years, the carrying amount of concessionary loans is adjusted to reflect any interest payable, where relevant.

Financial assets and financial liabilities are offset only when there is a current legally enforceable right to set off the recognised amounts and the intention to either settle on a net basis, or to realise the asset and settle the liability simultaneously.

Derecognition of financial assets and liabilities

A financial asset is derecognised only when the contractual rights to cash flow expire or are settled, or substantially all the risks and the rewards of ownership are transferred to another party, or if some significant risks and rewards of ownership are retained but control of the asset has transferred to another party that is able to sell the asset in its entirety to an unrelated third party. A financial liability (or part thereof) is derecognised when the obligation specified in the contract is discharged, cancelled or expires.

Taxation

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

Short term employment and termination benefits

Short term employment benefits such as salaries and compensated absences (holiday pay) are recognised as an expense in the year in which the employees render service to the Trust. The cost of any unused holiday entitlement the Trust expects to pay in future periods is recognised in the period the employees' services are rendered.

The best estimate of the expenditure required to settle an obligation for termination benefits is recognised immediately as an expense when the Trust is demonstrably committed to terminating the employment of an employee or to provide termination benefits.

Pensions benefits

Retirement benefits to employees of the Trust are provided by the Teachers' Pension Scheme ('TPS') and the Local Government Pension Scheme ('LGPS'), which are multi-employer defined benefit schemes. The various LGPS of which the Trust is a member are administered by the relevant Local Authority.

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONTINUED)

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2023

1 Accounting policies (Continued)

Pension benefits (Continued)

The TPS is an unfunded scheme and contributions are calculated so as to spread the cost of pensions over employees' working lives with the 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 projected unit credit method. The TPS is a multi-employer scheme but 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 are recognised in the period to which they relate. Differences between contributions payable in the year and contributions actually paid are shown as either accruals or prepayments.

The LGPS are funded schemes and the assets are held separately from those of the 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 reporting date. The amounts charged to net income 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 liabilities/assets 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 and the effect of the asset ceiling are recognised immediately in other recognised gains and losses.

The LGPS assets are managed by the scheme trustees at scheme level, and the determination / allocation of assets to each individual employer in the scheme is managed by the scheme actuary. The assets are allocated to each employer for accounting purposes based on the valuation of the assets at the latest triennial valuation as adjusted for subsequent contributions received from the employer, asset returns and benefit payments made (either on a cash basis or actuarial basis).

The retirement benefit obligation recognised represents the deficit or surplus in the defined benefit plans. Any surplus resulting from this calculation is limited to the present value of any economic benefits available in the form of refunds from the plans or reductions in future contributions to the plans.

Fund accounting

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

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

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

Agency arrangements

The Trust acts as an agent in distributing 16-19 bursary funds from the ESFA. Payments received from the ESFA and subsequent disbursements to students are excluded from the statement of financial activities as the Trust does not have control over charitable application of the funds. The Trust can use up to 5% of the allocation towards its own administration costs and this would be recognised in the statement of financial activities, however the Trust does not retain this 5%. The funds received, paid and any balances held are disclosed in note 32.

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONTINUED)

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2023

2 Critical accounting estimates and areas of judgement

Accounting 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.

Critical accounting estimates and assumptions

The 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.

Local Government Pension Scheme

The present value of the Local Government Pension Scheme defined benefit obligation depends on a number of factors that are determined on an actuarial basis using a variety of assumptions. The assumptions used in determining the net cost or income for pensions include the discount rate. Any changes in these assumptions, which are disclosed in note 29, will impact the carrying amount of the pension liabilities. Furthermore a roll forward approach which projects results from the latest full actuarial valuation performed at 31 March 2022 has been used by the actuaries in valuing the pensions obligation at 31 August 2023. 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 obligation.

Enhanced pension provision

The Trust has included an enhanced pension provision in the financial statements, see note 19. An estimate of the expected future cost of any enhancement to the ongoing pension of a former member of staff is charged in full to the Statement of Financial Activities in the year that the provision is created. In subsequent years, a charge is made to the provision in the balance sheet. The provision is determined using a variety of assumptions including the appropriate discount rate and life expectancies. Any changes in these assumptions would impact on the carrying value of this provision.

Useful economic lives of tangible assets

The annual depreciation charge for the tangible assets is sensitive to changes in the estimated useful economic lives and residual values of the assets. The useful economic lives and residual values are re-assessed annually. They are amended when necessary to reflect current estimates, based on technological advancement, future investments, economic utilisation and the physical condition of the assets. See note 14 for the carrying amount of the property plant and equipment and note 1 for the depreciation accounting policy.

Property valuations

When new schools join the Trust, the new school land and buildings are included at a valuation at the date of transfer. This valuation is then treated as deemed cost.

Management have taken advice from professional valuers in determining the amounts at which those buildings are included in the financial statements.

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONTINUED)

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2023

2 Critical accounting estimates and areas of judgement (Continued)

Critical areas of judgement

Local Government Pension Scheme

Determining the existence of a minimum funding requirement for the Local Government Pension Scheme to including in the asset ceiling in measuring and recognising a surplus in the scheme. This judgement is based on an assessment of the nature of the scheme as a statutory scheme and is the inherent implied continuance and the operation of the primary and secondary contributions.

Properties subject to PFI arrangements

In some cases, the Trust occupies buildings under PFI agreements with the local authority and has applied judgement in determining that these buildings should not be capitalised on the balance sheet.

Management are required to make a judgement as to the appropriate accounting treatment and presentation of properties subject to PFI. They do this on a case by case basis with reference to specific contracts in place. The considerations include;

- Right to access/restrictions of use
- Risks of ownership
- Rewards of ownership
- Substance of transaction
- Any obligation to make capital contributions.

The Trust does not believe that there are any other additional critical areas where judgement is used.

3 Donations and capital grants

	Unrestricted funds £'000	Restricted funds £'000	Total 2023 £'000	Total 2022 £'000
Private sponsorship	44	17	61	111
Donated fixed assets	-	10,079	10,079	3,343
Capital grants	-	10,717	10,717	6,918
#wewill donations	-	-	-	749
Other donations	-	161	161	321
	<u>44</u>	<u>20,974</u>	<u>21,018</u>	<u>11,442</u>

The income from donations and capital grants was £21,018k (2022: £11,442k) of which £44k was unrestricted (2022: £258k), £178k was restricted income (2022: £923k) and £20,796k was restricted fixed assets (2022: £10,261k).

Donated fixed assets of £10,079k included an extension to the Ormiston Victory Academy donated by Norfolk County Council which included school buildings, fixtures, fittings and computer equipment with a fair value of £7,654k and an extension to the Ormiston Sir Stanley Matthews Academy donated by the City of Stoke on Trent Council which included school buildings, fixtures, fittings and computer equipment with a fair value of £2,425k.

In the prior year, the donation - transfer of existing academy into the trust was £52,080k of which (£5,641k) was restricted income and £57,721k was restricted fixed assets.

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONTINUED)

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2023

4 Funding for the Trust's charitable activities

	Unrestricted funds £'000	Restricted funds £'000	Total 2023 £'000	Total 2022 £'000
Funding for Trust's educational operations				
DfE/ESFA grants				
General annual grant (GAG)	-	204,944	204,944	196,749
Other DfE/ESFA grants:				
- Universal infant free school meals	-	284	284	270
- Pupil premium	-	12,574	12,574	12,182
- Supplementary funding	-	5,714	5,714	2,488
- Growth funding	-	171	171	-
- PE/Sports grant	-	149	149	163
- Rates relief	-	949	949	1,068
- Early careers Framework	-	391	391	74
- Teachers pay and pension grant	-	434	434	646
- Mainstream schools additional grant	-	3,331	3,331	-
- Others	-	529	529	237
	-	229,470	229,470	213,877
Other government grants				
Local authority grants - SEN	-	8,000	8,000	6,355
Local authority grants - other	-	6,706	6,706	5,413
Other government grants	-	1,804	1,804	2,322
	-	16,510	16,510	14,090
COVID-19 additional funding (DfE / ESFA)				
Catch-up premium	-	3,314	3,314	1,312
Other DfE/ESFA COVID-19 funding	-	1,632	1,632	2,714
	-	4,946	4,946	4,026
Other income				
Catering income	3,017	-	3,017	2,798
School trip income	-	2,050	2,050	977
Other incoming resources	53	650	703	685
	3,070	253,626	256,696	236,453
Teaching school				
DfE grants	-	2,165	2,165	1,956

The total income from funding for educational operations was £258,861k (2022: £238,409k) of which £3,070k was unrestricted (2022: £3,329k) and £255,791k was restricted income (2022: £235,080k).

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONTINUED)

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2023

4 Funding for the Trust's charitable activities (Continued)

The Trust has been eligible to claim additional funding in year from government support schemes in response to the coronavirus outbreak. The funding received is shown above under COVID-19 additional funding (DfE/ESFA).

The Trust received £3,314k (2022: £1,312k) of funding for catch-up and recovery premium and costs incurred in respect of this funding totalled £3,598k (2022: £1,638k), with a £108k (2022: £392k) remaining to be spent in 2023/24.

5 Other trading activities

	Unrestricted funds £'000	Restricted funds £'000	Total 2023 £'000	Total 2022 £'000
Hire of facilities	1,113	-	1,113	970
Sundry income	658	1,252	1,910	1,186
	<u>1,771</u>	<u>1,252</u>	<u>3,023</u>	<u>2,156</u>

The income from other trading activities was £3,023k (2022: £2,156k) of which £1,771k was unrestricted (2022: £1,595k) and £1,252k was restricted (2022: £561k).

6 Investment income

	Unrestricted funds £'000	Restricted funds £'000	Total 2023 £'000	Total 2022 £'000
Interest from short term deposits	124	-	124	7
	<u>124</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>124</u>	<u>7</u>

The income from investment income was £124k (2022: £7k) which is all unrestricted.

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONTINUED)

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2023

7 Expenditure

	Staff costs £'000	Non-pay expenditure Premises £'000	Other £'000	Total 2023 £'000	Total 2022 £'000
Expenditure on raising funds					
- Direct costs	-	-	253	253	147
Academy's educational operations					
- Direct costs	167,062	-	24,961	192,023	176,076
- Allocated support costs	36,362	46,899	10,897	94,158	90,165
Teaching school					
- Direct costs	2	-	1,480	1,482	1,205
- Allocated support costs	519	1	37	557	520
	<u>203,945</u>	<u>46,900</u>	<u>37,628</u>	<u>288,473</u>	<u>268,113</u>

The expenditure on raising funds was £253k (2022: £147k) which is all unrestricted.

Net income/(expenditure) for the year includes:

	2023 £'000	2022 £'000
Operating lease rentals	1,370	1,317
PFI scheme	1,819	1,683
Depreciation of tangible fixed assets	12,498	12,029
Amortisation of intangible fixed assets	47	43
Loss on disposal of tangible fixed assets	32	8
Impairment of tangible fixed assets	4,773	-
Interest payable on loan from Education and Skills Funding Agency	6	7
Net interest on defined benefit pension liability	981	2,620
Fees payable to RSM UK Audit LLP and its associates in respect of both audit and non-audit services are as follows:		
- Audit	76	66
- Other assurance services	30	26
- All other non-audit services	23	23
- Taxation compliance services	11	8

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONTINUED)

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2023

8 Charitable activities

	Unrestricted funds £'000	Restricted funds £'000	Total 2023 £'000	Total 2022 £'000
Direct costs				
Educational operations	1,243	190,780	192,023	176,076
Teaching school	-	1,482	1,482	1,205
Support costs				
Educational operations	3,170	90,988	94,158	90,165
Teaching school	-	557	557	520
	<u>4,413</u>	<u>283,807</u>	<u>288,220</u>	<u>267,966</u>

The expenditure on charitable activities (excluding Teaching School) was £286,181k (2022: £266,241k) of which £4,413k was unrestricted (2022: £3,560k), £257,050k was restricted income (2022: £246,550k) and £24,718k was restricted fixed assets (2022: £16,131k).

The expenditure on teaching school was £2,039k (2022: £1,725k) which is all restricted.

	Teaching School £'000	Educational operations £'000	Total 2023 £'000	Total 2022 £'000
Analysis of support costs				
Support staff costs	519	36,362	36,881	45,659
Depreciation, amortisation, impairment and loss on disposal	-	17,350	17,350	12,072
Technology costs	-	4,813	4,813	4,247
Premises costs	1	29,549	29,550	21,690
Legal costs	-	131	131	132
Other support costs	34	5,711	5,745	6,699
Governance costs	3	242	245	186
	<u>557</u>	<u>94,158</u>	<u>94,715</u>	<u>90,685</u>

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONTINUED)

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2023

9 Staff

Staff costs

Staff costs during the year were:

	2023 £'000	2022 £'000
Wages and salaries	148,457	136,246
Social security costs	15,562	14,532
Pension costs	33,424	45,215
	<hr/>	<hr/>
Staff costs - employees	197,443	195,993
Agency staff costs	6,360	4,223
Staff restructuring costs	142	264
	<hr/>	<hr/>
Total staff expenditure	203,945	200,480
	<hr/> <hr/>	<hr/> <hr/>

Staff restructuring costs comprise:

Redundancy payments	45	115
Severance payments (including special severance payments)	97	149
	<hr/>	<hr/>
	142	264
	<hr/> <hr/>	<hr/> <hr/>

Exit payments

The Trust paid 13 exit payments in the year, as follows:

£0 - £25,000	13
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Special staff severance payments

Included in staff restructuring costs are special severance payments totalling £97,251 (2022: £149,341). Individually, the payments were: £24,500, £19,684, £13,300, £10,500, £7,575, £6,674, £4,418, £4,100, £4,000 and £2,500.

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONTINUED)

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2023

9 Staff (Continued)

Staff numbers

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

	2023	2022
	Number	Number
Teachers	2,706	2,271
Administration and support	2,221	2,462
Management	61	58
	<u>4,988</u>	<u>4,791</u>
	<u><u>4,988</u></u>	<u><u>4,791</u></u>

Of the total staff numbers, 130 were employed at head office (2022: 97). Included within the staff employed at head office are 55 (2022: 28) regional lead practitioners and executive principals who work directly in schools. All other staff worked in the academies.

Administration and support refers to all non-management and non-teaching staff including class based educational support such as teaching assistants in addition to premises, catering, cleaning, admin, finance, HR, ICT, governance and other support. Management reflects principals and central director roles including executive and other members of the Trust senior leadership team.

The number of persons employed, expressed as a full time equivalent, was as follows:

	2023	2022
	Number	Number
Teachers	2,075	2,089
Administration and support	1,755	1,820
Management	61	58
	<u>3,891</u>	<u>3,967</u>
	<u><u>3,891</u></u>	<u><u>3,967</u></u>

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONTINUED)

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2023

9 Staff (Continued)

Higher paid staff

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

	2023 Number	2022 Number
£60,001 - £70,000	143	91
£70,001 - £80,000	46	41
£80,001 - £90,000	13	19
£90,001 - £100,000	18	6
£100,001 - £110,000	5	8
£110,001 - £120,000	11	4
£120,001 - £130,000	4	4
£130,001 - £140,000	3	3
£140,001 - £150,000	1	-
£150,001 - £160,000	2	1
£160,001 - £170,000	1	2
£210,001 - £220,000	2	1
	=====	=====

207 (2022: 144) of the above employees were principals, vice principals and assistant principals and participated in the Teachers' Pension Scheme.

Key management personnel

The total amount of employee benefits (including employer pension contributions and employer national insurance contributions) received by the executive team (who are listed in the reference and administration section) for their services to the Trust was £1,032,299 (2022: £1,152,457).

10 Central services

All Ormiston Academies Trust academies pay a partnership fee to cover centrally incurred costs. This covers the cost of management, school improvement and central teams. It also includes any centrally procured and reported supplier costs that are incurred on behalf of the academies. The central teams include governance, finance, fundraising, projects, data, ICT, legal, HR, communications, PR & media, procurement, estates and compliance. The partnership fee for the year ended 31 August 2023 is charged at 6.5% of ESFA GAG funds and as such the charge varies in line with the absolute GAG funding that each academy receives (2022: 6.5%).

The amounts charged during the year were as follows:

	2023 £'000	2022 £'000
Ormiston Bolingbroke Academy	468	478
Ormiston Chadwick Academy	401	376
Ormiston Horizon Academy	415	411
Ormiston Ilkeston Enterprise Academy	385	356
Ormiston Maritime Academy	248	251

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONTINUED)

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2023

10 Central services (Continued)

The amounts charged during the year were as follows:

	2023 £'000	2022 £'000
Ormiston Meridian Academy	411	398
Ormiston Sir Stanley Matthews Academy	461	439
Sandymoor Ormiston Academy	214	184
Brownhills Ormiston Academy	305	292
Ormiston Forge Academy	666	635
George Salter Academy	550	515
Ormiston NEW Academy	351	332
Ormiston Sandwell Community Academy	434	416
Ormiston Shelfield Community Academy	576	558
Ormiston SWB Academy	524	523
Tenbury High Ormiston Academy	168	152
Wodensborough Ormiston Academy	486	455
Ormiston Bushfield Academy	433	396
Cowes Enterprise College An Ormiston Academy	461	440
Ormiston Endeavour Academy	206	204
Ormiston Park Academy	277	272
Ormiston Rivers Academy	427	408
Ormiston Six Villages Academy	226	198
Stoke High School - Ormiston Academy	297	280
Ormiston Sudbury Academy	256	255
Broadland High Ormiston Academy	264	257
City of Norwich School An Ormiston Academy	635	589
Cliff Park Ormiston Academy	346	339
Ormiston Denes Academy	338	342
Flegg High Ormiston Academy	296	279
Ormiston Venture Academy	368	354
Ormiston Victory Academy	484	470
Ormiston Cliff Park Primary Academy	155	147
Edward Worlledge Ormiston Academy	104	108
Ormiston Herman Academy	101	98
Ormiston Meadows Academy	57	55
Packmoor Ormiston Academy	107	111
Ormiston South Parade Academy	152	145
Thomas Wolsey Ormiston Academy	68	58
Ormiston Beachcroft Academy	54	56
Ormiston Bridge Academy	45	46
Ormiston Courtyard Academy	12	12
Ormiston Latimer Academy	43	39
	13,275	12,729

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONTINUED)

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2023

11 Trustees' remuneration and expenses

One (2022: One) of the Trustees has been paid remuneration or has received other benefits from an employment with the Trust. The Trustees only receive remuneration in respect of services they provide undertaking the roles as staff members under their contracts of employment, and not in respect of their services as Trustees.

The value of Trustees' remuneration and other benefits was as follows:

Nick Hudson, Accounting Officer received remuneration of £214,974 (2022: £212,627) and pension contributions paid by the Trust in the year of £nil (2022: £nil).

During the year, travel and subsistence expenses totalling £3,804 (2022: £2,334) were reimbursed to 4 Trustees (2022: 3 Trustees). This included expense reimbursements to staff Trustees in connection with their employment.

Nick Hudson was the highest paid Trustee during the year ended 31 August 2023.

Other related party transactions are set out in note 31 to the financial statements.

12 Trustees and officers' insurance

In accordance with normal commercial practice, the Trust has purchased insurance to protect Trustees and officers from claims arising from negligent acts, errors or omissions occurring whilst on Trust business. The insurance provides cover up to £5,000,000 on any one claim. It is not possible to quantify the Trustees and officers indemnity element from the overall costs of the insurance premium paid.

13 Intangible fixed assets

	Computer software £'000
Cost	
At 1 September 2022 and at 31 August 2023	247
Amortisation	
At 1 September 2022	60
Charge for year	47
At 31 August 2023	107
Carrying amount	
At 31 August 2023	140
At 31 August 2022	187

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONTINUED)

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2023

14 Tangible fixed assets

	Land and buildings	Assets in the course of construction	Computer equipment	Fixtures, fittings and equipment	Motor vehicles	Total
	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
Cost						
At 1 September 2022	565,585	980	6,892	4,068	124	577,649
Transfers	1,768	(1,833)	65	-	-	-
Additions	10,435	1,488	834	639	30	13,426
Disposals	(25)	(6)	(1,009)	(119)	(45)	(1,204)
At 31 August 2023	577,763	629	6,782	4,588	109	589,871
Depreciation						
At 1 September 2022	73,109	-	2,159	1,904	79	77,251
On disposals	(6)	-	(1,005)	(116)	(45)	(1,172)
Charge for the year	10,713	-	1,342	428	15	12,498
Impairment	4,660	113	-	-	-	4,773
At 31 August 2023	88,476	113	2,496	2,216	49	93,350
Net book value						
At 31 August 2023	489,287	516	4,286	2,372	60	496,521
At 31 August 2022	492,476	980	4,733	2,164	45	500,398

Included in the land and buildings above is freehold land and buildings with a net book value at 31 August 2023 of £84,758k (2022: £85,190k) and long leasehold land and buildings with a net book value at 31 August 2023 of £404,529k (2022: £407,286k).

The long leasehold properties are leased from the local councils of the individual academies, relating to the land and buildings of the Trust and are leased for periods of up to 125 years for peppercorn rent. No such charges have been made in the current year (2022: £nil).

Included in the additions to land and buildings are new building extensions donated to the Trust by Norfolk County Council at a fair value of £7,340k and by Stoke on Trent Council at a fair value of £2,254k. Included in impairment is £4,660k of land and buildings and £113k of assets under construction relating to Ormiston Courtyard Academy. The premises were returned to the DfE following the closure of Ormiston Courtyard Academy and its amalgamation with Ormiston Bridge Academy with effect from 1 September 2023.

15 Debtors

	2023 £'000	2022 £'000
Trade debtors	1,573	1,555
VAT recoverable	2,700	2,275
Other debtors	25	65
Prepayments and accrued income	6,725	4,604
	11,023	8,499

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONTINUED)

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2023

16 Current asset investments

	2023 £'000	2022 £'000
Short-term deposit accounts	12,000	-

Current asset investment represents cash held on short-term deposit account, in accordance with the Trust's investment policy.

17 Creditors: amounts falling due within one year

	2023 £'000	2022 £'000
Trade creditors	3,921	1,968
Other taxation and social security	3,685	3,417
Other creditors	3,636	3,442
Accruals and deferred income (see note 20)	12,628	11,986
Loan from Education and Skills Funding Agency	700	700
Salix loan	158	158
	<u>24,728</u>	<u>21,671</u>

18 Creditors: amounts falling due after more than one year

	2023 £'000	2022 £'000
Loan from Education and Skills Funding Agency	452	827
Salix loan	315	473
	<u>767</u>	<u>1,300</u>

	2023 £'000	2022 £'000
Analysis of loans		
Wholly repayable within five years	1,625	2,158
Less: included in current liabilities	(858)	(858)
Amounts included above	<u>767</u>	<u>1,300</u>

Loan maturity

Debt due in one year or less	858	858
Due in more than one year but not more than two years	538	538
Due in more than two years but not more than five years	229	762
	<u>1,625</u>	<u>2,158</u>

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONTINUED)

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2023

18 Creditors: amounts falling due after more than one year (Continued)

At the year end, the Trust has a Salix loan amounting to £473k (2022: £631k). The loan terms are 9 years at an interest rate of 0%.

At the year end, the Trust owed the ESFA £320k (2022: £320k) with agreed payment terms of 4 years at interest rates of 0%. With respect to a further loan the Trust had with the ESFA, at the year end the Trust owed £600k (2022: £900k) with agreed payment terms of 9 years at an interest rate of 0%. Also with respect to a further loan with the ESFA, at year end the Trust owed £232k (2022: £307k) with agreed payment terms of 9 years at an interest rate of 1.83%.

19 Provisions for liabilities

The Trust recognises a provision of £1,096k (2022: £1,273k) in respect of enhanced pensions for staff who have previously been employed by the Trust. The provision has been recalculated in accordance with guidance issued by the funding bodies. During the year, part of the provision has been utilised amounting to £177k (2022: £294k).

The principal assumption for this calculation is a discount rate of 5.00% (2022: 3.30%) and price inflation of 2.80% (2022: 2.90%).

20 Deferred income

	2023	2022
	£'000	£'000
Deferred income is included within:		
Creditors due within one year	3,203	2,663
	<u> </u>	<u> </u>
Deferred income at 1 September 2022	2,663	1,580
Released from previous years	(2,663)	(1,580)
Resources deferred in the year	3,203	2,663
	<u> </u>	<u> </u>
Deferred income at 31 August 2023	3,203	2,663
	<u> </u>	<u> </u>

Deferred income relates to funds received in advance and trip income received in advance specifically for future periods.

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONTINUED)

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2023

21 Funds

	Balance at 1 September 2022 £'000	Income £'000	Expenditure £'000	Gains, losses and transfers £'000	Balance at 31 August 2023 £'000
Restricted general funds					
General Annual Grant (GAG)	14,306	204,944	(203,484)	(1,151)	14,615
Universal infant free school meals	-	284	(284)	-	-
Pupil premium	-	12,574	(12,574)	-	-
Supplementary funding	24	5,714	(5,738)	-	-
Growth funding	-	171	(171)	-	-
PE/Sports grant	-	149	(149)	-	-
Rates relief	-	949	(949)	-	-
Early careers framework	-	391	(391)	-	-
Teachers pay and pension grant	-	434	(434)	-	-
Mainstream schools additional grant	-	3,331	(3,331)	-	-
Other DfE/ESFA grants	13	529	(452)	-	90
Local authority grants - other	37	6,706	(6,722)	-	21
Local authority grants - SEN	-	8,000	(8,000)	-	-
Other government grants	21	1,804	(1,813)	-	12
Catch-up premium	392	3,314	(3,598)	-	108
Other DfE/ESFA COVID-19 funding	28	1,632	(1,624)	-	36
Government grants - Maritime Futures funding	185	-	(66)	-	119
Other grants - Maritime Futures funding	18	-	(18)	-	-
Teaching school	551	2,165	(2,039)	-	677
#wewill funding	281	-	(271)	-	10
Ormiston Trust endowment fund	206	-	(71)	-	135
Other restricted funds	559	4,130	(4,343)	-	346
Pension reserve	(22,641)	-	(2,567)	22,839	(2,369)
	<u>(6,020)</u>	<u>257,221</u>	<u>(259,089)</u>	<u>21,688</u>	<u>13,800</u>
Restricted fixed asset funds					
Funded out of DfE group capital grants, GAG, donated assets and transfer on conversion	510,465	20,796	(24,718)	1,151	507,694
	<u>510,465</u>	<u>20,796</u>	<u>(24,718)</u>	<u>1,151</u>	<u>507,694</u>
Total restricted funds	<u>504,445</u>	<u>278,017</u>	<u>(283,807)</u>	<u>22,839</u>	<u>521,494</u>
Unrestricted funds					
General funds	3,581	5,009	(4,666)	-	3,924
	<u>3,581</u>	<u>5,009</u>	<u>(4,666)</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>3,924</u>
Total funds	<u>508,026</u>	<u>283,026</u>	<u>(288,473)</u>	<u>22,839</u>	<u>525,418</u>

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONTINUED)

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2023

21 Funds (Continued)

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

Unrestricted income funds represent those resources which may be used towards meeting any of the charitable objectives of the 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 Department for Education where the asset acquired or created is held for a specific purpose. Restricted fixed asset funds include life cycling and capital maintenance funds.

Restricted general funds comprise all other restricted funds received and include grants from the Department for Education. Restricted general funds shown above included unspent '#wewill' funding of £10k (2022: £281k), endowment funds receivable from Ormiston Trust of £135k (2022: £206k), Maritime Futures funding - government grants of £119k (2022: £185k), Maritime Futures funding - other grants of £nil (2022: £18k) and a pension reserve of £2,369k (2021: £22,641k) in deficit.

Under the funding agreement with the Secretary of State for Education, the Trust was not subject to a limit on the amount of GAG that it could carry forward at the 31 August 2023.

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONTINUED)

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2023

21 Funds (Continued)

Funds prior year

	Balance at 1 September 2021 £'000	Income £'000	Expenditure £'000	Gains, losses and transfers £'000	Balance at 31 August 2022 £'000
Restricted general funds					
General Annual Grant (GAG)	7,783	196,749	(189,027)	(1,199)	14,306
Universal infant free school meals	121	270	(391)	-	-
Pupil premium	196	12,182	(12,378)	-	-
Supplementary funding	-	2,488	(2,464)	-	24
Teachers pay and pension grant	-	646	(646)	-	-
Other DfE/ESFA grants	594	1,542	(2,123)	-	13
Local authority grants	-	11,768	(11,731)	-	37
Other government grants	711	2,322	(3,012)	-	21
Catch-up premium	718	1,312	(1,638)	-	392
Other DfE/ESFA COVID-19 funding	49	2,714	(2,735)	-	28
Government grants - Maritime Futures funding	-	185	-	-	185
Other grants - Maritime Futures funding	-	50	(32)	-	18
Teaching school	320	1,956	(1,725)	-	551
#iwill funding	23	-	(23)	-	-
#wewill funding	-	749	(468)	-	281
Ormiston Trust endowment fund	711	-	(505)	-	206
Other restricted funds	-	1,631	(1,072)	-	559
Pension reserve	(144,942)	(5,641)	(18,305)	146,247	(22,641)
	<u>(133,716)</u>	<u>230,923</u>	<u>(248,275)</u>	<u>145,048</u>	<u>(6,020)</u>
Restricted fixed asset funds					
Funded out of DfE group capital grants, GAG, donated assets and transfer on conversion	457,415	67,982	(16,131)	1,199	510,465
	<u>457,415</u>	<u>67,982</u>	<u>(16,131)</u>	<u>1,199</u>	<u>510,465</u>
Total restricted funds	<u>323,699</u>	<u>298,905</u>	<u>(264,406)</u>	<u>146,247</u>	<u>504,445</u>
Unrestricted funds					
General funds	2,099	5,189	(3,707)	-	3,581
	<u>2,099</u>	<u>5,189</u>	<u>(3,707)</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>3,581</u>
Total funds	<u>325,798</u>	<u>304,094</u>	<u>(268,113)</u>	<u>146,247</u>	<u>508,026</u>

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONTINUED)

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2023

21 Funds (Continued)

In line with the freedoms within the Trust's master funding agreement and with encouragement of the Department of Education, the Trustees decided to pool all reserves with effect from 31 August 2018. Accordingly, no surpluses or deficits are attributed to particular academies but all are held centrally.

Total cost analysis by academy

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

	Teaching and educational support staff £'000	Other support staff costs £'000	Educational supplies £'000	Other costs excluding depreciation £'000	Total 2023 £'000	Total 2022 £'000
Ormiston Bolingbroke Academy	5,895	1,060	489	1,656	9,100	8,732
Ormiston Chadwick Academy	4,370	691	536	1,935	7,532	6,341
Ormiston Horizon Academy	4,962	998	538	1,292	7,790	7,227
Ormiston Ilkeston Enterprise Academy	4,235	879	744	1,417	7,275	6,225
Ormiston Maritime Academy	3,119	653	364	962	5,098	4,621
Ormiston Meridian Academy	4,803	668	628	1,600	7,699	7,045
Ormiston Sir Stanley Matthews Academy	5,218	932	2,179	2,131	10,460	9,193
Ormiston Sandymoor Academy	2,525	675	305	1,053	4,558	3,798
Brownhills Ormiston Academy	3,368	581	639	1,240	5,828	5,344
Ormiston Forge Academy	8,513	1,072	907	1,876	12,368	11,127
George Salter Academy	6,357	1,105	790	2,086	10,338	9,182
Ormiston NEW Academy	4,381	607	432	1,576	6,996	5,995
Ormiston Sandwell Community Academy	5,049	662	654	1,735	8,100	7,293
Ormiston Sheffield Community Academy	6,749	1,075	762	2,075	10,661	10,013
Ormiston SWB Academy	5,816	1,063	475	1,804	9,158	8,944
Tenbury High Ormiston Academy	2,174	296	312	584	3,366	2,861
Wodensborough Ormiston Academy	5,823	778	747	2,230	9,578	8,643
Ormiston Bushfield Academy	5,313	820	333	1,716	8,182	7,356
Cowes Enterprise College						
An Ormiston Academy	5,607	756	700	1,736	8,799	7,737
Ormiston Endeavour Academy	2,422	507	170	693	3,792	3,466
Ormiston Park Academy	3,883	605	489	1,191	6,168	5,566
Ormiston Rivers Academy	4,882	999	539	1,524	7,944	7,289
Ormiston Six Villages Academy	2,399	692	328	860	4,279	3,720

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONTINUED)

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2023

21 Funds (Continued)

	Teaching and educational support staff £'000	Other support staff costs £'000	Educational supplies £'000	Other costs excluding depreciation £'000	Total 2023 £'000	Total 2022 £'000
Stoke High School - Ormiston Academy	2,989	550	323	1,007	4,869	4,510
Ormiston Sudbury Academy	3,013	573	233	842	4,661	4,435
Broadland High Ormiston Academy	3,262	269	384	984	4,899	4,548
City of Norwich School An Ormiston Academy	7,435	994	748	2,160	11,337	10,510
Cliff Park Ormiston Academy	3,959	717	397	1,270	6,343	6,082
Ormiston Denes Academy	4,054	817	321	1,082	6,274	5,971
Flegg High Ormiston Academy	3,670	682	307	1,007	5,666	5,053
Ormiston Venture Academy	4,165	974	491	1,220	6,850	6,158
Ormiston Victory Academy	6,279	911	499	1,692	9,381	8,243
Ormiston Cliff Park Primary Academy	2,030	312	112	580	3,034	2,900
Edward Worlledge Ormiston Academy	1,598	259	91	409	2,357	2,302
Ormiston Herman Academy	1,551	183	124	385	2,243	1,956
Ormiston Meadows Academy	892	220	49	300	1,461	1,320
Packmoor Ormiston Academy	1,472	322	103	512	2,409	2,376
Ormiston South Parade Academy	2,093	455	149	600	3,297	3,098
Thomas Wolsey Ormiston Academy	1,964	352	83	583	2,982	2,445
Ormiston Beachcroft Academy	1,649	357	70	790	2,866	2,342
Ormiston Bridge Academy	1,571	380	28	823	2,802	2,465
Ormiston Courtyard Academy	354	113	11	206	684	591
Ormiston Latimer Academy	1,026	371	31	601	2,029	1,560
Central Services	3,631	7,211	280	10,604	21,726	14,484
	<u>166,520</u>	<u>35,196</u>	<u>18,894</u>	<u>62,629</u>	<u>283,239</u>	<u>251,067</u>

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONTINUED)

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2023

22 Analysis of net assets between funds

	Unrestricted Funds £'000	Restricted General Funds £'000	Restricted Fixed asset Funds £'000	Total Funds £'000
Fund balances at 31 August 2023 are represented by:				
Intangible fixed assets	-	-	140	140
Tangible fixed assets	-	-	496,521	496,521
Current assets	3,924	39,563	14,230	57,717
Current liabilities	-	(21,531)	(3,197)	(24,728)
Non-current liabilities	-	(767)	-	(767)
Provisions for liabilities	-	(1,096)	-	(1,096)
Pension scheme liability	-	(2,369)	-	(2,369)
Total net assets	3,924	13,800	507,694	525,418

	Unrestricted Funds £'000	Restricted funds: General £'000	Fixed asset £'000	Total Funds £'000
Fund balances at 31 August 2022 are represented by:				
Intangible fixed assets	-	-	187	187
Tangible fixed assets	-	-	500,398	500,398
Current assets	3,581	40,865	9,880	54,326
Current liabilities	-	(21,671)	-	(21,671)
Non-current liabilities	-	(1,300)	-	(1,300)
Provisions for liabilities	-	(1,273)	-	(1,273)
Pension scheme liability	-	(22,641)	-	(22,641)
Total net assets	3,581	(6,020)	510,465	508,026

23 Contingent liabilities

During the period of the Funding Agreement, in the event of the sale or disposal by other means of any asset for which a Government capital grant was received, the Trust is required either to re-invest the proceeds or to repay the Secretary of State for Education the same proportion of the proceeds of the sale or disposal as equates with the proportion of the original cost met by the Secretary of State for Education.

Upon termination of the Funding Agreement, whether as a result of the Secretary of State for Education or the Trust serving notice, the Trust shall repay to the Secretary of State for Education sums determined by reference to:

(a) the value at the time of the Trust's site and premises and other assets held for the purpose of the Trust; and

(b) the extent to which expenditure incurred in providing those assets was met by payments by the Secretary of State for Education under the Funding Agreement.

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONTINUED)

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2023

24 Capital commitments

	2023	2022
	£'000	£'000
Expenditure contracted for but not provided in the financial statements	652	1,830
	<u> </u>	<u> </u>

25 Long-term commitments

Operating leases

At 31 August 2023, the total of the Trust's future minimum lease payments under non-cancellable operating leases was:

	2023	2022
	£'000	£'000
Amounts due within one year	1,272	1,226
Amounts due between one and five years	2,322	2,124
Amounts due after five years	1,901	1,954
	<u> </u>	<u> </u>
	<u>5,495</u>	<u>5,304</u>

The Trust is also party to facilities management contracts under three PFI schemes. The Trust is party to the contracts under supplemental agreements. Total commitments under the contracts are £1,927k (2022: £1,746k) within 1 year, £5,579k (2022: £5,679k) between 1 and 5 years and £10,751k (2022: £10,579k) in greater than 5 years.

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONTINUED)

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2023

26 Reconciliation of net (expenditure)/income to net cash flow from operating activities	2023 £'000	2022 £'000
Net (expenditure)/income for the reporting period (as per the statement of financial activities)	(5,447)	35,981
Adjusted for:		
Net surplus on transfer of academy in the Trust	-	(52,080)
Capital grants from DfE and other capital income	(10,717)	(6,918)
Donated fixed assets	(10,079)	(3,343)
Interest receivable	(124)	(7)
Interest payable	6	7
Pension costs less contributions payable	1,586	15,685
Pension scheme finance costs	981	2,620
Depreciation of tangible fixed assets	12,498	12,029
Amortisation of intangible fixed assets	47	43
Loss on disposal of fixed assets	32	8
Impairment of fixed assets	4,773	-
(Decrease) in provisions	(177)	(294)
Movements in working capital:		
(Increase) in stocks	-	(21)
(Increase) in debtors	(2,524)	(563)
Increase in creditors	3,057	3,606
Net cash (used in)/provided by operating activities	(6,088)	6,753

27 Analysis of changes in net funds	1 September 2022 £'000	Cash flows £'000	Other non- cash changes £'000	31 August 2023 £'000
Cash	45,471	(11,133)	-	34,338
Short term investment	-	12,000	-	12,000
	45,471	867	-	46,338
Loans falling due within one year	(858)	533	(533)	(858)
Loans falling due after more than one year	(1,300)	-	533	(767)
	43,313	1,400	-	44,713

28 Members' liability

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

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONTINUED)

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2023

29 Pension and similar obligations

The Trust's employees belong to two principal pension schemes: the Teachers' Pension Scheme England and Wales (TPS) for academic and related staff; and the Local Government Pension Scheme (LGPS) for non-teaching staff, which is managed by the separate relevant local authorities. Each Local Authority runs a separate pension fund. Both are multi-employer defined benefit schemes.

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

Contributions amounting to £3,515k (2022: £3,393k) were payable to the schemes at 31 August 2023 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' Pensions 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 and members contribute on a 'pay as you go' basis - these contributions along with those made by employers are credited to the Exchequer. The Trust has accounted for its contributions to the scheme as if it were a defined contribution scheme. The Trust has set out below the information available on the scheme.

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 2023 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 2020 in accordance with The Public Service Pensions (Valuations and Employer Cost Cap) Directions 2023 and the Employer Contribution Rate was assessed using agreed assumptions in line with the Directions and was accepted at the original assessed rate as there was no cost control mechanism breach.

The valuation report was published by the Department for Education on 26 October 2023. The key elements of the valuation and subsequent consultation are:

- total scheme liabilities for service (the capital sum needed at 31 March 2020 to meet the stream of future cash flows in respect of benefits earned) of £262 billion
- value of notional assets (estimated future contributions together with the proceeds from the notional investments held at the valuation date) of £222 billion
- notional past service deficit of £39.8 billion (2016 £22 billion)
- discount rate is 1.7% in excess of CPI (2016 2.4% in excess of CPI) (this change has had the greatest financial significance)

As a result of the valuation, employer contribution rates have been set at 28.6% of pensionable pay from 1 April 2024 until 31 March 2027 (compared to 23.68% under the previous valuation including a 0.08% administration levy).

The employer's pension costs paid to the TPS in the period amounted to £21,003k (2022: £20,062k).

The TPS is a multi-employer pension plan and there is insufficient information to account for the scheme as a defined benefit plan so it is accounted for as a defined contribution plan.

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONTINUED)

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2023

29 Pension and similar obligations (Continued)

Local Government Pension Scheme

Ormiston Academies Trust is a member of the Cambridgeshire, Cheshire, Norfolk, Isle of Wight, Suffolk, West Midlands, Staffordshire, Derbyshire, East Riding, Essex, West Sussex, Worcestershire, City of Westminster, Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea and London Borough of Hammersmith and Fulham Local Government Pension Schemes.

The LGPS is a funded defined benefit scheme, with the assets held in separate Trustee-administered funds. The total contributions are as noted below. The agreed contribution rates for future years are 15.3 - 28.7% 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 academy closure, outstanding Local Government Pension Scheme liabilities would be met by the Department for Education. The guarantee came into force on 18 July 2013 and on 21 July 2022, the Department for Education reaffirmed its commitment to the guarantee, with a parliamentary minute published on GOV.UK. .

Principal actuarial assumptions:

The following information is based upon a full actuarial valuation of the funds at 31 March 2022 updated to 31 August 2023 by the qualified independent actuaries.

	Discount rate for scheme liabilities		Rate of increase in salaries		Rate of increase for pensions in payment / inflation	
	2023 %	2022 %	2023 %	2022 %	2023 %	2022 %
Cambridge Local Government Pension Scheme	5.20	4.25	3.50	3.55	3.00	3.05
Cheshire Local Government Pension Scheme	5.20	4.25	3.70	3.75	3.00	3.05
Norfolk Local Government Pension Scheme	5.20	4.25	3.70	3.75	3.00	3.05
Isle of Wight Local Government Pension Scheme	5.20	4.25	3.95	3.85	2.95	3.05
Suffolk Local Government Pension Scheme	5.20	4.25	4.00	3.75	3.00	3.05
West Midlands Local Government Pension Scheme	5.20	4.25	3.95	4.05	2.95	3.05
Staffordshire Local Government Pension Scheme	5.20	4.25	3.50	3.45	3.00	3.05
Derbyshire Local Government Pension Scheme	5.20	4.25	4.00	3.75	3.00	3.05
East Riding Local Government Pension Scheme	5.20	4.25	2.95	3.95	2.95	3.05
Essex Local Government Pension Scheme	5.30	4.25	3.90	3.95	2.90	2.95
West Sussex Local Government Pension Scheme	5.20	4.25	4.45	3.55	2.95	3.05
Worcestershire Local Government Pension Scheme	5.40	4.30	4.30	4.40	3.00	2.90
City of Westminster Local Government Pension Scheme	5.20	4.25	3.95	4.05	2.95	3.05
Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea Local Government Pension Scheme	5.20	4.25	3.95	4.05	2.95	3.05
London Borough of Hammersmith and Fulham Local Government Pension Scheme	5.20	4.25	3.95	4.05	2.95	3.05

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONTINUED)

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2023

29 Pension and similar obligations (Continued)

Total contributions made	2023	2022
	£'000	£'000
Employer's contributions	10,475	8,875
Employees' contributions	2,849	2,456
Total contributions	13,324	11,331

Mortality

The assumed life expectations are:

	Males		Females	
	Retiring today 2023	Retiring in 20 years 2023	Retiring today 2023	Retiring in 20 years 2023
Cambridge Local Government Pension Scheme	20.6	22.5	24.4	25.0
Cheshire Local Government Pension Scheme	19.6	20.2	23.5	24.8
Norfolk Local Government Pension Scheme	20.5	21.8	23.5	25.9
Isle of Wight Local Government Pension Scheme	19.7	24.1	21.6	25.5
Suffolk Local Government Pension Scheme	20.3	21.9	24.0	25.4
West Midlands Local Government Pension Scheme	20.3	21.4	24.1	24.8
Staffordshire Local Government Pension Scheme	21.1	21.0	23.4	24.7
Derbyshire Local Government Pension Scheme	20.8	21.6	23.8	25.3
East Riding Local Government Pension Scheme	21.1	21.9	24.0	25.5
Essex Local Government Pension Scheme	20.7	22.0	23.2	24.6
West Sussex Local Government Pension Scheme	21.6	21.0	24.9	25.4
Worcestershire Local Government Pension Scheme	21.5	22.8	23.8	25.6
City of Westminster Local Government Pension Scheme	21.9	23.1	24.3	25.8
Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea Local Government Pension Scheme	21.9	22.8	24.5	25.7
London Borough of Hammersmith and Fulham Local Government Pension Scheme	21.6	22.6	24.3	25.6

The Trust's share of the assets in the scheme

	2023	2022
	Fair value	Fair value
	£'000	£'000
Equities	113,435	106,739
Bonds	33,790	29,076
Property	19,529	18,198
Cash and other	8,444	10,133
Total fair value of assets	175,198	164,146

The actual return on scheme assets was £(13,526,000) (2022: £(2,001,000)).

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONTINUED)

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2023

29 Pension and similar obligations (Continued)

Amount recognised in the statement of financial activities	2023 £'000	2022 £'000
Current service cost	12,061	24,560
Net interest cost	981	2,620
	<hr/>	<hr/>
Total operating charge	13,042	27,180
	<hr/> <hr/>	<hr/> <hr/>
Changes in the present value of defined benefit obligations		2023 £'000
At 1 September 2022		186,787
Current service cost		12,061
Interest cost		8,183
Employee contributions		2,849
Actuarial gain		(43,567)
Benefits paid		(2,398)
		<hr/>
At 31 August 2023		163,915
		<hr/> <hr/>
Changes in the fair value of the Trust's share of scheme assets		2023 £'000
At 1 September 2022		164,146
Interest income		7,202
Return on plan assets (excluding net interest on the net defined pension liability)		(7,076)
Employer contributions		10,475
Employee contributions		2,849
Benefits paid		(2,398)
		<hr/>
At 31 August 2023		175,198
		<hr/> <hr/>

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONTINUED)

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2023

29 Pension and similar obligations (Continued)

	2023 £'000
Present value of defined benefit obligations	(163,915)
Fair value of plan assets	175,198
	<hr/>
Net asset	11,283
Restriction to level of asset ceiling	(13,652)
	<hr/>
Net liability recognised in the balance sheet	(2,369)
	<hr/> <hr/>

The value of the academy trust's share of net assets has been restricted due to the effect of the asset ceiling being the maximum value of the present of the economic benefits available in the form of the unconditional right to reduced contributions from the plan. A corresponding charge has been made to other comprehensive income in the period.

30 Controlling party

The Trustees consider Ormiston Trust, a grant making Trust that chiefly assists schools and organisations supporting children and young people (company number: 09648958 and charity registration number: 1164358) to be the ultimate controlling party due to that organisation's right to appoint a majority of the Trustees.

Ormiston Trust prepares consolidated financial statements which incorporates the results and positions of the Trust. Copies of the consolidated financial statements of Ormiston Trust can be obtained from its registered office: Suite 1 Windmill Oast, Benenden Road, Rolvenden, Cranbrook, Kent, England, TN17 4PF.

31 Related party transactions

The following related party transactions took place during the year ended 31 August 2023. All transactions involving such organisations are conducted at cost and in accordance with the Trust's financial regulations and normal procurement procedures.

During the year, Ormiston Academies Trust recognised grants of £3k (2022: £945k) from Ormiston Trust. At the year end, £135k (2022: £556k) was due from Ormiston Trust.

During the year, Ormiston Academies Trust purchased goods totalling £nil (2022: £1k) from Birmingham Ormiston Academy, a fellow group undertaking. At the year end, no amounts were outstanding (2022: £nil).

32 Agency arrangements

The Trust distributes 16 - 19 bursary funds to students as agent for the ESFA. In the accounting period ending 31 August 2023, the Trust received £293k (2022: £293k) and disbursed £206k (2022: £218k) from the fund. At the year end, the balance not yet disbursed was £88k (2022: £75k).

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

Conclusion

We have carried out an engagement in accordance with the terms of our engagement letter dated 12 April 2021 and further to the requirements of the Education and Skills Funding Agency ('ESFA') as included in the extant Framework and Guide for External Auditors and Reporting Accountants of Academy Trusts, to obtain limited assurance about whether the expenditure disbursed and income received by Ormiston Academies Trust during the period 1 September 2022 to 31 August 2023 have been applied to the purposes identified by Parliament and the financial transactions conform to the authorities which govern them.

In the course of our work, nothing has come to our attention which suggests that in all material respects the expenditure disbursed and income received during the period 1 September 2022 to 31 August 2023 have not been applied to purposes intended by Parliament and the financial transactions do not conform to the authorities which govern them.

Basis for conclusion

The framework that has been applied is set out in the extant Framework and Guide for External Auditors and Reporting Accountants of Academy Trusts. We are independent of Ormiston Academies Trust in accordance with the ethical requirements that are applicable to this engagement and we have fulfilled our ethical requirements in accordance with these requirements. We believe the assurance evidence we have obtained is sufficient to provide a basis for our conclusion.

Responsibilities of Ormiston Academies Trust's accounting officer and trustees

The accounting officer is responsible, under the requirements of Ormiston Academies Trust's funding agreement with the Secretary of State for Education dated 30 July 2018 and the Academy Trust Handbook extant from 1 September 2022, for ensuring that expenditure disbursed and income received are applied for the purposes intended by Parliament and the financial transactions conform to the authorities which govern them. The accounting officer is also responsible for preparing the Statement of Regularity, Propriety and Compliance. The trustees (who are also the directors of the charitable company for the purposes of company law) are responsible for the proper conduct and financial operation of Ormiston Academies Trust and appointment of the accounting officer.

Reporting Accountant's responsibilities for reporting on regularity

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 extant Framework and Guide for External Auditors and Reporting Accountants of Academy Trusts.

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 the procedures performed vary in nature and timing from, and are less in extent than for a reasonable assurance engagement; consequently a limited assurance engagement 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.

We report to you whether anything has come to our attention in carrying out our work which suggests that in all material respects, expenditure disbursed and income received during the period 1 September 2022 to 31 August 2023 have not been applied to purposes intended by Parliament or that the financial transactions do not conform to the authorities which govern them.

Our work included identification and assessment of the design and operational effectiveness of the controls, policies and procedures that have been implemented to ensure compliance with the framework of authorities including the specific requirements of the funding agreement with the Secretary of State for Education, the Academy Trust Handbook 2022 published by the Education and Skills Funding Agency and high level financial control areas where we identified a risk of material irregularity is likely to arise. It also included areas assessed as presenting a higher risk of impropriety. We undertook detailed testing, on a sample basis, based on the identified areas where a material irregularity is likely

to arise, or potential impropriety where such areas are in respect of controls, policies and procedures that apply to classes of transactions. Our work was undertaken with due regard to the 'Evidence to support conclusion on regularity' guidance in the extant Framework and Guide for External Auditors and Reporting Accountants of Academy Trusts.

This work was integrated with our audit on the financial statements and evidence was also derived from the conduct of that audit to the extent it supports the regularity conclusion.

Use of our report

This report is made solely to Ormiston Academies Trust and the ESFA in accordance with the terms of our engagement letter dated 12 April 2021. Our work has been undertaken so that we might state to the Ormiston Academies 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 Ormiston Academies Trust and the ESFA, for our work, for this report, or for the conclusion we have formed.

RSM UK Audit LLP

RSM UK AUDIT LLP

Chartered Accountants
103 Colmore Row
Birmingham
West Midlands
B3 3AG

Date: 20 December 2023



ACHIEVING MORE TOGETHER

Ormiston Academies Trust annual report and
financial statements, year ending 31 August 2023

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