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COMPANIES HOUSE

drb Ignite Multi Academy Trust

(A Company Limited by Guarantee)

Annual Report and Financial Statements Year ended 31 August 2023

Company Registration Number 09284055 (England and Wales)

Outstanding
pupil experience

Excellence
in education

Impactful
teaching

Effective
partnerships



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Reference and Administrative Details

Members:

Name

David Sheldon
 Malcolm Frier
 Tim Reid

*Diocesan Member representing the
 Worcester Diocese Academy Trust (WDAT)*

Trustees:

Name

David Sheldon (Chair)
 Viv Randall OBE (Vice Chair)
 Cheryl Millard
 Catherine Gallagher
 David Peters
 Bernard Peters
 John McDermott
 Robert Bowater (CEO)
 Sadia Hanif
 Mahbub Elahi
 Sue Egersdorff
 Catherine Griffiths

Resigned: 29 November 2022

Resigned: 7 September 2023

Appointed: 1 September 2023

Appointed: 1 September 2023

Clerk:

Catherine Ludwig

Clerk to Trust board

**Executive
 Leadership
 Team:**

Name

Role

Robert Bowater
 James Hill

CEO / Accounting Officer
 Executive Director of School
 Improvement

Edward Masterson

Director of Curriculum & Professional
 Development

Alison Quinn
 Greg Snowdon
 Mollie Sheldon

Trust Inclusion Lead
 Strategic School Improvement Lead
 School Improvement Operations Manager

Executive Leadership Team (continued)

<i>Name</i>	<i>Role</i>
Christopher Finnerty	Director of Finance & Operations
Julie Sambrook	Director of HR
Alvin Walters	Director of IT & Compliance
Geoff Bagley	Director of Estates
Harpal Singh Sembi	Head of Marketing and Communications
Rebecca Hawkings	Trust Office Manager

Trust details:

Company name	drb Ignite Multi Academy Trust
Company number	09284055
Principal & Registered Office	2nd Floor, 3 Brindleyplace, Birmingham, B1 2JB

Independent Auditor:

Feltons Chartered Accountants	8 Sovereign Court, 8 Graham Street, Birmingham, B1 3JR
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Bankers:

Lloyds Bank	114-116 Colmore Row, Birmingham, B3 3DP
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Legal:

Browne Jacobson LLP	103 Colmore Row, Birmingham, B2 4BU
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Website:

www.drbigitemat.org



Welcome

From David Sheldon, Chair of Trustees

I am proud to present our Academy Trust Annual Report for the academic year 2022-23. As Chair of Trustees, I am privileged to lead a dedicated group of individuals committed to ensuring the continued success and growth of our Trust and its schools.

This annual report serves as a comprehensive overview of our collective achievements, and the impact we have had on the lives of our pupils and the communities we serve. We have worked tirelessly to uphold our commitment to educational excellence, inclusivity, and the wellbeing of all within our Trust. It is a testament to the unwavering commitment of our Trustees, school leaders, educators, and support staff who have worked tirelessly to provide the highest quality education and support for our pupils.

As we reflect on the past year, we acknowledge the challenges we have faced, including the ongoing impact of the global pandemic and evolving educational landscape. These challenges have tested our resolve, but they have also reinforced our determination to adapt, innovate, and thrive. We have done this by living our values and staying committed to our vision:

'All pupils achieve the highest standards of educational outcomes regardless of circumstance or background'

Looking ahead, we are excited about the opportunities that the future holds. We understand that education is not just about imparting knowledge but also about nurturing creativity, resilience, and the skills needed for a rapidly changing world. Our strategic vision guides us in this endeavour, ensuring that we prepare our pupils not only for the challenges of today but also for the opportunities of tomorrow.

I want to express my heartfelt gratitude to each member of our Trust community for your dedication, hard work, and belief in our mission. Together, we have accomplished great things, and together, we will continue to shape the future of education in our communities.

I invite you to explore this report, celebrate our achievements, and join us in our commitment to making a positive and lasting impact on the lives of the pupils we serve.

With warm regards,



David Sheldon
Chair of Trustees
drb Ignite Multi Academy Trust

Board of Trustees



David Sheldon
Chair of Trustees

Safeguarding and Child Protection
Relationship and Health Education



Viv Randall OBE
Vice-Chair

Outcomes and Quality of Education
Behaviour and Attendance



Cheryl Millard
Trustee

Inclusion, SEND and
Children in Care



Bernard Peters
Trustee

Christian
Distinctiveness



David Peters
Trustee

Pupil, Sports, and
Recovery Premia



John McDermott
Trustee

Sustainability



Robert Bowater
Trustee

Trustee Professional
Development Lead



Sue Egersdorff
Trustee

Pupil and Staff Wellbeing
and Mental Health



Catherine Griffiths
Trustee

Rights Respecting
Schools Programme



Mahbub Elahi
Parent Trustee

Parent and Community
Voice

Outstanding
pupil experience

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Impactful
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Effective
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Welcome

From Robert Bowater, Chief Executive Officer

I am delighted to present our Academy Trust Annual Report for the 2022-23 academic year. Our main priority for the reporting year has been to enhance educational outcomes and raise standards across all Trust schools as we continue to re-establish cohesive and coherent learning following the Covid-19 pandemic.

We believe the professional capacity and capability of our leadership, teaching and support staff are central to effective teaching and learning.

As one Trust, we work together to create an expectation of ongoing professional development, teacher enquiry and evidence-based practice that sustains and improves the quality of pedagogy and learning for everyone.

We are committed to developing improvement and intervention models that solve and overcome persistent problems, particularly for our most disadvantaged pupils.

As a group of ten schools in a close geographical area, we have the ability of being able to work collaboratively with those doing similar roles in different schools, picking up best teaching practice and sharing great ideas.

The excellent progress we have made this year highlights the collaborative efforts of our Trust community in supporting and driving academic excellence and creating positive learning environments for all our pupils.

Over the last year there have been many successes which are highlighted in this report. This includes the successful Ofsted inspections of Audley Primary and Princethorpe Junior School, and the further development of the Trust aligned curriculum, which Ofsted noted is ambitious and creates a culture of aspiration.



We also welcomed The Oaks Primary School in Birmingham to our Trust, and we are looking forward to working with and supporting staff, pupils and parents.

Another of the highlights over the past year has been the substantial progress we have made in enhancing our sustainability and environmental initiatives. We firmly believe in our responsibility to not only educate our pupils but to instill in them a deep understanding of their role in preserving and enriching our world. Our commitment to sustainability has included the development of innovative programs and initiatives, such as our Forest Schools and Eco Committees, which are transforming the way we engage with our natural environment.

Our investment in the professional growth and development of our teaching and leadership staff continues to be a cornerstone of our school improvement strategy. Our partnership with the Ambition Institute, and the access to National Professional Qualifications, has allowed staff to expand their knowledge and skills, fostering a culture of continuous improvement in our leadership and classrooms.

I would like to extend my heartfelt gratitude to our dedicated Trustees, all staff, pupils, and our supportive families. The trust placed in our educational community is the foundation upon which we continue to build a brighter future for all our pupils.

Thank you for your continued support.

With best wishes.



Rob Bowater
Chief Executive Officer
drb Ignite Multi Academy Trust

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pupil experience

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Trustees Annual Report and Financial Statements

The Trustees present their Annual Report together with the financial statements and independent auditor's report of the charitable company for the year 1 September 2022 to 31 August 2023.

This Annual Report serves the purposes of a Trustees' report, a Directors' report and a Strategic Report under company law.

The first part of the report provides a comprehensive overview of the Trust's work, governance, and achievements during the period. It serves to inform stakeholders, including Trustees, parents, staff, and the wider community, about the Trust's progress and future plans.

The second part of the report focuses on the financial performance of the Trust and provides a detailed account of the Trust's financial activities. This section of the report also demonstrates the Trust's compliance with the Department for Education (DfE) Academy Trust Handbook and the Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA) reporting requirements.

Trustees have referred to the guidance contained in the Charity Commission's general guidance on public benefit when reviewing the Trust's aims and objectives.



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Section 1:

About drb Ignite Multi Academy Trust



Background

drb Ignite Multi Academy Trust is a vibrant and growing charitable organisation. As a unique family of ten primary schools, our vision and values are shared and consistently lived across all schools so that:

'All pupils achieve the highest standards of educational outcomes regardless of circumstance or background'

The Trust was founded in October 2014 and is an ambitious and dynamic Multi-Academy Trust with a dedicated mission to drive educational improvement across its group of schools. We see ourselves as a new civic structure committed to advancing education for the public benefit. The Trust places significant importance on strong school leadership and collaborative endeavour in achieving and sustaining this ambition for all pupils.

We are a specialist primary phase Trust operating ten schools across Birmingham and Dudley (nine community schools and one Church of England school) across the age range from nursery to year six.

The close proximity of our schools enables staff to easily travel between schools to collaborate, share resources and provide school improvement support. This capacity to work together and get to know each other's schools and communities is an important and central feature of our system design.

Our Trust operates with an annual budget of £24 million which is provided by the Department for Education (DfE) through our Funding Agreement. We use our funding carefully to maintain a consistently high standard of education for over 3,600 pupils.

As an established Trust, we have a clear vision and plans for further growth within the West Midlands area.



Principal Object

Public benefit is at the heart of our purpose as an organisation.

The principal object of the Trust is the advancement of education for the public benefit within the United Kingdom. The Trust achieves its objectives through the operation of a group of schools.

The ultimate aim of the Trust is to drive educational standards through the provision of outstanding teaching, leadership and learning for all. Our leaders focus on pupil progress and attainment and regularly share knowledge, insight and experience. We believe passionately in the power of collaborative working and work together as 'One Trust - One Organisation'.

One Trust - One Organisation

To achieve great outcomes for pupils and sustain effective performance over time we keep our strategic design model simple: 'One Trust - One Organisation'.

We strongly believe that more can be achieved by working together than individual schools can achieve by working alone.

This involves building a deliberate system that is fit for purpose, robust and flexible enough to face both immediate and future challenges.

The experience of the pandemic illustrated the effectiveness and benefits that can be achieved when the Trust operates as a unified and aligned organisation, especially in terms of operational efficiency, support, resilience and clear governance.

Our 'One Trust One Organisation' approach ensures a holistic and cooperative approach that maximises the Trust's capacity to deliver high-quality education, collaborate effectively, and maintain a clear sense of purpose and accountability throughout the organisation.

We believe this is the best way to enhance levels of support, retain a focus on improvement priorities and secure appropriate accountability. Schools within the Trust are encouraged to respond to the diversity of their local context, taking decisions in accordance with the needs of the pupils and families they serve.

This collaboration is facilitated through a structured Scheme of Delegation, which provides the framework for working together with clear roles, responsibilities and accountabilities.



Vision, Values and Operating Principles

Vision

'All pupils achieve the highest standards of educational outcomes regardless of circumstance or background'

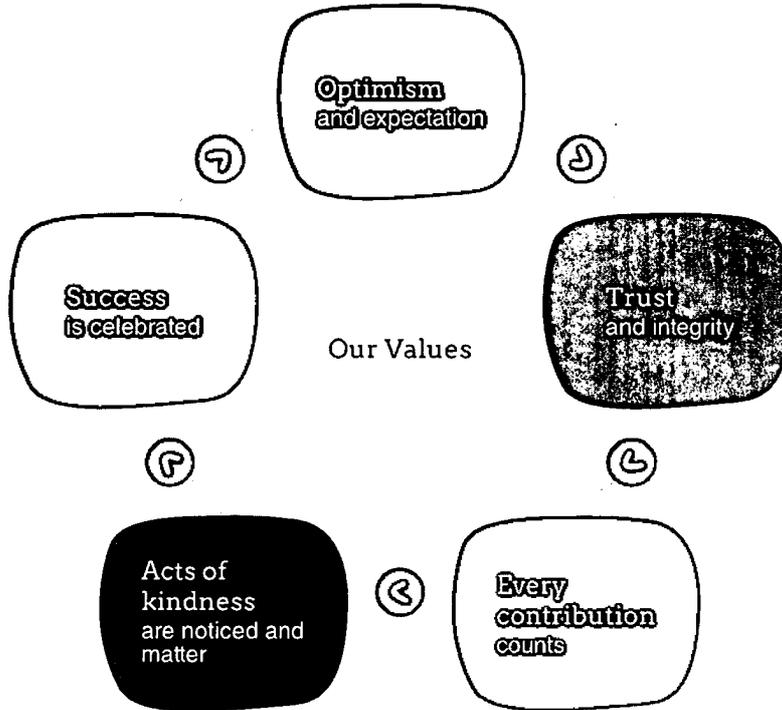
The Trust supports the concept of simplicity over complexity and uses this as a principle to drive improvement. In essence this means:

- children are at the centre of thinking at all times.
- inclusion, equity and equality matter.
- respectful partnerships with parents, carers and the local community make a real difference.
- staff wellbeing and professional development are central to effective school improvement.
- compassionate leadership by all senior leaders provides inspiration to act and motivation to hold each other to account.
- collaboration within and between schools is supportive and drives rapid improvement.
- no school is an island.
- sustainable school improvement is underpinned by effective governance and financial systems and processes.



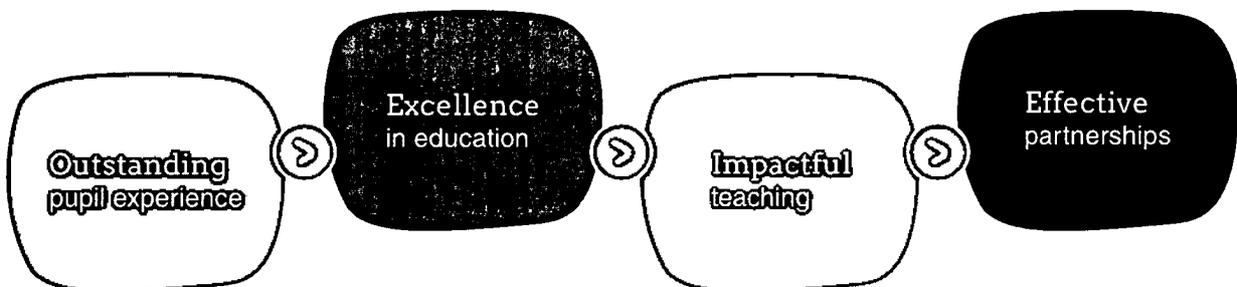
Values

We have a set of shared values that further underpin everything we do together. They articulate how we respect each other and are embedded in every aspect of our provision and approach:



Operating Principles

Our vision and values are supported by four operating principles which shape our planning and create the conditions for deep collaboration, helping us to retain a strong focus on our intended outcomes:





Indicators of success

- ✓ Pupils enjoy coming to school and learning
- ✓ Pupils make good progress and achieve well
- ✓ Pupils are safe and well
- ✓ Pupils develop as confident, responsible social and community citizens



Indicators of success

- ✓ The curriculum is current, relevant and exciting
- ✓ Pupils develop transferable skills, rigour of thought, resilience and a positive outlook
- ✓ Pupils are engaged by the cutting-edge learning experiences and opportunities
- ✓ Learning environments are safe, welcoming and enticing
- ✓ Teachers and pupils have great learning relationships



Indicators of success

- ✓ The Trust has a leading reputation and increases its profile and impact steadily over time
- ✓ Teacher development is strongly embedded and leaves a tangible footprint on curriculum and teaching
- ✓ Teaching is consistently good across all phases
- ✓ Teachers enjoy their work and want to develop their knowledge, skills and understanding



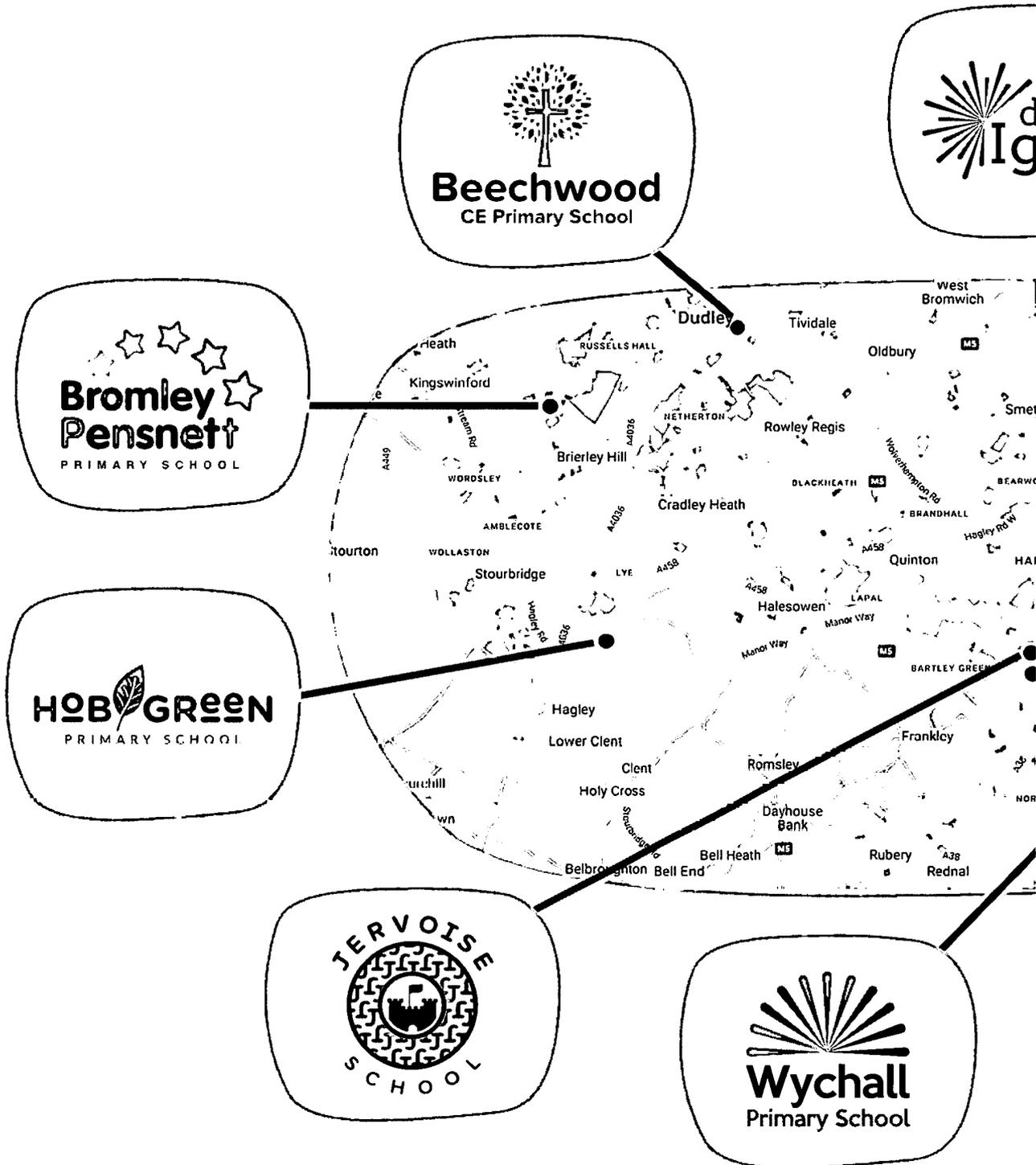
Indicators of success

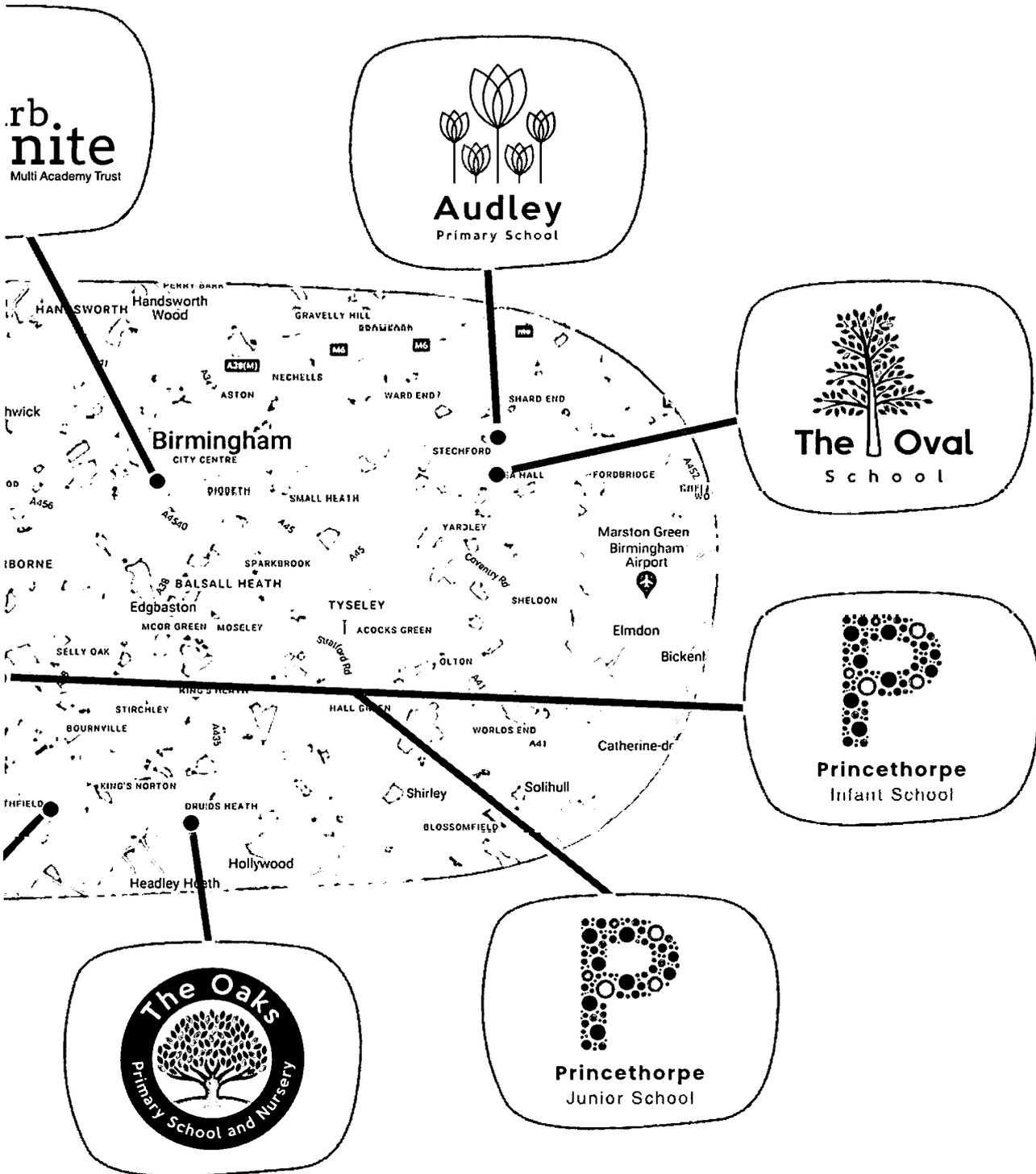
- ✓ The Trust is a partner of choice for parents through its compelling school improvement work
- ✓ The Trust understands the complexity behind achievement gaps and responds by working collaboratively with others
- ✓ Collaboration is at the heart of the Trust's school improvement model
- ✓ Our outward facing approach sustains a range of enhancing partnerships beyond the Trust



Trust Schools

In 2022-23, the Trust operated ten primary schools serving catchment areas in Birmingham and Dudley.





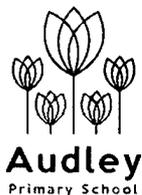
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Trust Headteachers



Audley Primary School

Miss J Harris
Headteacher
www.audley.drbignitemat.org



Beechwood CE Primary School

Mrs S Blick
Headteacher
www.beechwood.drbignitemat.org



The Bromley Pensnett Primary School

Mr J Gray
Headteacher
www.bromley.drbignitemat.org



Hob Green Primary School

Mrs L Williams
Headteacher
www.hobgreen.drbignitemat.org



Jervoise School

Mr S Byrne
Headteacher
www.jervoise.drbignitemat.org



Princethorpe Infant School

Mr G Rothwell
Executive Headteacher
www.princethorpe.drbignitemat.org



Princethorpe Junior School

Mr G Rothwell
Executive Headteacher
www.princethorpe.drbignitemat.org

The Oaks Primary School and Nursery

Mrs J Dodds
Headteacher
www.theoaks.drbignitemat.org



The Oval School

Mrs D Williams
Headteacher
www.theoval.drbignitemat.org



Wychall Primary School

Mr N Lamorte
Headteacher
www.wychall.drbignitemat.org

Trust Executive Leadership Team



Robert Bowater
CEO / Accounting Officer



James Hill
Executive Director of
School Improvement



Edward Masterson
Director of Curriculum & Professional
Development



Alison Quinn
Trust Inclusion Lead



Greg Snowdon
Strategic School Improvement Lead



Mollie Sheldon
School Improvement Operations Manager



Christopher Finnerty
Director of Finance & Operations



Julie Sambrook
Director of HR



Alvin Walters
Director of IT & Compliance



Geoff Bagley
Director of Estates



Harpal Singh Sembi
Head of Marketing and Communications



Rebecca Hawkings
Trust Office Manager



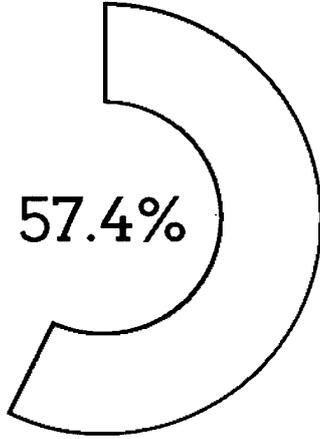
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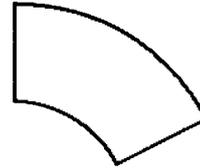
Trust Context and Demographics



Pupils in receipt of Pupil Premium
(2022-23: 60%)



Pupils who speak English as an additional language
(2022-23: 27%)



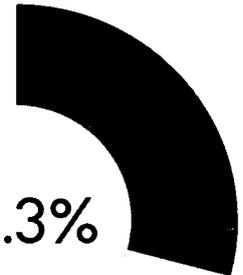
17.5%

Pupils with Pupil Mobility
(2022-23: 15%)



2.6%

Pupils in receipt of an Educational Health Care Plan
(2022-23: 3%)



29.3%

Pupils with special educational needs and disabilities
(2022-23: 25%)



Pupil Numbers

The Trust schools collectively have a pupil capacity of 3,600, excluding nursery pupils. In the October 2023 Census, schools had a funded roll of 3,242 which reflects the actual pupils on roll.

Birmingham Schools		Dudley Schools	
Number On Roll (NOR)		Number On Roll (NOR)	
Audley Primary School	769	Beechwood CE Primary School	202
Jervoise School	203	The Bromley Pensnett Primary School	240
Princethorpe Infant School	149	Hob Green Primary School	216
Princethorpe Junior School	242		
The Oaks Primary School and Nursery	286		
The Oval School	604		
Wychall Primary School	331		



Conversions to the Trust

The Company was incorporated at Companies House on 28 October 2014. Signed commercial transfer agreements and academy conversion dates are presented in the following table:

Name of School	Date of joining Trust	Ofsted grading on joining Trust	Latest Ofsted judgement
Jervoise School	1 October 2015	Good	Good (Sept 2018)
Wychall Primary School	1 October 2015	Good	Good (Feb 2020)
Bromley Pensnett Primary School	1 October 2015	Requires Improvement	Good (Sept 2018)
Beechwood CE Primary School	1 October 2015	Requires Improvement	Good (Sept 2019)
The Oval School	1 September 2016	Good	Good (June 2019)
Princethorpe Infant School	1 October 2016	Good	Good (May 2019)
Audley Primary School	1 October 2016	Good	Good (June 2023)
Hob Green Primary School	1 November 2016	Good	Good (Nov 2020)
Princethorpe Junior School	1 March 2019	Inadequate	Good (June 2023)
The Oaks Primary School and Nursery	1 July 2023	Good	Awaiting first inspection post-conversion

Welcoming new schools

We are delighted to welcome the pupils, staff, parents and carers of The Oaks Primary school who joined the Trust on the 1 July 2023.

The Oaks Primary school is located in the Druids Heath area of Birmingham and is a two-form entry primary school.

Ofsted Inspections

Over the course of 2022–23, two Section 5 Ofsted inspections took place across the Trust. Audley Primary School's grading increased from 'Requires Improvement' to 'Good' and Princethorpe Junior Schools grading increased from 'Inadequate' to 'Good'.

Both of these results recognise the incredible hard work that has gone in across these schools to ensure that pupils are being given the best chances in life.

It was really pleasing that Ofsted praised the new leadership team at Audley Primary and the Trust for our effective collaboration and the swift improvements brought about since the pandemic.

Ofsted also noted the creation of the ambitious curriculum, culture of aspiration and that the Trust has clear systems and processes to support leaders.

At Princethorpe Junior School, Ofsted noted that leaders strive to achieve the very best for each pupil, that they are happy and safe, enjoy attending school and learning new things.

This has led to a significant improvement in our Ofsted profile; all of our schools now have an Ofsted 'Good' judgement.



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Section 2:

Governance Statement



Constitution

drb Ignite Multi Academy Trust is a company limited by guarantee and an exempt charity. The charitable company’s Memorandum and Articles of Association are the primary governing documents of the Multi Academy Trust.

The Trustees are also the Directors of the charitable company for the purposes of company law. The charitable company operates as drb Ignite Multi Academy Trust.

Details of the Trustees who served during the year and to the date these accounts are approved are included in the Reference and Administrative details on pages 4 and 5.

Member Liability

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

Trustees’ Indemnities

In accordance with normal commercial practice the Trust has purchased indemnity 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 £10,000,000 on any one claim.





Trustee Competency

The Trust board is primarily composed of non-executive Trustees. The CEO also serves on the Trust board as an ex officio Trustee.

Trustees are appointed by Members of the Trust with the intention to create a diverse and effective board that combines a range of experience, skills, and knowledge. This ensures the Trust is able to fully meet the accountability requirements outlined in the Department for Education (DfE) Academy Trust Handbook, Governance Handbook and associated Competency Framework.

At the time of approving the Annual Report and financial statements for 2022-23, the Trust board has ten Trustees and one vacancy.

Multi Academy Trusts must comply with the requirements set out in their Articles of Association as a condition of their funding agreements with the Secretary of State. The model articles provide a framework for Trusts to govern in transparent and accountable ways that fulfil the Trust's charitable purpose. The model articles reflect elements of charity and company law and departmental governance policy.

Individuals appointed as non-executive Trustees to the Trust board are required to demonstrate:

- a set of competencies required by the Trust board and in line with the current Department for Education (DfE) Academy Trust Handbook, Governance Handbook and associated Competency Framework.
- a robust skills and competencies set assessed and monitored through application, interview and annual audit.
- a commitment to getting to know the Trust's schools well and fulfilling the vision and values of the Trust.
- a commitment to maintaining a rigorous strategic oversight of Trust statutory, mandatory and regulatory financial management and governance responsibilities in line with the DfE Academy Trust Handbook.
- Chair of Trustees elected annually by Trustees including a 'suitability' check by DfE.

Trustee Term of Office

The term of office for any Trustee, excluding the Chief Executive Officer (CEO), is four years.

Any Trustee may be reappointed after their initial term of four years. This allows for continuity and the possibility of experienced Trustees serving additional terms.

New Trustees are appointed to the Trust board following a rigorous selection process undertaken by current Trustees and Members. This ensures that newly appointed Trustees have the required experience and qualifications.

Trustee Recruitment and professional development

Great Trust boards build, grow and sustain great Academy Trusts. The support they provide and the accountability they demand are central to ensuring good governance and public trust.

Trustee Recruitment

The Trust's recruitment process for the appointment of Trustees has been designed to be both inclusive and thorough. This may include local and national advertising as well as the use of other social media platforms. This approach enables the Trust to attract candidates who align with the Trust's mission and governance requirements.

The Chair of Trustees leads the process for the appointment of Trustees and works with the Trust board to identify the skills, experience and qualities they are seeking in a new appointment through review of the Board composition and the needs of the Trust.

Curriculum Vitae are submitted to the Trustees for consideration and shortlisted candidates are interviewed by the Chair of Trustees and Chief Executive, including a visit to one or more of the Trust's schools.

If the Trust board considers the candidate suitable, the appointment is recommended to Members for approval.

Trustee Induction

Newly appointed Trustees undergo a full induction package that includes a range of face to face sessions and online training. This introduces them to the Trust's mission, values, governance structure, and specific roles and responsibilities.

Trustee Professional Development

The Trust maintains an annual professional development plan. It identifies the training and development opportunities that will be provided to both Members and Trustees over the course of the year. It includes both online and external training options. Regular briefings and training sessions are also delivered by senior colleagues from the Executive leadership team.

Trustees also receive regular communications from the Chief Executive and executive leadership to keep them informed about significant developments. This includes developments across the Trust, legal, regulatory, and policy changes.

Trustees regularly review the knowledge and skills of the board to determine the focus for subsequent training sessions.

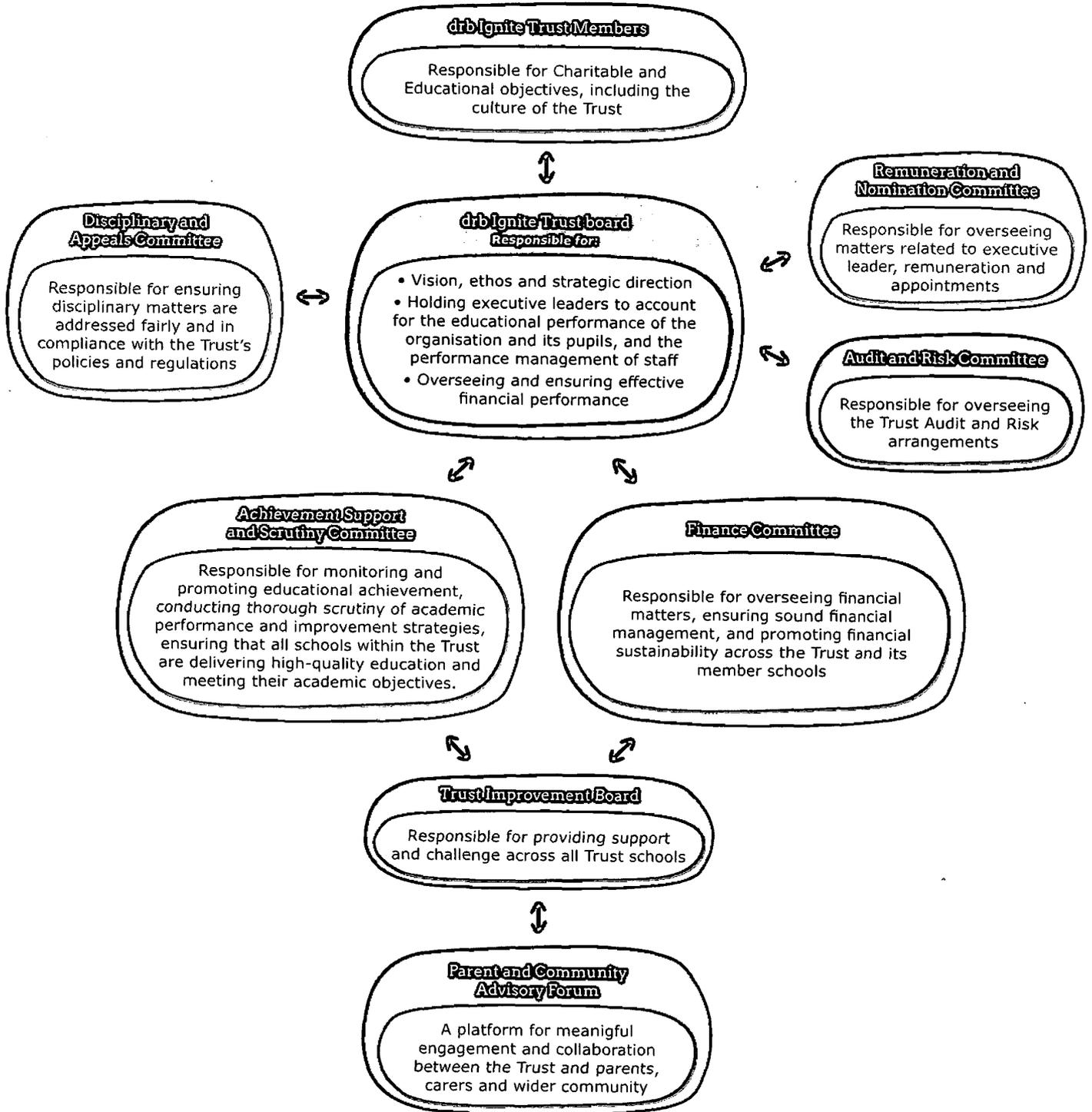
The Essential Trustee Programme

Across the 2022-23 academic year, all Trustees were enrolled on The Essential Trustee Programme developed by the Confederation of Schools Trusts.

The programme has been specifically designed for Trustees serving in a Multi Academy Trust to equip them with the knowledge and skills to understand what constitutes strong governance and effectively fulfil their roles and responsibilities.



Governance Structure



Members

Members serve as the guardians of the governance of the Trust. While they are not directly involved in the day-to-day operations of the Trust, their role is instrumental in ensuring the integrity and effectiveness of the Trust's governance structure, ensuring the Trust operates in accordance with its charitable objects and mission.

Trustees

Trustees play a critical role in the governance and management of the Trust and its member schools. The role and responsibilities of Trustees includes the following:

- **Strategic Leadership and Vision:** Responsible for setting the strategic direction of the Trust and the overarching vision and mission that guide the Trust and its schools.
- **Safeguarding Ethos and Values:** Ensuring that the ethos and values of the Trust are upheld and aligned with the Trust's mission.
- **Compliance and Accountability:** Ensuring that the Trust operates in compliance with the relevant laws and regulations. Trustees are accountable for the Trust's actions and the performance of its schools.
- **Policy Development:** Developing the policies and procedures that govern the Trust and its schools. This includes all educational, financial and governance policies, including the Scheme of Delegation.
- **Financial Oversight:** Trustees have a duty to oversee the financial management of the Trust. They monitor the Trust budget, financial reports, and audits to ensure the responsible use of resources.
- **School Improvement:** Responsible for ensuring that each school within the Trust is making progress, setting performance targets and monitoring progress.
- **Appointment of Executive Leaders and Headteachers:** Trustees are involved in the appointment of Executive Leaders and Headteachers within the Trust.
- **Holding Executive Leaders to account:** Trustees hold the executive leadership accountable for the performance and management of the Trust and its schools. This includes the performance management of the Chief Executive Officer.
- **Risk Management:** Assessing and managing the risks that could impact the Trust and its schools, taking measures to mitigate potential issues.
- **Accountability to Stakeholders:** Accountable to various stakeholders, including parents, pupils, staff and the wider community. Undertaking regular engagement to gather input and feedback.
- **Ethical Conduct:** Promote ethical conduct and a culture of integrity within the Trust and its academies in line with the Nolan Principles – 'Seven Principles of Public Life'.



Organisational Structure

The Trust board has established five main Committees which play a significant role in managing the key areas of the Trust’s operations and governance. Each Committee has a defined focus and a group of Trustees responsible for overseeing and making decisions within that area.

The terms of reference for each committee are outlined in the Trust’s Governance Charter, Scheme of Delegation, and Financial Procedures Manual and can be viewed on the Trust website.

These essential documents provide the framework for how these Committees operate and contribute to the Trust’s overall governance and management. They specify the responsibilities, authority, and decision-making processes of each Committee, ensuring transparency and accountability in the Trust’s operations.

The Committees for the period of the report were as follows:

	Committee	Chair of Committee
1	Finance	John McDermott
2	Audit and Risk	David Peters
3	Achievement, Support and Scrutiny	Viv Randall
4	Remuneration and Nomination	David Sheldon
5	Trust Improvement Board	Robert Bowater

Annual Business Planner

The Trust board organises its work through an Annual Business Planner. This provides a structured and organised approach to governance oversight, and accountability within the Trust. It helps the Trust board to fulfil its responsibilities effectively, maintain compliance with regulations, and focus on continuous improvement in education and financial management.

The planner also includes the performance management and remuneration arrangements for the CEO (Accounting Officer).

An ongoing focus over the 2022-23 reporting year has continued to be well-organised, robust governance and financial management to ensure full compliance with all DfE and ESFA reporting requirements.

Trustee Governance oversight responsibilities

The Trust board is committed to meeting all statutory, mandatory and regulatory accountabilities and is fully compliant with the Department for Education (DfE) Academy Trust Handbook and associated Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA) requirements.

To fulfil these responsibilities, the Trust board appoints Trustees to specific areas of focus. For the 2022-23 academic year, there were:

	Trustee Responsibility	Trustee
1	Trust Chair	David Sheldon
2	Trust Vice Chair	Viv Randall
3	Safeguarding and Child Protection	David Sheldon
4	Relationship and Health Education	David Sheldon
5	Behaviour and Attendance	Viv Randall
6	Outcomes and Quality of Education	Viv Randall
7	Single Point of Contact (Child Protection)	Robert Bowater
8	Pupil and Staff Wellbeing and Mental Health	David Sheldon
9	Inclusion, SEND and Children In Care	Cheryl Millard
10	Trustee Professional Development Lead	Robert Bowater
11	Pupil, Sports and Recovery Premia	David Peters
12	Rights Respecting Schools Programme	Cheryl Millard
13	Christian Distinctiveness	Bernard Peters
14	Sustainability	John McDermott
14	Parent and Community Voice	Mahbub Elahi
16	Clerk to the Trust board	Catherine Ludwig



Trade Union Facility Time

In accordance with the provisions of the Trade Union (Facility Time Publication Requirements) Regulations 2017, the following information has been provided in respect of Trust employees involved in Trade Union Facility Time activity.

Relevant Union Officials	
Number of employees who were relevant union officials during the relevant period	Full-time equivalent number
4	4

Percentage of time spent on facility time	
Percentage of time	Number of employees
0%	3
1% - 50%	1
51% - 99%	0
100%	0

Percentage of pay bill spent on facility time	
Total cost of facility time	£14,155.00
Total pay bill	£16,893,188.00
Facility time as percentage of total pay bill	0.08%

Paid trade union activities	
Time spent on paid trade union activities as a percentage of total paid facility time hours	0%

Related Parties

Related party transactions between the Trust’s key management personnel and other charities, companies or organisations are extensively reviewed and disclosed within these financial statements.

Engagement with Suppliers, Customers and others in a Business Relationship

The business of the Trust is carried out in good faith and specifically to promote the success, financial efficiency and health of the organisation.

Trust financial policies and procedures define the ways in which the engagement with suppliers, customers and other businesses should be conducted. Clear delegations are defined within the policies together with separations that ensure sound and transparent relationships.

This is supplemented by way of standard operating procedures to ensure consistency of application with regard to transacting business and further enhanced by routine communication between the Trust and its suppliers.

All business decisions are taken in the best interest of providing an outstanding education provision for all pupils, staff and the wider Trust community it serves. Where possible opportunities are taken to source business in the local area subject to appropriate business processes and value for money protocol being applied.



Section 3: Priorities and Achievements: Reporting Year 2022-23



Strategic Priorities: Reporting Year 2022-23

The Trust's strategic priorities for the reporting year are set out in the *Strategy Plan 2021-2024: One Trust - One Organisation*.

To manage and oversee progress against strategic priorities, action planning has been organised into eight Workstrands, each with a Workstrand owner and risk register.

The Workstrands are set out in the table below:

Workstrand	Strategic Workstrand	Owner
1	School Improvement, Safeguarding and Pupil Outcomes	James Hill Executive Director of School Improvement
2	Financial Management	Chris Finnerty Director of Finance
3	Growth and Governance	Julie Sambrook Director of Operations
4	Workforce	Julie Sambrook Director of Operations
5	IT and Compliance	Alvin Walters Director of IT & Compliance
6	Operational Strategy	Chris Finnerty Director of Finance
7	Estates and Sustainability	Geoff Bagley Director of Estates
8	Marketing and Communications	Harpal Sembi Head of Marketing & Communications



To support Workstrand planning the Trust has used the Education Endowment Foundation's guidance document, The EEF Guide to Supporting School Planning 2022-23 – Moving forwards, making a difference. This advocates a three tier approach that considers:

1. High-quality teaching

The evidence tells us that high-quality teaching is the most important factor when it comes to improving attainment outcomes. Schools should focus on developing teaching practice over a sustained period to drive meaningful change in their setting. School plans to maximise teaching quality may include:

- high-quality daily teaching: the 'five-a-day' approach,
- improving literacy and mathematics outcomes;
- securing effective professional development, and
- using diagnostic assessment to address learning gaps.



2. Targeted academic support

For pupils in need of additional support, research suggests that providing targeted academic support finely tuned to the needs of individual pupils offers potential benefits.

School planning should therefore be open to the idea of planning interventions to complement high quality classroom teaching.

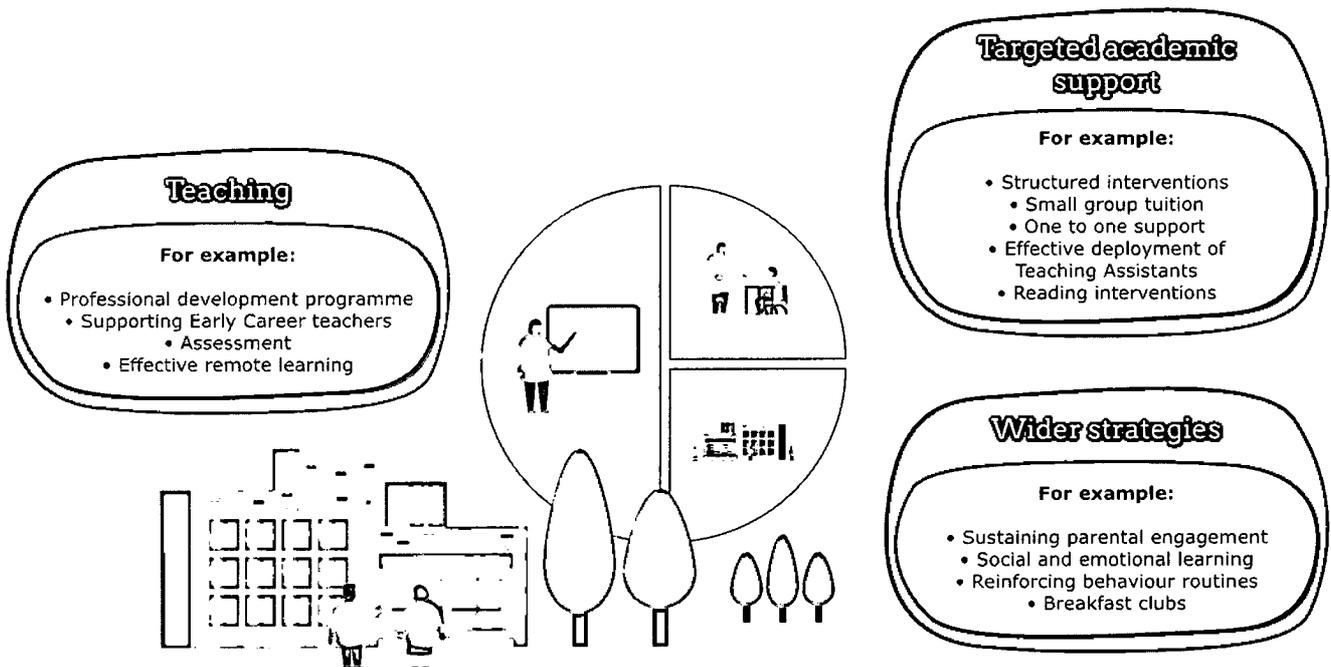
3. Wider strategies

Wider strategies address non-academic barriers to success at school that have a significant influence on attainment.

Approaches to wider strategies that are likely to support learning include:

- improving attendance; and
- improving behaviour and re-establishing routines and relationships.





The Trust recognises that transformation and improvement are an ongoing process and work will continue beyond 2022-23, through Strategy Plan updates across all areas set out in the Strategic Workstrand action areas.

In addition, when government clarifies future educational budgets, it is highly likely that further adjustments will need to be made. All Workstrand priorities are supported by detailed action plans.





Strategic ambition: One Trust - One Organisation

The Trust is now moving into the third year of its three-year Strategy Plan 2021-2024. Our Strategy Plan sets out an ambitious vision for the Trust's future and plans for building on progress to date.

Successful organisations learn from the environment in which they operate and adapt to the challenges they encounter.

Our three-year plan sets a clear intention to improve outcomes for children in the West Midlands by putting quality teaching, strong leadership, professional collaboration and hard work at the heart of decision making whilst also keeping ahead of the challenges presented by a rapidly developing educational landscape.

This is designed to ensure we accelerate our improvement journey and become more dynamic, collaborative and successful in our work to improve outcomes for children.

In summary, through the Trust Strategic Plan 2021-24 we aim to:

- Improve pupil outcomes: Our priority is to improve educational outcomes for all pupils by securing high-quality teaching for all in safe and inspiring learning environments.
- Secure high-quality teaching for all: Improve the skills and knowledge of our workforce through effective professional development. This will ensure pupils receive an exciting and challenging curriculum and the Trust is well placed to exploit the opportunities offered by the emerging educational landscape.
- Support health and wellbeing: Our learning from the pandemic has reinforced the central importance of a consistent focus on the health and wellbeing of pupils, parents, staff and local communities.



- Make the Trust a great place to learn and work: We will work to make the Trust an employer of excellence – valuing, supporting, developing and investing in our support staff, teachers and leaders. We will also aim for parents to make our schools a first choice for their children.
- Develop our leadership culture: Encouraging positive, compassionate and improvement focused leadership will help us to create a culture that delivers better outcomes for children. We aim to develop our leadership culture at every level.
- Further develop and refine the model for school improvement: Extending our internal expertise and capacity to support improved teaching and learning outcomes across all schools. We also aim to offer our expertise beyond the Trust to ensure we are active in supporting educational improvement.
- Ensure financial probity and strong governance: Continuing to refine and improve our financial controls, governance systems and processes to maintain compliance, sustainability, growth and effective support functions.
- Secure sustainable growth: Achieving real momentum with our growth plans by building a reputation as a trusted pupil-centred, relationships focused, systems and technology enabled, well-governed organisation.
- Develop as a sustainable modern organisation: Becoming an interactive organisation with a strong set of aligned improvement strategies. This includes a proactive attitude to adapt to change through continuous learning and innovation at the centre of our operating culture.

Achievements and Performance

Key Stage 2 attainment

At drb Ignite Trust, our fundamental mission is to support every pupil in the best way possible to ensure their success during Key Stage 2. We understand the pivotal role this stage plays in a child's educational journey, and we are dedicated to providing the resources, guidance, and nurturing environment required for them to succeed.

We recognise that each child is unique, and provide targeted support, tailored to their strengths, challenges, and interests to meet the diverse needs of our pupils.

Our Trust is resolute in delivering high-quality education and we are focused on cultivating a love of learning and equipping our pupils with the knowledge and skills necessary for academic success and personal development.

We place a strong emphasis on the wellbeing of our pupils by creating a safe and inclusive environment where they can thrive, fostering emotional and psychological resilience that is crucial to their growth and development.

This is underpinned by a curriculum that offers a diverse range of subjects, activities, and experiences to enable pupils to explore their passions and talents, helping them to succeed academically and personally.

The publication of Key Stage 2 attainment results for 2023, represents the second set of results since 2019, due to cancellation of the 2020 and 2021 assessments during the Covid-19 pandemic.

The results cover the attainment of Year 6 pupils who took assessments in summer 2023. These pupils experienced disruption to their learning during the pandemic, particularly at the end of Year 4 and in Year 5.

The national attainment for the 2023 Key Stage 2 SATs was broadly similar to that of 2022, with 59% of pupils achieving the expected level across the three subjects of reading, writing and maths. This percentage has remained unchanged from 2022. In 2019, 65% of pupils achieved the expected standard in all three areas.



Evaluation of outcomes

The Trust average has closed the gap with the national average by 6% at the end of Key Stage 2 compared to 2019. Although this is an improvement in pupil outcomes across the Trust, they are 7% below the national average.

Predicted outcomes for Year 6 SATs for 2023, indicate an improvement on 2022 outcomes. The aspiration is to close the gap further on the national average by the end of 2024 at the end of KS2.

These results have not yet been validated so there may be some minor amendments as a small number of pupils may be disapplied from this process and KS2 papers may be reviewed if any errors have been made.

Statutory Assessments by School					
Proportion of pupils achieving the expected standard at each assessment stage					
	EYFS GLD %	Year 1 Phonics %	Year 2 Phonics %	Year 2 KS1 SATs %	Year 6 KS2 SATs %
Audley Primary School	60	81	84	42	42
Beechwood CE Primary School	59	81	88	50	32
Bromley Pensnett Primary School	43	72	76	31	47
Hob Green Primary School	60	83	78	36	50
Jervoise School	61	72	81	75	43
Princethorpe Infant School	61	80	90	45	-
Princethorpe Junior School	-	-	-	-	67
The Oaks Primary School and Nursery	53	83	83	42	59
The Oval School	65	81	83	69	64
Wychall Primary School	54	76	82	42	52
Total	59	80	88	48	52
National 2023	67	79	87	53	59



Trust Statutory Assessments

Proportion of pupils achieving the expected standard at each assessment stage

	EYFS GLD %	Year 1 Phonics %	Year 2 Phonics %	Year 2 KS1 SATs Combined %	Year 6 KS2 SATs %
drb Ignite Trust 2023	59	80	88	48	52
National 2023	67	79	87	53	59

KS2 Outcomes over time

Percentage of pupils achieving the expected standard in Reading, Writing and Mathematics (RWM) at the end of Key Stage 2

	2016	2017	2018	2019	2022	2023
drb Ignite Trust	33%	48%	46%	52%	50%	52%
National	54%	62%	64%	65%	59%	59%
Difference between Trust and National Outcomes	-21%	-14%	-18%	-13%	-9%	-7%



Analysis of attainment and progress

- Attainment is continuing to return to pre-pandemic levels.
- The gap between Trust outcomes and national outcomes at the end of KS2 has improved by 6% from 2019 to 2022.
- Reading at KS2 continues to be a focus as the proportion of pupils reaching the expected standard is 10% below the national average.
- The gap between the proportion of pupils achieving the national average and the Trust average in mathematics has closed from 2022 to 2023, however further work is needed as the Trust average is still below the national average by 6%.
- Pupil progress and attainment information indicates progress is broadly in line compared to previous national averages.
- Predicted outcomes for Year 6 SATs for 2023, indicate an improvement on 2022 outcomes. The aspiration is to close the gap further on the national average by the end of 2024 at the end of KS2.
- Progress across Trust schools indicates at least good progress for the academic year 2022 to 2023, however the lower starting points due to the pandemic would need to be considered when making such judgements.
- The proportion of Year 1 pupils passing the phonics screening check in the Trust is now higher than the national average.



Pupil Attendance

Pupil attendance and persistent absence					
	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23
Attendance	94.6%	93.6%	92.9%	91.6%	93.6%
Persistent Absences	15%	20.2%	22.6%	29.8%	22.0%

Evaluation of pupil attendance levels

During 2022-23, attendance levels for the Trust are 1.5% below the national average, however the Trust has made strong progress during the year to close the gap.

Weekly attendance has been tracked across the year and compared to national weekly attendance figures since they were released by the DfE. Our analysis informs us that this reduction in attendance levels is directly attributed to the impact of the pandemic, response to Teacher’s strike action and the cost of living crisis.

The priority for the Trust is to ensure all Trust schools meet the national average attendance as soon as possible in 2023-24.

Exclusions

Exclusions					
	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23
Number of Permanent Exclusions	14 pupils	3 pupils	1 pupil	3 pupils	8 pupils
Percentage of Permanent Exclusions	0.5%	0.01%	0.03%	0.09%	0.25%
Number of suspensions (Fixed Term Exclusions)	119 pupils	71 pupils	62 pupils	92 pupils	92 pupils
Percentage of suspensions (Fixed Term Exclusions)	6.9%	4.39%	3.8%	6.9%	6.46%

Evaluation of exclusions

Permanent exclusion levels have dropped significantly since the 2018-19 academic year. However, academic year 2022-23 saw an increase in the numbers of pupils permanently excluded. The Trust has worked tenaciously to ensure pupils are not permanently excluded unless absolutely necessary.

This has been achieved through securing managed moves, sourcing alternative placements or providing support within Trust schools.

There were 8 permanent exclusions in 2022-23, which is an increase of 5 pupils (0.14% rise) compared to 2021-22.

Factors contributing to this increase include decreasing funding, at the same time there are more pupils at risk of permanent exclusion.

The Trust Inclusion Lead is working with all schools to ensure early help for all pupils at risk of permanent exclusion is in place.

Fixed-term exclusions (suspensions), although at times necessary to maintain school discipline, remain an area for concern with our Trust due to their potential impact on pupils' learning and overall wellbeing.

Over the past academic year, we have continued to see an increase in fixed-term exclusions across the Trust. In the 2022-23 academic year, 92 pupils experienced fixed-term exclusions.



Although this the same as 2021-22 academic year and a decrease compared to 2018-19, these numbers remain a concern.

The primary reasons for fixed-term exclusions with our Trust are behavioural issues. These include disruptive behaviour in the classroom, defiance of school rules, and incidents of verbal or physical aggression. These issues have been exacerbated by the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic, which resulted in disrupted learning, social isolation, and a range of mental health challenges for our pupils.

Addressing the issue of fixed-term exclusions is a complex and multifaceted challenge. The Trust Inclusion Lead has been working with Headteachers and Behaviour Leads across the Trust to support with early intervention programs, which identify pupils at risk of suspension and provide them with the necessary support and guidance.

Over this academic year, the Trust has developed its restorative approach to pupil behaviour. This is a pupil centred approach which prioritises building and maintaining positive relationships, resolving conflicts, and promoting a sense of accountability and responsibility.

Our restorative approach seeks to create a safe and inclusive school environment where pupils can learn from their mistakes and are actively engaged in shaping their own behaviour and the overall school community.

This approach aims to reduce punitive measures and instead focuses on repairing harm, restoring relationships, and promoting personal growth.

We have also invested in professional development for all teaching and support staff in delivering a restorative approach and will continue to provide support across the 2023-24 academic year.

School Improvement

We believe the professional capacity and capability of our leadership, teaching and support staff are central to effective teaching and learning.

As one Trust, we work together to create an expectation of ongoing professional development, teacher enquiry and evidence-based practice that sustains and improves the quality of pedagogy and learning for everyone.

We are committed to developing improvement and intervention models that solve and overcome persistent problems, particularly for our most disadvantaged pupils.

As a group of ten schools in a close geographical area, we have the ability of being able to work collaboratively with those doing similar roles in different schools, picking up best teaching practice and sharing great ideas.

To support school improvement, we have a team of School Improvement Practitioners (SIPs) and are proud that all of them have been appointed from within the Trust.

They include phase and subject specialists who champion our collaborative approach and are fully up to date with the latest teaching and learning developments.

All our SIPs work with the School Improvement Team to support rapid improvement in identified areas and to develop the richness of our curriculum.

Over the academic year we have increased the number of SIPs and now employ 30 SIPs.





Curriculum Development Progress 2022-23

Trust aligned curriculum – building on the 2021-22 foundations

In the 2021-22 academic year, we embarked on a journey to collaboratively align and strengthen our curriculum across all schools within the Trust. The key principles of this curriculum development include inclusivity, continuity, and alignment with educational best practices.

The groundwork laid during the last academic year has served as a solid foundation upon which we have continued to build and improve.

Aligning our curriculum with the latest educational standards has ensured that each school is covering the necessary content and skills outlined in the National Curriculum, providing a solid foundation for pupil's learning and progress.

Key Achievements in 2022-23

- **Refined Learning Objectives:** We have fine-tuned our learning objectives, ensuring that they are clear, measurable, and aligned with national standards. This provides a more precise framework for both teachers and pupils. The curriculum is personalised to the different needs of pupils, with teachers skilled in providing support and challenge based on individual pupil abilities and interests.
- **Seamless Progression:** We have focused on creating a seamless progression from one key stage to another. By clearly articulating learning objectives and outcomes, we ensure that pupils experience a coherent and progressive curriculum throughout their educational journey within the Trust.
- **Cross-Curricular Integration:** A significant achievement has been the integration of cross-curricular elements. This approach allows pupils to draw connections between subjects, promoting a deeper understanding of interdisciplinary topics.
- **Inclusivity and Accessibility:** We have made substantial progress in creating an inclusive curriculum that accommodates pupils diverse needs. We continue to prioritise accessibility for pupils with special educational needs and disabilities.
- **Incorporation of Technology:** Recognising the importance of digital literacy, we have integrated technology more comprehensively into the curriculum. This includes the use of digital resources and digital literacy skills development.

- **Global Perspectives:** Our aligned curriculum emphasises global perspectives, encouraging pupils to explore global issues, diverse cultures, and the complexities of our interconnected world.
- **Culturally Responsive Teaching:** Inclusivity and diversity are at the forefront of our curriculum development. We are committed to creating a curriculum that reflects the cultural backgrounds of our pupils and celebrates diversity.
- **Professional Development:** We continue to provide professional development for all our teaching staff in the delivery of the aligned curriculum.
- **Rigorous and ambitious curriculum:** The two recent Ofsted inspections identified that a strength of our aligned curriculum is that it is rigorous, ambitious, and challenges pupils to achieve high standards of knowledge and skills. Ofsted recognised that the curriculum sets high expectations for all learners and provides opportunities for pupils to deepen their understanding, think critically, and apply their learning.
- **Ofsted:** Our aligned curriculum was identified to demonstrate seamless progress and continuity across different key stages and year groups, is well-sequenced, and ensures pupils are able to build on their prior knowledge and skills as they move through the school.
- **School websites:** Each school website highlights our commitment to providing a comprehensive and well-rounded education that meets national standards while addressing the specific context of our communities and pupils. It showcases our strategic focus on academic excellence, personal development, and holistic education.





- Parental engagement: The school website information about the aligned curriculum creates opportunities for parents/carers to actively participate in their child's education and support their learning journey.
- IT Investment Strategy: Through our IT investment strategy, teaching staff have access to high-quality IT equipment to ensure they are 'teach ready'. This has included a review of all IT applications and investment in online teaching resources for all Trust schools e.g. the purchase of Accelerated Reader to support progress in reading.
- Pupil IT Equipment: Over the academic year the Trust has invested in pupil laptops and charging trollies. The total IT equipment investment in the 2022-23 academic year was £150,000.
- Monitoring and evaluation: To maintain progress, a comprehensive monitoring and evaluation system has been implemented. Regular assessments, individual pupil progress tracking, and timely feedback and coaching for teachers has enabled the sensitive planning of effective and timely interventions when necessary.
- Implementation of the aligned curriculum: To deliver the aligned curriculum, Trustees have invested over £200,000 in curriculum resources. Ofsted recognised this investment and commented on the high-quality and range of resources available to teachers and pupils.
- Trust commitment: We are dedicated to providing our pupils with a high-quality education that is reflective of their needs. The 2022-23 academic year has seen significant progress, but we recognise that there is more work to be done. We will continue to monitor the impact of these developments and gather feedback from all stakeholders to refine and enhance our curriculum further.

Why we have aligned the curriculum

All staff have collaborated on the establishment of the Trust aligned curriculum, using the aligned autonomy model to ensure all pupils access a progressive and engaging curriculum that will prepare them for secondary school, and to be lifelong learners.

The aligned curriculum ensures our pupils receive the best-quality education and our minimum expectations for all pupils are met. Subject leaders have worked tirelessly throughout the year to develop each aspect of the curriculum.

Working collaboratively, the Trust has been able to procure curriculum resources more efficiently and better enable schools to access shared resources. We are now confident that all pupils have access to the best curriculum resources as a result of the significant investment provided.

Workload for teachers has also been reduced as we are now able to share planning and resources more effectively.

Teachers are collaborating across schools to develop and adapt the curriculum to meet the needs of all pupils. The ongoing evaluation and future development of the curriculum is essential for its success.

One of the Trust's key strengths identified by Ofsted inspectors for both schools that were inspected in the 2022-23 academic year, was the implementation of our aligned curriculum.

Across all Trust schools, this has provided consistency, coherence, and progression in pupil's learning experiences.

By sharing best practices, resources, and expertise, the Trust has created a cohesive educational framework that provides pupils with a well-rounded education and clearly articulated pedagogy.





Growth of Central Capacity

Over the reporting year, we have increased the capacity of our central team, strengthening our ability to support and enhance the services we provide to our schools.

Our Trust central team serves as the strategic and administrative of our organisation. It is responsible for a wide range of functions including:

- School Improvement
- Finance
- People Function
- Governance
- Data Management
- Policy development
- Estates
- IT and GDPR
- Communications

The increased capacity of our central team has enabled us to improve the quality of education and support we provide. We are proud of the accomplishments we have achieved in the past reporting year and look forward to continued growth and success.



Staff Recruitment

Trust Inclusion Lead

The Trust Inclusion Lead is a key role within the Trust School Improvement Team responsible for the development of our inclusion, safeguarding, SEND, behaviour and wellbeing strategies, ensuring high-quality support and challenge for all pupils with a focus on the most vulnerable.

The Inclusion Lead provides strategic direction and guidance to all schools within the Trust, offering advice, support and technical expertise to Headteachers and ensures that SENCO's, safeguarding, and pastoral staff benefit from current and relevant evidence-informed practice and research.

School Improvement Practitioners

We are dedicated to the continuous improvement of teaching and learning within our Trust schools and we recognise that enhancing the quality of education is a dynamic and ongoing process.

To facilitate this commitment, we employ 30 School Improvement Practitioners from across all Trust schools who serve as valuable resources, providing additional capacity to support teaching and learning initiatives.

The School Improvement Practitioners play a vital role in enhancing teaching and learning within our schools. Their expertise, dedication and collaborative approach contribute significantly to our ongoing mission to provide the highest quality of education for our pupils.

Examples of the support provided include:

- **Professional Development:**
Providing guidance and support to teachers and staff in identifying areas for professional growth and development.
- **Curriculum Enhancement:**
Assisting in the development of curriculum materials, instructional strategies, and assessment tools that align best practices across the Trust.
- **Coaching and Mentoring:**
Providing one-on-one coaching and mentoring to teachers to improve instructional techniques and classroom management.
- **Inclusive Practices:**
Promoting inclusive teaching practices that address diverse learning needs and support pupils with special educational needs.
- **Leadership Development:**
Preparing and nurturing future leaders by identifying leadership potential and providing opportunities for growth.
- **Collaboration and Best Practices:**
Our School Improvement Practitioners work closely with school leadership and teaching staff to ensure that all schools within the Trust benefit from their expertise and share best practices.





Training and Professional Development

We have continued to invest in the professional development of existing team members, providing opportunities for skill enhancement, leadership training, and specialised knowledge acquisition.



Future Commitment

We are committed to sustaining and further enhancing the capacity of our central team in the coming years. Our focus remains on delivering excellence in education and support to our schools, and the wider community.

Staff Health and Wellbeing

Staff Wellbeing

The welfare of our staff has been a priority for the Trust, particularly during the lockdown periods and periods of high infection rates.

The Trust has continued to provide an employee assistance programme for all staff, a confidential counselling service which has been developed to support the physical, emotional and psychological wellbeing of employees, as well as offering legal advice. Regular communication through a host of platforms has been vital in gaining valuable feedback on staff views and identifying where further support or action was required. This will continue to remain a priority for the Trust in 2023-24.

Flexible and Family Friendly Policies

The Trust has generous policies for maternity leave, paternity leave, flexible working and discretionary leave. All staff have the right to request flexible working as soon as they have worked for at least 26 weeks (continuous service).

The introduction of the Trust's Flexible Working Policy is an important aspect of the Trust's commitment to providing equality of opportunity in employment and to developing work practices and policies that support work-life balance.

The Trust recognises that, in addition to helping balance work and personal lives, flexible working can raise staff morale, reduce absenteeism and improve our use and retention of staff.

Employee Discount Scheme - Perkbox

The Trust recognises that every day costs are increasing and this can create financial pressures. Through Perkbox, the Trust provides a free subscription to a discount retail platform for all our staff offering an extensive range of discounts for supermarkets, high street stores, cinemas, days out and much more to help their salary go further.

Cycle to work scheme

The Trust offers a discounted cycle scheme to enable staff to save money when purchasing a bicycle, with payments deducted from their salary each month.

Childcare Vouchers

The Trust offers a Childcare Voucher scheme in partnership with the Trust's preferred provider to help staff make savings in paying for their childcare. Childcare vouchers are Tax and National Insurance exempt and can be used to pay for childcare aged up to 15 (16 if they are disabled). They can be used for a wide range of childcare, with the only condition that the provider is registered with the appropriate body.

Flu Vaccines

The Trust offers free flu vaccinations to all staff on an annual basis to help make it easy for them to be immunised and safeguarded against the flu each winter.



Succession Planning Framework



The Trust is committed to ensuring pupils are supported by highly trained and committed leaders, teachers and support staff.

To achieve this, we have established our Trust Succession Planning Framework.

By forward planning and looking after the professional development of leaders and staff, we hope to retain our best talent.

Effective succession planning ensures we can put solid plans in place to limit our vulnerability and sustain high-quality professional leadership and teaching at all times.

This helps us to build a strong Trust that can manage change and focus on its core business of teaching and learning.

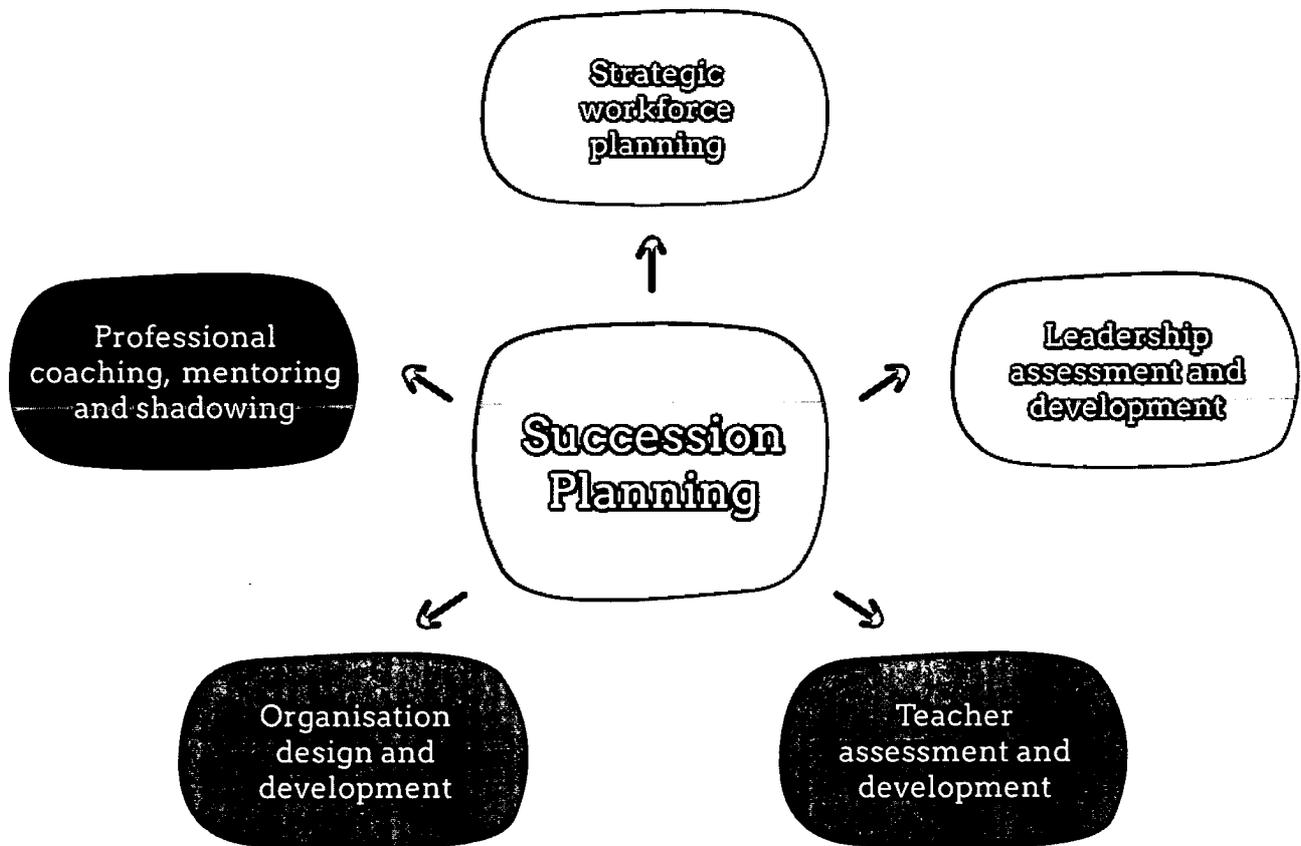
The Trust see succession planning as a central and positive element of our workforce management as it encourages professional development at every level and ensures that leadership can remain energised, focused on school improvement priorities and forward looking.

The Trust needs robust, adaptable and agile people strategies and plans in place to manage the range of professional capacity scenarios it faces and to ensure the Trust workforce is as stable as possible.

There are four key features to the Trust’s succession planning approach:

1. identifying critical and vulnerable positions.
2. creating opportunities for potential successors.
3. aligning recruitment practices to consider and promote successors.
4. establishing the *Igniting Our Potential* professional development programme.

Summary of activities included in Trust succession planning process:





'Igniting Our Potential' Professional Development Programme

The welfare of our staff remains a priority for the Trust and we are deeply committed to investing in staff at every level of the organisation. We believe this is essential if we are to achieve the best outcomes for our pupils, keep our staff motivated and excited about their work and ensure our practice is and remains the highest quality.

The Igniting Our Potential Professional Development Programme has been developed to offer all staff clear professional development pathways and opportunities. The aim of the programme is to align all staff training, professional development and career pathways through this programme. At every level of the organisation clear progression routes will be identified that include the following core components:

Leadership Development Pathway

Strong Trust and school leadership is at the heart of our school improvement model. We recognise the importance of strong leadership and the direct impact it has on educational outcomes. It sets the tone for the Trust and each school's culture, enhances staff morale by providing clear direction, support and opportunities for growth and fosters a culture of innovation, learning, and continuous improvement.

Our Leadership Development Pathway, focuses on fostering great and effective leadership and is designed to achieve ambitious outcomes for pupils, motivate staff, gain parents' confidence, attract and retain teaching talent, and empower leaders to work collaboratively across Trust schools.

The Leadership Development Pathway is delivered through a combination of internal and external professional development experiences, including collaboration with the Ambition Institute for programs like the National Professional Qualifications for Headship (NPQH) and National Professional Qualifications for Executive Leadership (NPQEL).



Teacher Development Pathway

Our Teacher Development Pathway is our structured framework for professional growth and development and aligns with the Trust’s Great Teaching Expectations. It plays a central role in shaping the professional development of teachers and enhancing the quality of education within the Trust.

The combination of internal and external professional development experiences in delivering the Teacher Development Pathway is a comprehensive approach that ensures all teachers have access to a wide range of learning opportunities. This approach aligns with the Trust’s commitment to supporting the growth and development of our teaching staff. Examples of how this commitment is fulfilled include:

- Access to Nationally Accredited Leadership Programmes (e.g., NPQLTD, NPQLBC, NPQLT, NPQSL) through the Trust’s collaboration with the Ambition Institute.
- Cross Trust Development Days provide a platform for teachers to focus on various aspects of teaching and learning, curriculum development, assessment, moderation, and behaviour management. They also provide opportunities to share best practices and collaborate with colleagues from different Trust schools.
- Cross-Trust Teams involving teachers in cross-Trust teams to develop their practice, curriculum design, subject leadership, and expertise.
- Professional Coaching and Mentoring to provide teachers with personalised support and guidance, helping them develop in their roles and navigate challenges effectively.
- Secondment Opportunities to allow teachers to gain valuable experience in different roles and settings, broadening their skill sets and understanding of the educational landscape.
- Deployment in School Improvement Capacity allows teachers to play a direct role in enhancing the performance of schools within the Trust. This experience contributes to professional growth and development.
- Bespoke Early Career Teacher (ECT) Induction and Early Development Programmes provide new teachers with the foundation and support needed to excel in their careers.





Early Career Teachers Programme

The Early Career Teachers Programme, which is funded by the Department for Education (DfE), represents a significant commitment to the development and support of Early Career Teachers. It is built upon the Early Career Framework and is designed to provide the skills and knowledge necessary for Early Career Teachers to excel in their roles.

Through the Trust's collaboration with the Ambition Institute, Early Career Teachers are supported through their Early Career Framework. The key components of this framework are designed to provide a well-rounded and effective support system which includes:

- **Early Career Framework:** The framework serves as the foundation for the program, outlining the essential knowledge and practices that Early Career Teachers need to learn and apply during their first two years of teaching. It is based on an evidence base that supports effective teaching practices.
- **Professional Development:** The program is dedicated to the professional development of Early Career Teachers, aiming to help them grow and develop in their roles. It ensures that they receive the necessary support and training to be successful teachers.
- **Mentorship:** The program recognises the importance of mentorship and support for Early Career Teachers. Mentors play a crucial role in helping Early Career Teachers understand and implement the standards of classroom practice described in the framework.
- **Entitlement for Professional Development:** The program represents an entitlement for Early Career Teachers, demonstrating the commitment to their ongoing learning and development.
- **Classroom Experience:** Early Career Teachers gain practical classroom experience, allowing them to apply what they have learned in a real educational setting.
- **Evidence-Based Practice:** The program is grounded in evidence-based practices, which means that it is designed to incorporate teaching methods and approaches that have been shown to be effective in improving pupil learning outcomes.
- **Continued Support:** Early Career Teachers receive continuous support and guidance as they navigate the complexities of their roles, helping them to build their confidence and competence.



External Partners

Collaborating with external partners to support the delivery of our Igniting our Potential Programme is a strategic approach that enriches the professional development opportunities offered by the Trust. These external providers bring valuable expertise and resources to enhance the program’s effectiveness.

The Trust’s main partners play a crucial role in supporting the growth and development our Trust’s educators.



The Ambition Institute – this is a graduate school with programmes designed to support educators throughout the education sector, including teachers, leaders and executive leaders. Their programmes are particularly designed to improve outcomes for pupils from disadvantaged backgrounds.



The Confederation of School Trusts – CST is the national organisation and sector body for school trusts in England advocating for, connecting and supporting executive and governance leaders. It has a strong, strategic presence with access to government and policy makers to drive real change for education on the big issues that matter most. It also offers a range of professional development, research and networking opportunities that we are closely involved with.



NASEN – this is a charitable membership organisation that exists to support and champion those working with and for, children with SEND and learning differences. Rooted in research and evidence-informed best practice, NASEN’s information, training and resources ensure that we are provided with the most up-to-date knowledge and support required to become an effective, inclusive Trust.



National Professional Qualifications (NPQs)

The collaboration with the Ambition Institute and access to their National Professional Qualifications (NPQs) has been a significant success for the Igniting our Potential Programme during the 2022-23 academic year.

These NPQs represent a valuable opportunity for senior leaders, middle leaders and teachers across the Trust to enhance their leadership skills and teaching abilities. The specific NPQs undertaken during this period are:

National Professional Qualifications	
Course Title	Number of staff attending
National Professional Qualification: Executive Leadership	1
National Professional Qualification: Headship	3
National Professional Qualification: Senior Leadership	9
National Professional Qualification: Leading Teaching	6
National Professional Qualification: Leading Literacy	2
National Professional Qualification: Leading Behaviour and Culture	6
National Professional Qualification: Curriculum	1
National Professional Qualification: Instructional Coaching	4
Total staff studying National Professional Qualifications with Ambition Institute:	32

Early Career Teacher Recruitment

We are committed to ensuring we have the very best teachers educating the pupils in our Trust.

Higher than normal staff mobility, mirrored nationally, led us to develop our Early Years Teachers (ECT's) recruitment campaign in 2021-22.

In the 2022-23 academic year, we continued our approach of developing an ECT recruitment brochure and running an advertising campaign on behalf of all Trust schools who had teacher vacancies.

We also maintained the practice of starting all ECT's employment in July instead of September to provide job security and peace of mind over the summer break as they transition into their teaching careers.

By starting in July, the ECT's were also able to benefit from a smooth transition into their roles, as they had the opportunity to acclimatise to their new school environment, curriculum, policies, and meet colleagues before the start of the academic year.

A successful Trust ECT induction day was also held, where the Trust vision, values and ethos was shared.

This approach has reinforced the Trust's commitment to attracting and retaining high-quality Early Career Teachers and providing them with a smooth and secure transition into their roles. It has also enhanced the Trust's reputation as an employer that values its staff and invests in their professional growth and wellbeing.





UNICEF Rights Respecting Schools Programme

The drb Ignite Trust is clear about the benefits of treating every pupil as a unique individual.

The Rights Respecting Schools Award puts children's rights at the heart of all drb Ignite Trust schools. This approach sits alongside our vision and values.

We have a deep respect for the dignity and agency of the child and we believe this supports resilience and helps to develop personality, talents and abilities irrespective of home language, ethnicity, culture, religion, family background, learning difficulties, disabilities or gender.

All Trust schools are now working to achieve or maintain the UNICEF Rights Respecting Schools Award and Trustees are committed to ensuring all schools achieve the 'Gold' award.

This commitment is supported by a collaborative working group involving the Rights Respecting School leads from across all Trust schools.

Establishing a Trust-wide approach to the Rights Respecting Schools Award has enabled a coordinated effort to embed these principles throughout the Trust with the following shared measures of success:



Children are healthier and happier

By promoting the values of respect, dignity and non-discrimination, children's self-esteem and wellbeing is boosted and they are less likely to suffer from stress. A child who understands their rights understands how they and others should be treated and their sense of self-worth is strengthened.

Children feel safe and secure

The Rights Respecting Schools Award gives children a powerful language to use to express themselves and to challenge the way they are treated. They are also able to challenge injustices for other children. Children are empowered to access information that enables them to make informed decisions about their learning, health and wellbeing.

Children have better relationships

Both with their teachers and their peers, based on mutual respect and the value of everyone's opinion. In Rights Respecting schools, children are treated as equals by their fellow peers and by the adults in the school. Children are involved in how the award is implemented in their school, and are also involved in strategic decision-making, decisions about their learning, and views about their wellbeing.



Our People

A significant achievement this reporting year has been the development of our People function. This has provided the Trust with greater autonomy and control over processes and decision-making and has allowed us to tailor our policies, procedures, and practices to align with our Trust vision and strategic objectives.

We now have the flexibility to create a framework that reflects our organisational culture, values and goals.

Every HR

To support our People function, we took the strategic decision to implement an integrated human resource management system.

Following the completion of a due diligence and detailed analysis exercise, the Every HR system was identified as the system which best suited the Trust's needs.

This strategic investment has led to improved efficiency, compliance, and overall effectiveness which has benefited both the Trust and our staff.

DataPlan

As part of the move to Every HR, the Trust also moved its payroll provider to DataPlan who work in partnership with Every and link to the Every HR system.

The DataPlan Payroll System has brought additional efficiency, accuracy, compliance and flexibility to our payroll processes.

The Every HR and DataPlan Payrolls Systems together are designed to accommodate organisational growth easily which suits our growth ambitions.

Feedback from staff across all schools has been very positive and the new systems have significantly improved our People and Payroll functionality.

Trust HR Legal Provider

Another significant step for the Trust this year as part of the process of bringing the Trust's HR function in-house has been moving away from Local Authority HR support.

A detailed best value exercise was conducted to assess and compare various HR providers to ensure we obtained the most advantageous combination of costs and quality of support.

This assessment encompassed factors such as legal compliance, HR Helpline, policy development, employee relations, recruitment, performance management, training and development.

After careful consideration and evaluation, Browne Jacobson emerged as the preferred HR provider. Their proposal demonstrated a deep understanding of the education sector, extensive experience of working with Trust's similar to ours, a comprehensive range of HR services, and a strong commitment to legal compliance and best practices.

Estates

Over the 2022-23 academic year, the Estates Teams priorities were:

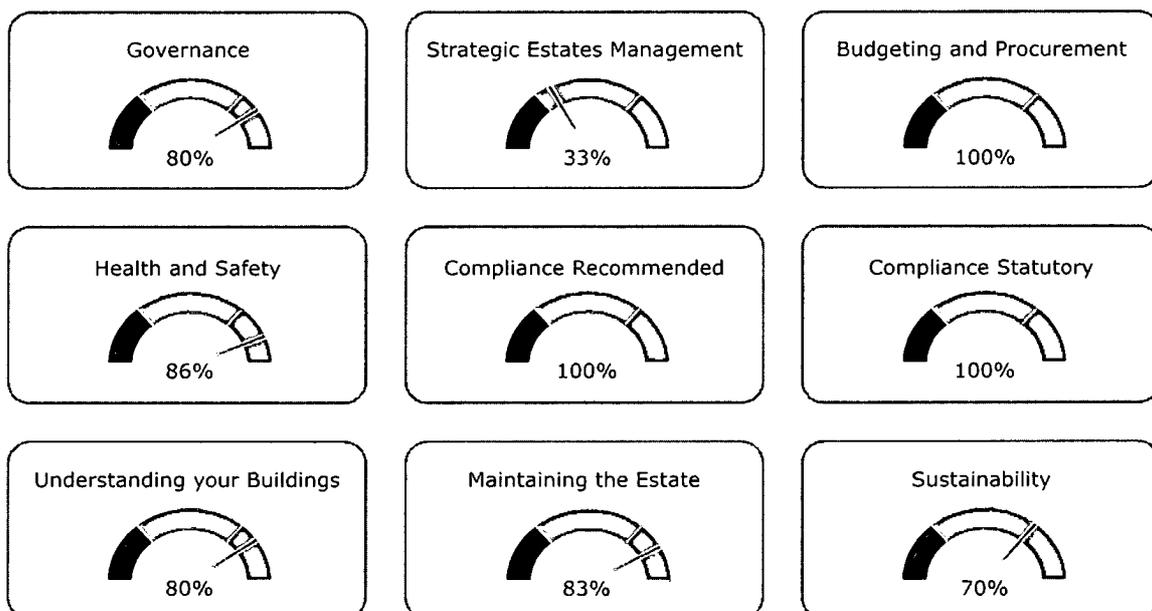
- Drive efficiencies within the Estates operation.
- Ensure the Estates Teams have the necessary skills and capacity to deliver a high-quality service provision.
- Ensure full compliance with all legislation.
- Fulfil the Trust’s target of being carbon neutral by 2030.
- Maximise the space capacity within our schools.
- Provide a safe, warm environment that is conducive to an excellent learning environment.

Statutory Compliance

All schools now have the systems and processes in place to monitor statutory compliance and address all issues identified within the school Health and Safety Sub-Committee meetings. To further develop the Trust’s monitoring and reporting of statutory compliance, the Trust is currently implementing Every Compliance and Business Management modules. Once implementation of Every Compliance has been completed, staff will be able to access the system to raise and log estates issues.

Good Estates Management System (GEMS) Dashboard

The GEMS dashboard provides an overview of the nine monitored areas within the Estates Department.





Reinforced Autoclaved Aerated Concrete (RAAC)

During the academic year the Trust has conducted thorough surveys of all school structures to ascertain the presence or absence of Reinforced Autoclaved Aerated Concrete (RAAC). We can confirm that there is no RAAC within any of our schools.

Our surveys were conducted by Harper Environmental Services in association with the Trust's accredited building surveyors, the Derek Evans Partnership, and they have provided us with a detailed report indicating that RAAC is not present in any of our schools.

Energy Efficiency Projects

School	Projects completed
Audley Primary School	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Rectified 5 water and heating main leaks saving circa £36K per annum LED retrofit of main hall LED retrofit of KS2 corridors Replacement thermostatic mixing valves pupil toilets
Beechwood CE Primary School	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Replaced all windows LED retrofit of site Replaced 220 m2 of flat roof with Bauder Roofing system Replaced school boiler
Bromley Pensnett Primary School	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Replaced 1034 m2 of flat roof with Bauder Roofing system Installed two new hot water heat exchangers Complete heating plant replacement LED retrofit of corridor KS1
Hob Green Primary School	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> LED retrofit of main hall LED retrofit of car park
Jervoise School	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Replaced boiler site house Replaced two heating boilers in plant room
Princethorpe Schools	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Removal of domed canopy and replaced with Bauder Roofing System and partial LED retrofit
The Oval School	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Replaced 1218 m2 of flat roof with Bauder Roofing system Rectified heating main leaks saving circa £18K per annum
Wychall Primary School	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> LED retrofit of external lighting Replaced site house boiler Replacement kitchen and Year 1 windows Replaced 1214 m2 of flat roof with Bauder Roofing system

The Trust is currently undertaking an LED replacement strategy across all Trust schools with The Oval School, Beechwood CE Primary School and Wychall Primary School already completed.

It is calculated that similar projects undertaken by the Trust coupled with environmental training across the schools will not only reduce energy consumption by circa 40% but also help exceed the Trust's carbon usage targets.

The Energy Efficiency Grant funding will be used to enable the following schools to undergo an LED retrofit during the academic year 2023-2024:

- Princethorpe Schools (60% completed)
- Jervoise School
- Bromley Pensnett Primary School

Rolling Refurbishment Program

The Trust has developed a rolling refurbishment program across all schools to ensure that our learning environments are suitable for the educational needs of pupils and conducive for effective learning.

The second year of this programme was completed in the summer holidays.

Project Funding

The Estates Team conduct comprehensive site surveys in September each year, in collaboration with the Trust School Improvement and IT Teams to ensure all works to school buildings align with the educational goals and needs of the schools.

This approach combines the principles of safety, education, cost-effectiveness, and efficiency, all aimed at providing the best possible learning environment for pupils while managing resources effectively. This approach also prevents resources from being wasted on unnecessary or less critical projects.





School Condition Allocation expenditure 2022-23

The table below details the School Condition Allocation expenditure completed for this financial year:

School	Health and Safety / Safeguarding	Building Structure	Refurbishment	Total Expenditure
Audley Primary School	£60,237.44	£20,871.00	£19,101.00	£100,209.44
Beechwood CE Primary School	£9,225.00	£11,485.00	£19,100.00	£39,810.00
Bromley Pensnett Primary School	£25,251.00	£361,956.00	£28,051.00	£415,258.00
Hob Green Primary School	£44,521.00	£6,889.00	£25,808.00	£77,218.00
Jervoise School	£24,301.00	-	£24,002.00	£48,303.00
Princethorpe Schools	£7,481.00	£2,062.00	£33,030.00	£42,573.00
The Oaks Primary School	£9,500.00	£15,000.00	-	£24,500.00
The Oval School	£12,607.00	£1,916.00	£25,931.00	£40,454.00
Wychall Primary School	£11,757.70	£54,025.00	£38,831.00	£104,613.70

Total Trust Commitment	£892,939.14
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Over the 2022-23 financial year, the Estates Team sourced 197 quotations and delivered 132 projects valued at £892,939.14. Through the Trust tendering processes, cost savings of £70,802.70 were achieved.

Sustainability

Trust Sustainability Strategy

One of the Trust’s key commitments to sustainability is our focus on preparing pupils for the future by teaching them about environmental responsibility. This approach not only benefits the pupils themselves but also has a positive impact on the broader community and environment.

Over the reporting period:

- Each school now has an established Eco-Committee.
- The main purpose of the Eco-Committee is to establish a group of pupils who take responsibility for delivering the Eco-School Programme which we have made a key component of our sustainability strategy.
- The Eco-Committee provides pupils with a sense of ownership and responsibility for the sustainability initiatives with each Trust school. It empowers them to be agents of positive change and environmentally responsible behaviour.
- The Trust appointed a Sustainability and Environment Manager. This role plays a critical part in leading and coordinating our sustainability and environmental activities.
- All schools have now begun their journey towards achieving Green Flag status. Schools have made significant progress over the year with Hob Green, Beechwood and Bromley Pensnett Schools all achieving full Green Flag status.
- The Trust Estates Team have identified and developed an area to create a Forest School in all Trust schools.





Below are examples of some of the Green Sustainability Initiatives our schools ECO Teams have undertaken:

- Planted 400 trees across all Trust schools to further enhance our Forest School provision.
- Undertaken weekly litter picks around school and involved with various community litter picks.
- Collected compostable food waste from the school kitchen daily as part of our food waste management initiative.
- Engaged with the RHS 'Big Seed Sow', including preparing and delivered planting trays for classes.
- Established an onsite gardening club.
- Traffic monitoring initiative to monitor air quality.
- All schools have taken part in the 'Big Battery Hunt'.
- Hob Green Primary School's Eco Team and pupils earned the Education Natural Environment Awards highly commended category in May 2023, and achieved the Gold Woodland Trust Award in June 2023.
- Incorporating environmental learning into the curriculum is a crucial step in promoting sustainability and eco-consciousness among pupils. As part of the Green Flag journey, schools must provide evidence demonstrating that the curriculum delivers environmental learning. The Seven Step Framework and the ten Eco-Schools topics offers a structured approach to achieving this goal:

- | | |
|-----------------------|-------------------|
| 1. Biodiversity | 6. Marine |
| 2. Energy | 7. School Grounds |
| 3. Global Citizenship | 8. Transport |
| 4. Healthy Living | 9. Waste |
| 5. Litter | 10. Water |

IT and Compliance

Challenges facing the education sector

The education sector has become a prime target for cybercriminals. Cyberattacks, including ransomware attacks, data breaches, and distributed denial of service (DDoS) attacks have increased significantly.

The escalating number of GDPR breach claims, along with increased staff and parental Subject Access Requests, has also presented new challenges for the sector.

IT and compliance priorities 2022-23

To combat these rising cyber threats, the Trust has implemented strong security protocols and provided regular cybersecurity training to all staff and Trustees.

The Trust also has strong GDPR, data protection and privacy practices to protect the Trust's data and sensitive information.

This approach has successfully protected the Trust from the increased cyber threats and ensured all staff have had the appropriate training and knowledge to keep the Trust safe.

Preparing our pupils for a technologically-driven future is also a critical imperative for our Trust. We have already started this work through the introduction of innovative educational technologies into the classroom and this will continue to be a priority in future years.

Over the reporting period our priorities have been three-fold:

1. Enhancement of our cybersecurity resilience and GDPR compliance.
2. Introduction of innovative technologies to support pupil outcomes.
3. IT investment strategy.





Priority 1: Enhancement of our cybersecurity resilience and GDPR compliance.

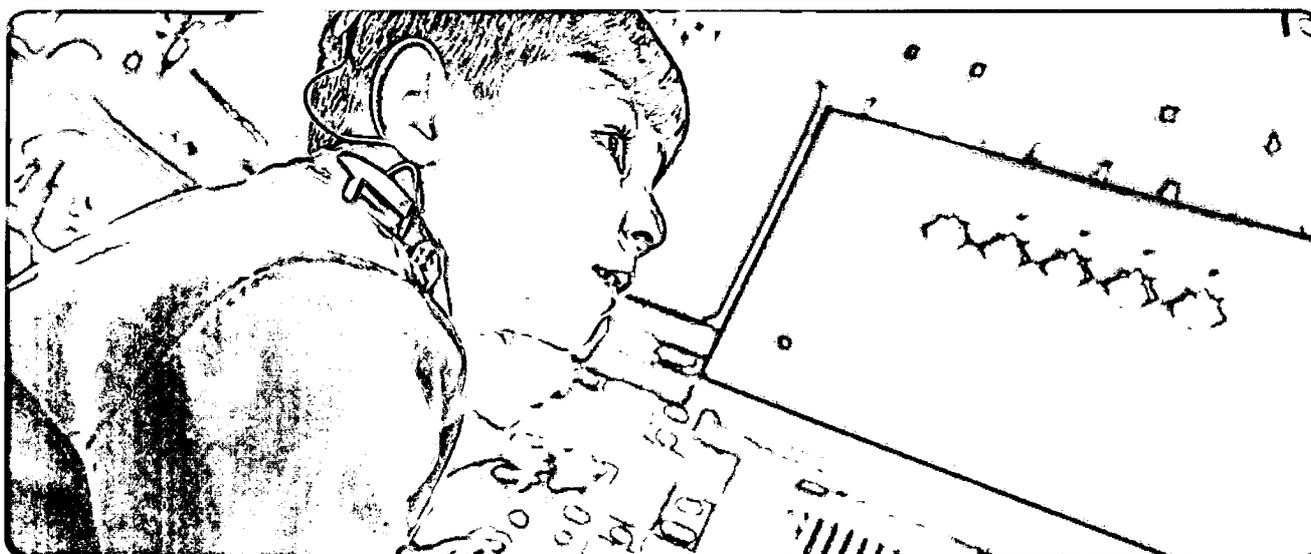
To address our cybersecurity resilience and our GDPR compliance challenges, we have implemented the following strategies:

- Microsoft Defender: Increasing our level of advanced threat protection tools to fortify our cybersecurity defences.
- KnowBe4 Training: Raising our licensing level to increase our staff and Trustee knowledge and skills to recognise and mitigate phishing threats.
- Phishing-Resistant MFA Solutions: The introduction of Multi Factor Authentication (MFA) and hardware-based authentication devices on 'High-Value Targets' by providing an additional layer of authentication designed to resist phishing attempts and enhance data security.
- Ongoing Awareness and Training: Continual cybersecurity and GDPR training programs to keep all of our staff and Trustees well-informed and vigilant.

Priority 2: Introduction of innovative technologies to support pupil outcomes.

In addition to our IT and security efforts, we are working with our School Improvement colleagues to actively explore teaching solutions that benefit and support our pupils learning. This includes introducing technology such as Virtual Reality (VR) into our classrooms. By incorporating VR, we aim to:

- Enhance engagement: VR immerses pupils in interactive 3D environments, making learning more engaging and memorable.
- Encourage visual and experiential learning: Complex concepts become easily understandable as pupils can visualise and interact with subjects like history, science, and geography.
- Improve retention: VR's immersive experiences lead to better information retention and understanding, ensuring pupils remember what they have learned.
- Customise learning: VR can be tailored to individual learning needs, providing personalised instruction and challenges.
- Increase motivation: The excitement of using VR in the classroom motivates pupils, fostering active participation and a love for learning.



Priority 3: IT investment strategy

Over the academic year 2022-23, the Trust has continued its development and investment in the Trust's IT infrastructure. This has been a key priority and further progress has been made at both school and Trust level:

- IT Investment rolling programme: Ensuring teaching staff have access to high-quality IT equipment enabling them to be 'teach ready'. This has included a review of all IT applications and investment in online teaching resources e.g. the purchase of Accelerated Reader to support progress in reading.
- Pupil IT Equipment: The Trust has invested in additional pupil laptops and charging trolleys.
- Setting up IT Infrastructure for new Trust school: With The Oaks Primary School joining the Trust in July 2023, the IT Team has worked to ensure that the school's IT infrastructure seamlessly integrated with the Trust's systems and processes for data sharing, communication, and reporting.
- IT Support and Helpdesk: Further established the IT Support and Helpdesk facility, including ticketing system to assist teachers and staff with technology issues and troubleshooting.

The total IT equipment investment in the 2022-23 academic year was £150,000.



Communications

We understand the importance of communicating effectively to the wide variety of stakeholders we work with and support, at both Trust and school level. The importance of having a communications strategy cannot be overstated, as it plays a vital role in achieving the Trust's goals and maintaining a positive relationship. Over this academic year we have developed and achieved the following:

Aligned Communications Strategy

- management of all aspects of brand development to ensure high-quality communications.
- design and production of innovative and engaging communications, including news stories, features and newsletters.
- delivery of Trust wide recruitment campaigns.
- promotional materials and key updates for parents and carers to promote school open days, special events, workshops and parents evenings.
- working with schools to attract prospective parents to support the Trust's priority for each of our schools, to become the community's school of choice.

School Websites

Finalised the development and launch of new websites for all Trust schools. The websites project a professional and dynamic image, conveying the Trust's vision and values.

All websites include easy to access key information for parents and stakeholders and are fully compliant. The news feature has been well received by parents and carers as we have been sharing content to celebrate Trust and school events and success stories on a regular basis.

School Signage

The Trust has started a rolling programme of external signage replacement across all schools.

This is really important as signage plays a key role in the first impression that everyone who visits our schools experiences. Signage also reflects the Trust's brand and we want to convey the professionalism of the Trust and our schools.

Over the reporting period new signage has been installed at Audley Primary, Beechwood CE Primary, Bromley Pensnett Primary, Jervoise School and the Princethorpe Schools. Plans are currently in progress for the roll out to be completed by the end of the 2023-24 academic year.

Celebrating our 10-year anniversary

Over 2024, the Trust will be celebrating our 10-year anniversary.

We will use this significant milestone as an excellent opportunity to celebrate and reflect on our achievements while setting our strategic priorities for the next decade.



Looking ahead to 2023-24

The Trust is now moving into the third year of its three-year Strategy Plan 2021-2024. To ensure we continue to accelerate our improvement journey over 2024 we will:

- continue to reduce learning gaps across all phases due to loss of school time during the Covid-19 pandemic.
- prioritise the improvement of educational outcomes for all pupils. This will be achieved by securing high-quality teaching for all in safe and inspiring learning environments.
- develop Trust Inclusion Strategy and delivery model.
- strengthen further the English and mathematics curriculum for every child before they progress to secondary school and as a foundation for future success.
- ensure plans for medium and long-term growth and development of the Trust are clear and include how the Trust will build capacity internally to support and facilitate school improvement.
- continue the rolling refurbishment programme to ensure that our learning environments are fit for purpose and conducive to learning.
- further adapt the Trust aligned curriculum to ensure the needs of all pupils are met.
- continue the development and investment in the Trust IT infrastructure to ensure all pupils and staff have access to the best technology.
- undertake 10-year strategic review that outlines the Trust's vision, goals, and priorities for the next decade.
- harness the resources and influence of parents and local communities through structured and planned activities to raise expectations and change entrenched behaviours.
- further develop implementation of the EveryHR portal and centralisation of People Function.
- continue the development of the communications strategy including Trust website refresh.



Section 4:

Financial Governance, Management and Statements

For note: The financial statements contained in this Part Two of the Trustees Annual Report comply with the DfE Academy Trust Handbook, ESFA reporting requirements and the Trust's Funding Agreement.



Financial Oversight

The Trust has continued to improve its financial governance through the work of the Finance and Audit and Risk Committees. This has included a full review of the Trust's Scheme of Delegation, Governance Charter, Financial Procedures Manual and associated policies.

This strengthened level of scrutiny provided by committees in the management of finance, risk, estates, IT and HR is an essential aspect of effective governance within the Trust. This ensures that important decisions related to these areas are well-informed and align with the Trust's strategic objectives.

The financial outcomes of the Trust are detailed in the following pages. The Trust takes full responsibility for its financial affairs and uses resources efficiently to maximise outcomes for pupils.

The Trust has effective governance structures, systems and processes in place to ensure compliance and sound financial probity. Trustees consider that the robust internal controls, risk management and assurance processes are in line with Section 2 of the Department for Education Academy Trust Handbook. Finances are currently sound and well planned. The Trust's internal control processes are laid down in the Financial Procedures Manual.

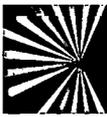
The adoption of hybrid meetings via Microsoft Teams has enhanced the way the Trust conducts its business. It has improved flexibility, accessibility, and cost effectiveness. The Trust board will continue to monitor the effectiveness of this model and make improvements where necessary.

This enabled:

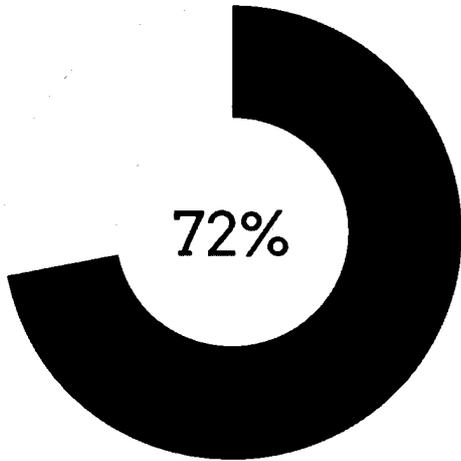
- the Board and its committees to continue to meet regularly to discharge their responsibilities to ensure effective financial management arrangements (ATH Sec 2).
- the Board to conduct its annual review of the Scheme of Delegation.
- all financial meetings of the Board and its committees to continue to be professionally clerked (ATH Sec 2), with minutes produced and distributed electronically.
- the Board to maintain its Risk Register, detailing and scoring financial risks alongside clear mitigation strategies.

The principal funding source to the Trust is government grant income delivered through the Education, Skills and Funding Agency (ESFA) in line with the Trust's Funding Agreement. All expenditure of this grant income is planned to fulfil the educational vision, priorities and strategies of the Trust.

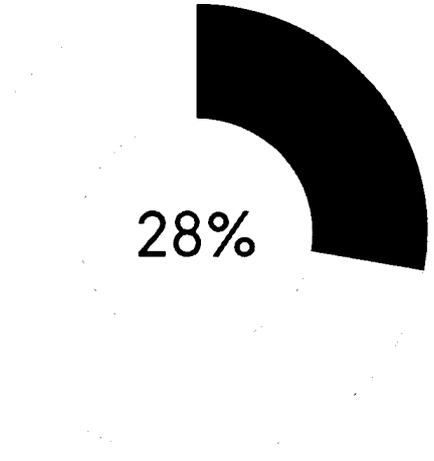
During the year ended 31 August 2023 total resources expended were £23,223,578 and the excess of income over expenditure was £6,421,831 which included depreciation of £1,167,432.



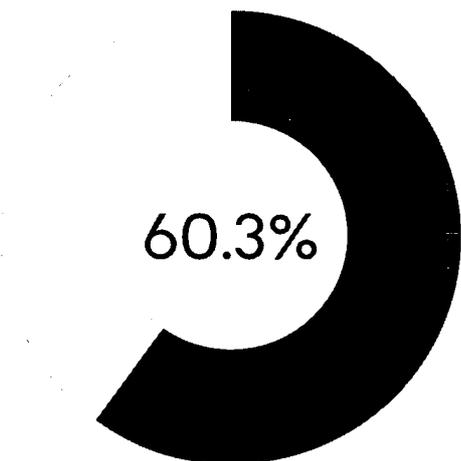
Financial Performance Indicators



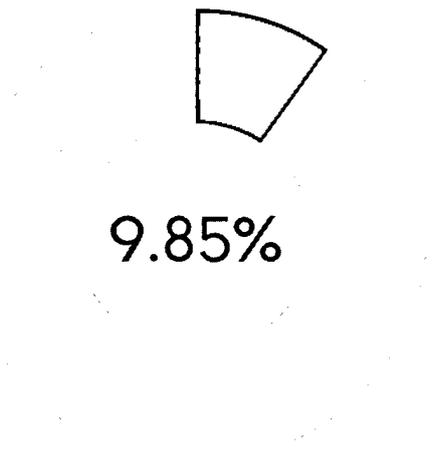
Direct costs as a % of total costs
(2022-23: 64.9%)



Support costs as a % of total costs
(2022-23: 35.1%)



Total payroll costs as a % of income
(2022-23: 82.3%)



Trust reserves as a % of total income
(2022-23: 11.65%)



Procurement of Goods and Services

When purchasing and contracting for goods and services, the Trust and its schools must always demonstrate compliance with procurement legislation and the proper and effective use of public funds. Purchasing procedures should also ensure that the goods, services, and work procured are for the correct quantity and quality, arrive on time and achieve best value.

Obtaining value for money is achieved through a tiered approach to procurement. The Director of Finance and Operations works with staff across the Trust to run formal tenders and utilise public sector buying organisations' frameworks to benefit from preferential terms and rates.

Where possible, large contracts such as IT, catering, estates, finance and HR are procured at Trust level. This allows us to improve and monitor service standards and obtain best value.



At a local level our schools make purchases in line with the Scheme of Delegation and Procurement policy. The use of PSBO Frameworks, such as the ESPO Stationery Framework, are used to support local purchasing decisions.

Examples of procurement activities undertaken during the reporting period:

- procurement of EveryHR integrated human resource system.
- amalgamation of numerous education software licences in line with School Improvement initiatives.
- procurement of Every Compliance – estates statutory monitoring tool.
- procurement of new phone handsets and licences Trust wide.

The Estates Team also sourced 197 quotations and delivered 132 projects valued at £892,939.14. Through the Trust's procurement processes, cost savings of £70,802.70 were achieved.

We continue to ensure compliance with the Public Contracts Regulations, the Academy Trust Handbook and our own Scheme of Delegation in relation to procurement activities.



Related Party and Connected Transactions

Over the reporting year there have been no related parties concerns which have either controlled or significantly influenced the decisions and operations of the Trust over the reporting year.

Financial Risk Management

Trustees acknowledge their responsibility for identifying and managing the risks to which the Trust is exposed. The Trust has undertaken further work during the year to develop and embed the system of internal control, including financial, operational and risk management which is designed to protect the Trust's assets and reputation.

A termly review of the Trust's Risk Register ensures that the Trustees are well informed to arrive at a set of parameters and decisions for the amount of risk they consider to be acceptable. For example, the Trustees continue to review and question the Reserves Policy to establish and agree an appropriate level of reserves.

With this information, the Trustees are able to make informed choices about the strategic proposals put forward by the Chief Executive Officer and Director of Finance and Operations.

The principal financial risks remain lack of clarity about future funding agreements from government and the projected falling pupil numbers across both Birmingham and Dudley.

To note: The Trust uses the Government's Orange Book to support the assessment of major risks to which the Trust is exposed, in particular those relating to governance, financial management and school improvement.

Pay and Remuneration of CEO and Senior Leaders

Full use continues to be made of the Department for Education guidance for Academy Trusts on financial benchmarking and value for money as well as guidance to support Academy Trusts in setting levels of pay for executive leaders – Setting Executive Salaries (ESFA July 2019).

This ensures the Trust board uses all available resources efficiently, benchmarking executive team salaries to those paid in similar Trusts as a basis for transparency, scrutiny and challenge.

In addition, the following value for money criteria continues to be used by Trustees when making senior appointments and associated financial decisions:

- economic, efficient and effective use of all the resources in the Trust’s charge.
- avoidance of waste and extravagance.
- prudent and economical administration of the organisation.
- establishment and maintenance of a transparent system of financial governance.
- all financial transactions represent value for money.

Reserves Policy

Trustees continue to assess the Trust’s approach to financial risk and reserves. Trustees agree on a deliberately prudent approach to risk and this is the foundation on which specific scenarios have been costed to provide the Trust with an appropriate margin of safety.

The Trust is mainly funded by grants from the ESFA, the use of which is regulated by its Funding Agreement. The Trust’s financial modelling means that income and expenditure can be forecast with reasonably high levels of accuracy.

As a result of this review work and after making appropriate projections, Trustees have assessed the going concern basis as at the date of the report and accounts are approved. They believe that the level of reserves held and an analysis of the financial risks currently faced gives sufficient assurance that the Trust continues to be a going concern.

Going Concern Statement

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



Ongoing Monitoring and Security

Over the reporting year Trustees have continually monitored the reserves of the Trust and will continue to do so. This process encompasses the nature of income and expenditure streams and the need to match commitments with income and the nature of reserves.

It is the Trust board's general policy to build reserves, if possible, which can be used for future educational purposes.

To note: The Trust had total funds at 31 August 2023 of £43,848,699 which included £1,349,437 restricted funds not available for general purposes of the multi academy trust, £913,683 of free reserves defined as unrestricted funds available for general purposes and £45,845,579 which can only be realised by the disposal of tangible fixed assets.

The balance on restricted general funds (excluding pension reserve) plus the balance on unrestricted funds was a surplus of £2,263,120.

In addition, the deficit on the restricted pension fund of £4,260,000 arises from an actuarial deficit on the local government pension scheme which will be dealt with as advised by the actuary.



Investment Policy

The Trust board has an Investment Policy which allows Trustees to invest to further the Trust's educational purpose and vision. The policy supports financial management and the tracking of financial exposure and ensures a focus is maintained on achieving value for money in all transactions and decisions.

In line with Section 2 of the Department for Education Academy Trust Handbook, the Trust board always:

- acts within its power as set out in the Articles.
- exercises care and due diligence in investment decisions.
- takes professional advice as appropriate.
- ensures that exposure to investment products is tightly controlled.
- prioritises security of funding over revenue maximisation.
- ensures that any investment decisions are in the best interests of the Trust.
- reviews its Investment Policy and any investments regularly.



Streamlined Energy and Carbon Reporting

UK Greenhouse gas emissions and energy use data for the period 1 September 2022 to 31 August 2023	2021-22	2022-23
Energy consumption used to calculate emissions (kWh):	4,800,691	4,077,419
Energy consumption break down (kWh):		
• Gas	3,126,793	3,056,978
• Electricity	1,666,934	1,010,838
• Transport fuel	6,963	9,603
Scope 1 emissions in metric tonnes CO ₂ e:		
• Gas consumption	570.76	558.08
• Owned transport – mini-buses	0.00	0.00
Total Scope 1:	570.76	558.08
Scope 2 emissions in metric tonnes CO ₂ e:		
• Purchased electricity	322.35	209.31
Scope 3 emissions in metric tonnes CO ₂ e:		
• Business travel in employee-owned vehicles (petrol/diesel)	6.96	9.60
Total gross emissions in metric tonnes CO₂e:	900.03	777.00
Intensity ratio Tonnes CO ₂ e per pupil:	0.28	0.26

Quantification and reporting methodology

The Trust 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 chosen intensity measurement ratio is total gross emissions in metric tonnes CO₂e per pupil, the recommended ratio for the sector.

Measures taken to improve energy efficiency

The Trust has committed circa. £113,000 of the Energy Efficiency Grant on the following projects over the financial year with further spend planned for the 2023 financial year:

- Continuation of LED retrofit lighting across the Trust estate with the aim of reducing energy consumption.
- Installation of thermostatic mixing valves across two of the Trusts largest schools
- Energy efficient replacement boilers installed.
- Mileage across the Trust has been kept to a minimum over the year due to the continuing use of online Microsoft Teams meetings.

Responsibility of Trustees for the Financial Statements

As explained fully in Annex 'A' Governance Statement, Trustees recognise that they are responsible for the preparation of the annual financial statements and for being satisfied that they have given 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.

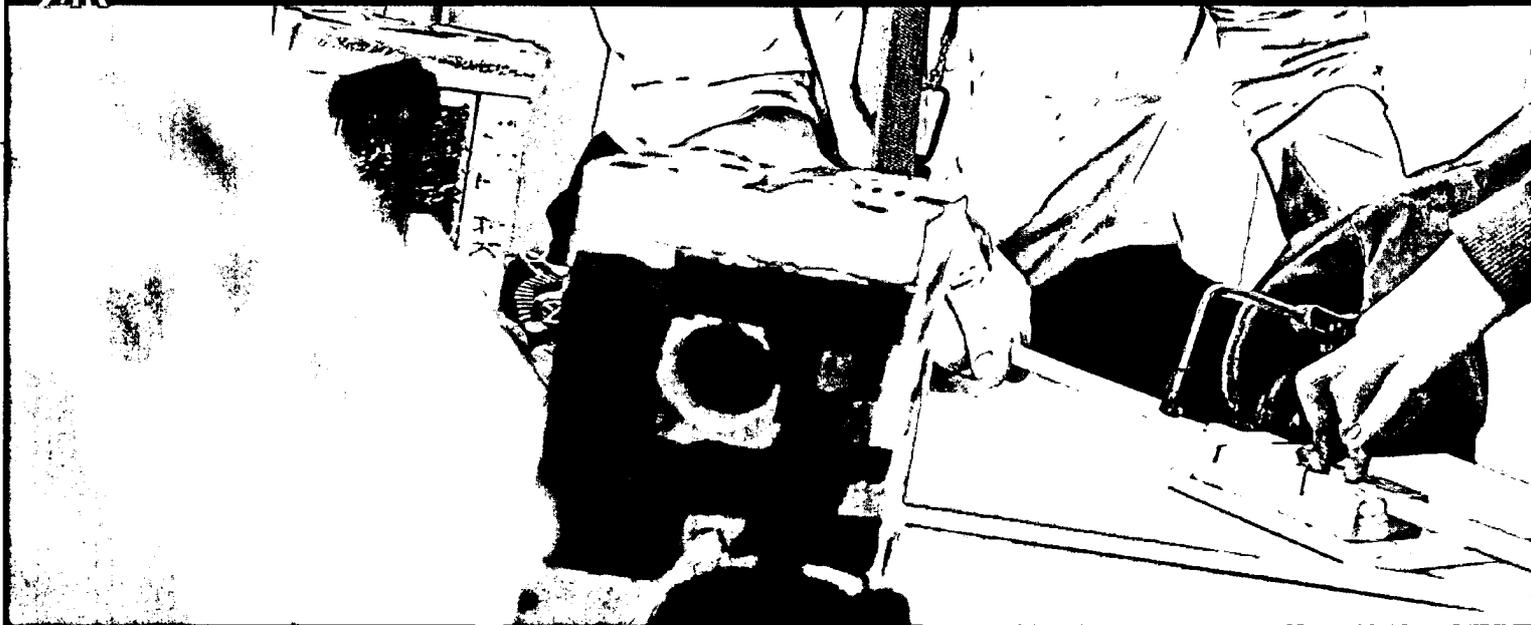
In so far as the Trustees are aware:

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

The Trustees' Annual Report and Financial Statements (incorporating Strategic Report) for the year 1 September 2022 to 31 August 2023, was approved by order of the Trust board, as the company directors, on 19 December 2023 and signed on the Trust board's behalf by:



David Sheldon
Chair of Trustees



Responsibility of the Auditor for the Audit of the Financial Statements

As auditor to the Trust our objectives are to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial statements as a whole are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error and to issue an auditor's report that includes our opinion.

Reasonable assurance is a high level of assurance but is not a guarantee that an audit conducted in accordance with ISAs (UK) will always detect a material misstatement when it exists. Misstatements can arise from fraud or error and are considered material if, individually or in the aggregate, they could reasonably be expected to influence the economic decisions of users taken on the basis of these financial statements.

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

- identify and assess the risks of material misstatement of the financial statements whether due to fraud or error, design and perform audit procedures responsive to those risks and obtain audit evidence that is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our opinion.
- obtain an understanding of internal control relevant to the audit in order to design audit procedures that are appropriate in the circumstances, but not for the purpose of expressing an opinion on the effectiveness of the Trust's internal control.
- evaluate the appropriateness of accounting policies used and the reasonableness of accounting estimates and related disclosures made by the Trustees.



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

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



Annex A

Trustee Governance Statement

Scope of Responsibility

The information on governance included in this Statement is supplementary to that described in the Trustees' Annual Report.

As Trustees of drb Ignite Multi Academy Trust, we acknowledge we have overall responsibility for ensuring the Trust has effective and appropriate systems of control, financial and otherwise.

Such systems are designed to manage rather than eliminate the risk of failure to achieve our educational and 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 Trust board delegates day-to-day responsibility for the running of the Trust to the Chief Executive Officer.

The Chief Executive Officer, as Accounting Officer, has full responsibility for ensuring financial controls conform and are compliant with the requirements of both propriety and good financial management as set out in the DfE Academy Trust Handbook, ESFA guidance and in accordance with the requirements and responsibilities assigned to the role in the Funding Agreement between the Trust and the Secretary of State for Education.

The Accounting Officer also has responsibility for reporting to the Trust board any material weaknesses or breakdowns in internal control.





Trustee Attendance Information

Members

The Members have formally met once during the reporting period as follows:

Trustee	Meetings attended	Out of possible
David Sheldon (Chair)	1	1
Malcolm Frier	1	1
Tim Reid (Worcester Diocesan Academies Trust)	1	1

Trust board

The Trust board has formally met four times during the reporting period. The adoption of hybrid meetings via Microsoft Teams has enhanced the way we conduct our business. It has improved flexibility, accessibility, and cost effectiveness while ensuring that we can continue to fulfil our mission.

We will continue to monitor the effectiveness of this model and make improvements where necessary.

Trustee	Meetings attended	Out of possible
David Sheldon (Chair)	4	4
Viv Randall (Vice-chair)	3	4
David Peters	4	4
Cheryl Millard	3	4
Bernard Peters	3	4
John McDermott	3	4
Robert Bowater (CEO/Accounting Officer)	4	4
Mahbub Elahi	3	4
Sadia Hanif	3	4

Finance Committee

The Finance Committee is a committee of the main Trust board. It has been established to support the Trust board in its on-going oversight of the Trust's arrangements for budgeting, financial planning, financial performance and financial reporting in respect of both revenue and capital activities. Attendance at meetings during the reporting period was as follows:

Trustee	Meetings attended	Out of possible
John McDermott (Chair)	5	5
David Sheldon	5	5
Robert Bowater (CEO/Accounting Officer)	5	5
Chris Finnerty (Director of Finance and Operations)	4	5

Achievement, Support and Scrutiny Committee

The Achievement, Support and Scrutiny Committee is a committee of the Trust board. It has been established to support the Trust board in meeting its responsibilities for curriculum, standards and quality of teaching and learning in all Trust schools. Attendance at meetings during the reporting period was as follows:

Trustee	Meetings attended	Out of possible
Viv Randall (Chair)	3	3
Cheryl Millard	2	3
Rob Bowater (CEO/Accounting Officer)	3	3



Audit and Risk Committee

The Audit and Risk Committee is a committee of the Trust board. It has been established to support the Trust board in meeting their responsibilities on matters relating to the Trust's audit and risk arrangements. Attendance at meetings during the reporting period was as follows:

Trustee	Meetings attended	Out of possible
David Peters (Chair)	4	4
Bernard Peters	3	4
Mahbub Elahi	0	4
Sadia Hanif	0	4

Remuneration and Nomination Committee

The Remuneration and Nomination Committee is a committee of the Trust board. It has been established to support the Trust board in meeting its responsibilities for ensuring the highest standards of corporate governance in the remuneration and succession planning of the Chief Executive (CEO) and Senior Executives of the Trust.

Trustee	Meetings attended	Out of possible
David Sheldon (Chair)	2	2
David Peters	2	2
Viv Randall	1	2
Cheryl Millard	2	2

Achieving Value for Money and Scope of Work

The purpose of this section is to demonstrate to all stakeholders that Trustees use of public assets has supported the advancement of education for the pupils in the care of the Trust and provided value for money during the reporting year.

An ongoing strategic objective, alongside the Trust's core purpose of raising educational standards, is to achieve value for money not only for the Trust itself but also for the taxpayer more generally.

The intention of Trustees is to continuously improve both the educational and wider wellbeing outcomes for all pupils within the resources available to them. The Chief Executive Officer (CEO) in his role as Trust Accounting Officer has responsibility for ensuring that the Trust delivers good value in the use of public resources. The CEO understands that value for money refers to the educational and wider wellbeing outcomes achieved in return for the taxpayer resources received.

Over the reporting year, the CEO as Accounting Officer has considered how the Trust's use of resources has specifically supported the raising of educational standards across all Trust Schools.

The publication of Key Stage 2 attainment results for 2023, represents the second set of results since 2019, due to cancellation of the 2020 and 2021 assessments during the Covid-19 pandemic.

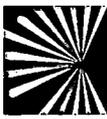
The national attainment for the 2023 Key Stage 2 SATs was broadly similar to that of 2022, with 59% of pupils achieving the expected level across the three subjects of reading, writing and maths. This percentage has remained unchanged from 2022. In 2019, 65% of pupils achieved the expected standard in all three areas.

For 2022, the Trust average has closed the gap with the national average by 6% at the end of Key Stage 2 compared to 2019. Although this is an improvement in pupil outcomes across the Trust, they are 7% below the national average.

Trustees are very clear that standards are not consistently there yet across all schools and improving outcomes for all pupils was a top priority before the arrival of Covid-19 and continues to be the major focus.

The CEO as Accounting Officer has worked to deliver improved value for money during the reporting period as exemplified through the procurement of the EveryHR integrated human resource system, amalgamation of numerous software licences and procurement of Every Compliance.

The Estates Team also sourced 197 quotations and delivered 132 projects valued at £892,939.14. Through the Trust's procurement processes, cost savings of £70,802.70 were achieved.



Trustee Self-Evaluation

At drb Ignite Trust, the importance of strong and robust governance is central to our work. Trustees recognise that effective governance requires a Trust board with a range of skills. These skills enable them to ask the right questions, analyse data and have discussions which create robust accountability for the CEO, executive and school leaders.

Over the reporting year Trustees have continued to evaluate their performance and effectiveness. They have used evaluation tools from the National Governors Association and Confederation of School Trusts to internally review performance.

By using the Confederation of School Trusts Assurance Framework, the Trust board is able to adapt the sixteen core competencies in the Competency Framework as a basis to assess its corporate capacity and effectiveness.

The Framework also recognises the Trust's position as a new civic structure with responsibilities to work with partners and other civic actors to advance education in the public interest across the Trust's local areas in Dudley and Birmingham.

The Assurance Framework simplifies the competencies as a basis for the Trust board to assess its corporate capacity and effectiveness.

The Trust board uses the Confederation of School Trusts Assurance.

Internal Controls

The Trust's systems of internal financial controls and Trust Improvement Board arrangements are designed to manage risk to an acceptable level, recognising that it is difficult to eliminate all risk of failure to achieve policies, aims and objectives.

Trustees can only provide reasonable and not absolute assurance of effectiveness. The Trust's systems of internal control are based on processes designed to identify and prioritise significant risks which have the potential to affect achievement of the Trust's Strategy Plan priorities.

They also help to evaluate the likelihood of those risks being realised, the impact should they be realised and the mitigatory actions required to manage them efficiently, effectively and economically.

Risk Management

The Trust board has a robust Risk Register which is presented at every board meeting and monitored by the Audit and Risk Committee. Risks to which the Trust is exposed together with the operating, financial and compliance controls that have been implemented to mitigate them are fully discussed.

The board is of the view that there has been a formal, robust and on-going process for identifying, evaluating and managing the Trust's significant risks in place for the reporting period and up to the date of approval of the Annual Report and financial statements.

Risk and Control Framework

The Trust's system of internal financial control is based on regular management information and administrative procedures including the segregation of duties and a system of delegation and accountability in line with the DfE Academy Trust Handbook and full compliance with ESFA requirements. It includes:

- comprehensive budgeting and monitoring systems with an annual budget and periodic financial reports which are scrutinised through the Trust Improvement Board/Finance Committee process before review and sign off by the Trust board.
- regular reviews by the Finance and Audit and Risk Committees of reports which indicate financial performance against the forecasts and of major purchase plans, capital works and expenditure programmes.
- setting Trust and individual school targets to measure financial and other performance.
- clearly defined purchasing (asset purchase or capital investment) guidelines.
- delegation of authority and segregation of duties.
- identification, management and mitigation of risks.

Over the reporting period, the Trustees have used drb Schools and Academies Services Ltd to provide the internal audit function and independent oversight of the Trust's financial affairs. These reports are presented to the Audit and Risk Committee and Trust board on a termly basis.

The main duties of the internal audit function are:

- Compliance - review and assessment of how the Trust is addressing Annex 'C' - The Musts as per the DfE Academy Trust Handbook, the Trust's Fraud Policy, attitude to fraud and how the Trust is addressing the Charity Commission CC8 checklist.
- Strategic - review and assessment of the Trust's documentation to include:
 - Business Continuity Plan and Risk Register.
 - Segregation of duties and Scheme of Delegation.
 - succession planning.
 - compliance visit reports and progress against recommendations.
 - management accounts and reporting process.
 - Board and Committee minutes.
- Governance - progress against prior year:
 - Management Letter.
 - Internal Assurance Report.
 - website compliance.
 - proper convening of Board meetings e.g. quorate.
 - maintenance of GIAS and Companies House Member/Trustee data.
 - assessment of any related, connected party issues.
 - maintenance of declarations and pecuniary interest register.
- Transactional - appropriate testing of:
 - purchases.
 - bank transactions.
 - credit cards.
 - capital works.
 - tendering and procurement.
 - payroll administration.
 - income.
 - IT procedures.



Review of Effectiveness

As Accounting Officer, Robert Bowater (CEO), has responsibility for reviewing the effectiveness of the Trust's systems of internal control.

During the reporting period this review activity has been informed by:

- the work of the internal reviewer.
- the work of the external auditor.
- the work of the executive leadership team within the Trust who have responsibility for the development and maintenance of the internal control framework.

The Accounting Officer has been advised of the implications of the results of review activity of the systems of internal control and a plan to address weaknesses and ensure continuous improvement of the systems is in place.

Approved by order of the Trustees of the Trust board on 19 December 2023.

Signed on its behalf by: 

David Sheldon
Chair of Trustees



Robert Bowater
CEO and Accounting Officer



Outstanding
pupil experience

Excellence
in education

Impactful
teaching

Effective
partnerships



Annex B

Statement of Regularity, Propriety and Compliance

Statement of Regularity, Propriety and Compliance

As Accounting Officer of drb Ignite Multi Academy Trust, I have considered my responsibility to notify the Board of Trustees and the Education Skills and Funding Agency (ESFA) of material irregularity, impropriety and non-compliance with terms and conditions of all funding received by Trust and the Secretary of State for Education.

As part of my consideration, I have had due regard to the requirements of the DfE Academy Trust Handbook 2022.

I confirm that I and the 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 DfE Academy 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 the ESFA.

Signed by: 
.....
Robert Bowater
Accounting Officer

19 December 2023
.....
Date



Annex C

Statement of Trustee Responsibilities

The Trustees, acting as Directors of the Charitable Company for the purposes of company law, are responsible for preparing the Annual Trustees' Report and the financial statements in accordance with:

- the Academies Accounts Direction published by the Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA)
- UK Accounting Standards (UK Generally Accepted Accounting Practice)
- DfE Academy Trust Handbook 2022 and applicable charitable company law and regulations.

Company law requires Trustees to prepare financial statements for each financial year. Under company law 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 Trust as a charitable company. This includes its incoming resources and application of resources, including its income and expenditure for the reporting year.

Statement of Trustee Responsibilities

Trustee responsibilities

In preparing these financial statements, Trustees are required to:

- select suitable accounting and internal controls policies and then apply them consistently.
- observe the methods and principles in the Charities SORP 2019, the ESFA Academies Accounts Direction 2022 to 2023 and the DfE Academy Trust Handbook 2022.
- 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.
- prepare the financial statements on the going concern basis unless it is inappropriate to presume that the Trust as a charitable organisation will continue in business.

The Trustees are responsible for keeping adequate accounting records that are sufficient to show and explain the Trust’s transactions and disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time the financial position of the Trust 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 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 Trust applies financial and other controls which conform with the requirements both of propriety and of good financial management. They are also responsible for ensuring grants received from the ESFA/DfE have been applied for the purposes intended.

The Trustees are responsible for the maintenance, integrity and compliance of the corporate and financial information included on the Trust 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 Trustees of the Trust board on 19 December 2023.

Signed on its behalf by: 

David Sheldon
Chair of Trustees



drb Ignite Multi Academy Trust (A company Limited by Guarantee)

Independent Auditor's Report on the Financial Statements to the Members of drb Ignite Multi Academy Trust

Opinion

We have audited the financial statements of drb Ignite Multi Academy (the 'multi academy trust') for the year to 31 August 2023 which comprise the Statement of Financial Activities, the Balance Sheet, the Statement of Cash Flows and notes to the financial statements, including a summary of significant accounting policies. The financial reporting framework that has been applied in their preparation is applicable law and United Kingdom Accounting Standards (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice) including Financial Reporting Standard 102 "The Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland", the Charities SORP 2019 and the Academies Accounts Direction 2022 to 2023 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 multi academy trust's affairs as at 31 August 2023, and of its incoming resources and application of resources, including its income and expenditure, for the period then ended
- have been properly prepared in accordance with United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice
- have been prepared in accordance with the requirements of the Companies Act 2006, the Charities SORP 2019 and the Academies Accounts Direction 2022 to 2023 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 multi academy trust in accordance with the ethical requirements that are relevant to our audit of the financial statements in the UK, including the FRC's Ethical Standard, and we have fulfilled our other ethical responsibilities in accordance with these requirements. We believe that the audit evidence we have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our opinion.

Conclusions relating to going concern

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

- Based on the work we have performed, we have not identified any material uncertainties relating to events or conditions that, individually or collectively, may cast significant doubt on the multi academy trust's ability to continue as a going concern for a period of at least twelve months from when the financial statements are authorised for issue.
- Our responsibilities and the responsibilities of the trustees with respect to going concern are described in the relevant sections of this report.

drb Ignite Multi Academy Trust

(A company Limited by Guarantee)

Independent Auditor's Report on the Financial Statements to the Members of drb Ignite Multi Academy Trust (Continued)

Other information

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

We have nothing to report in this regard.

Opinion on other matter prescribed by the Companies Act 2006

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

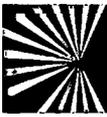
- the information given in the trustees' report (incorporating the strategic report and the directors' report) for the financial year for which the financial statements are prepared is consistent with the financial statements; and
- the strategic report and the directors' report have been prepared in accordance with applicable legal requirements.

Matters on which we are required to report by exception

In the light of the knowledge and understanding of the Multi Academy and its environment obtained in the course of the audit, we have not identified material misstatements in the strategic report and the directors' report.

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

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



drb Ignite Multi Academy Trust (A company Limited by Guarantee)

Independent Auditor's Report on the Financial Statements to the Members of drb Ignite Multi Academy Trust (Continued)

Responsibilities of trustees

As explained more fully in the trustees' responsibilities statement (set out on page 107], the trustees (who are also the directors of the charitable company for the purposes of company law) are responsible for the preparation of the financial statements and for being satisfied that they give a true and fair view, and for such internal control as the trustees determine is necessary to enable the preparation of financial statements that are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

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

Auditor's responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements

Our objectives are to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial statements as a whole are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error, and to issue an auditor's report that includes our opinion.

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

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

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

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

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

drb Ignite Multi Academy Trust
(A company Limited by Guarantee)

*Independent Auditor's Report on the Financial Statements to the Members of
drb Ignite Multi Academy Trust (Continued)*

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

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

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

Use of our report

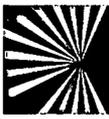
This report is made solely to the multi academy trust's members, as a body, in accordance with Chapter 3 of Part 16 of the Companies Act 2006. Our audit work has been undertaken so that we might state to the charitable company's members those matters we are required to state to them in an auditor's report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

Feltons

David W Farnsworth FCA (Senior Statutory Auditor)

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

19 December 2023



drb Ignite Multi Academy Trust (A company Limited by Guarantee)

Independent Reporting Accountant's Assurance Report on Regularity to drb Ignite Multi Academy Trust and the Education and Skills Funding Agency

In accordance with the terms of our engagement letter dated 30 March 2021 and further to the requirements of the Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA) as included in the Academies Accounts Direction 2022 to 2023, we have carried out an engagement to obtain limited assurance about whether the expenditure disbursed and income received by drb Ignite Multi Academy Trust during the year 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.

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

Respective responsibilities of drb Ignite Multi Academy Trust's accounting officer and the reporting accountant

The accounting officer is responsible, under the requirements of drb Ignite Multi Academy Trust's funding agreement with the Secretary of State for Education dated 25 September 2015 and the Academy Trust Handbook, extant from 1 September 2022, for ensuring that expenditure disbursed and income received is applied for the purposes intended by Parliament and the financial transactions conform to the authorities which govern them.

Our responsibilities for this engagement are established in the United Kingdom by our profession's ethical guidance and are to obtain limited assurance and report in accordance with our engagement letter and the requirements of the Academies Accounts Direction 2022 to 2023. We report to you whether anything has come to our attention in carrying out our work which suggests that in all material respects, expenditure disbursed and income received during the year 1 September 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.

Approach

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

The objective of a limited assurance engagement is to perform such procedures as to obtain information and explanations in order to provide us with sufficient appropriate evidence to express a negative conclusion on regularity. A limited assurance engagement is more limited in scope than a reasonable assurance engagement and consequently does not enable us to obtain assurance that we would become aware of all significant matters that might be identified in a reasonable assurance engagement. Accordingly, we do not express a positive opinion.

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

The work undertaken to draw our conclusion includes :

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

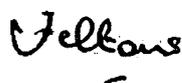
drb Ignite Multi Academy Trust

(A company Limited by Guarantee)

*Independent Reporting Accountant's Assurance Report on Regularity to
drb Ignite Multi Academy Trust and the Education and Skills Funding Agency
(Continued)*

Conclusion

In the course of our work, nothing has come to our attention which suggests that in all material respects the expenditure disbursed and income received during the year 1 September 2022 to 31 August 2023 has not been applied to purposes intended by Parliament and the financial transactions do not conform to the authorities which govern them.



David W Farnsworth FCA (Reporting Accountant)

For and on behalf of Feltons, Statutory Auditor

8 Sovereign Court

8 Graham Street

Birmingham B1 3JR

19 December 2023



drb Ignite Multi Academy Trust
(A company Limited by Guarantee)

*Statement of financial activities for the year ended 31 August 2023
(including income and expenditure account)*

	Notes	Unrestricted funds £	Restricted pension fund £	Restricted general funds £	Restricted fixed asset funds £	Total 2022/23	Total 2021/22 £
Income from :							
Donations and capital grants	2	-	-	-	839,953	839,953	820,097
Transfer from local authority on conversion	3	50,000	(1,134,000)	-	7,761,198	6,677,198	-
Charitable activities :							
Funding for the academy trust's educational operations	4	228,911	-	21,850,571	-	22,079,482	20,842,315
Other trading activities	5	19,971	-	-	-	19,971	27,751
Investments	6	28,805	-	-	-	28,805	1,819
Total		327,687	(1,134,000)	21,850,571	8,601,151	29,645,409	21,691,982
Expenditure on :							
Charitable activities :							
Academy trust educational operations	7	277,687	(125,000)	21,903,459	1,167,432	23,223,578	23,018,423
Total		277,687	(125,000)	21,903,459	1,167,432	23,223,578	23,018,423
Net income/(expenditure) before transfers		50,000	(1,009,000)	(52,888)	7,433,719	6,421,831	(1,326,441)
Transfers between funds	16	-	-	(112,956)	112,956	-	-
Net income/(expenditure) after transfers		50,000	(1,009,000)	(165,844)	7,546,675	6,421,831	(1,326,441)
Other recognised gains/(losses)							
Actuarial gains/(losses) on defined benefit pension schemes	16, 26	-	3,825,000	-	-	3,825,000	16,434,000
Net movement in funds		50,000	2,816,000	(165,844)	7,546,675	10,246,831	15,107,559
Reconciliation of funds							
Total funds brought forward	17	863,683	(7,076,000)	1,515,281	38,298,904	33,601,868	18,494,309
Total funds carried forward		913,683	(4,260,000)	1,349,437	45,845,579	43,848,699	33,601,868

114 The statement of financial activities includes all gains and losses recognised in the year.
All of the multi academy trust's activities derive from continuing operations during the above two financial periods.

drb Ignite Multi Academy Trust
(A company Limited by Guarantee)

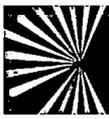
Company number: 09284055
Balance sheet as at 31 August 2023

	Notes	2023		2022	
		£	£	£	£
Fixed assets					
Tangible assets	13		45,369,344		37,991,527
Current assets					
Debtors	14	1,223,380		895,185	
Cash at bank and in hand		3,570,177		7,960,369	
		<u>4,793,557</u>		<u>8,855,554</u>	
Liabilities					
Creditors: amounts falling due within one year	15(a)	<u>1,889,088</u>		<u>5,997,216</u>	
Net current assets			2,904,469		2,858,338
Total assets less current liabilities			<u>48,273,813</u>		<u>40,849,865</u>
Creditors: amounts falling due after more than one year	15(b)		(165,114)		(171,997)
Net assets excluding pension liability			<u>48,108,699</u>		<u>40,677,868</u>
Defined benefit pension scheme liability	26		(4,260,000)		(7,076,000)
Total net assets			<u>43,848,699</u>		<u>33,601,868</u>
Funds of the academy trust :					
Restricted funds					
Fixed asset fund	16	45,845,579		38,298,904	
Restricted income fund	16	1,349,437		1,515,281	
Pension reserve	16	<u>(4,260,000)</u>		<u>(7,076,000)</u>	
Total restricted funds			<u>42,935,016</u>		<u>32,738,185</u>
Unrestricted income funds	16		913,683		863,683
Total funds			<u>43,848,699</u>		<u>33,601,868</u>

The financial statements on pages 114 to 138 were approved by the trustees, and authorised for issue on 6 December 2023 and are signed on their behalf by:



David Sheldon - Chair of Trust Board



drb Ignite Multi Academy Trust
(A company Limited by Guarantee)

Statement of cash flows for the year ended 31 August 2023

	Notes	2022/23 £	2021/22 £
Cash flows from operating activities			
Net cash provided by/ (used in) operating activities	20	(4,517,715)	4,201,957
Cash transferred on conversion to academy trust		50,000	-
Cash flows from investing activities	21	84,707	(160,804)
Cash flows from financing activities	22	(7,184)	(7,487)
		<hr/>	<hr/>
		(4,390,192)	4,033,666
Cash and cash equivalents at 1 September 2022		7,960,369	3,926,703
Cash and cash equivalents at 31 August 2023	23	<hr/> 3,570,177	<hr/> 7,960,369

drb Ignite Multi Academy Trust

(A company Limited by Guarantee)

Notes to the financial statements for the year ended 31 August 2023

1. Accounting policies

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

1.1 Basis of preparation

The financial statements of the multi academy trust, which is a public benefit entity under FRS 102, have been prepared under the historical cost convention in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard Applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102), the Accounting and Reporting by Charities: Statement of Recommended Practice applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (Charities SORP (FRS 102)), the Academies Accounts Direction 2021 to 2022 issued by ESFA, the Charities Act 2011 and the Companies Act 2006.

1.2 Going concern

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

1.3 Income

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

- **Grants**

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

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

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

- **Donations**

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



drb Ignite Multi Academy Trust (A company Limited by Guarantee)

Notes to the financial statements for the year ended 31 August 2023 (Continued)

1. Accounting policies (continued)

1.3 Income (continued)

- **Other income**
Other income, including the hire of facilities, is recognised in the year it is receivable and to the extent the multi academy trust has provided the goods or services.
- **Donated goods, facilities and services**
Goods donated for resale are included at fair value, being the expected proceeds from sale less the expected costs of sale. If it is practical to assess the fair value at receipt, it is recognised in 'Stocks' and 'Income from Other Trading Activities'. Upon sale, the value of the stock is charged against 'Income from Other Trading Activities' and the proceeds are recognised as 'Income from Other Trading Activities'. Where it is impractical to fair value the items due to the volume of low value items they are not recognised in the financial statements until they are sold. This income is recognised within 'Income from Other Trading Activities'.
- **Donated fixed assets**
Where the donated good is a fixed asset it is measured at fair value, unless it is impractical to measure this reliably, in which case the cost of the item to the donor should be used. The gain is recognised as income from donations and a corresponding amount is included in the appropriate fixed asset category and depreciated over the useful economic life in accordance with the multi academy trust's accounting policies.

1.4 Conversion to multi academy trust

The conversion from a state maintained school to an multi academy trust involved the transfer of identifiable assets and liabilities and the operation of the school for £nil consideration. The substance of the transfer is that of a gift and it has been accounted for on that basis as set out below :

The assets and liabilities transferred on conversion from The Oaks Primary School to the multi academy trust have been valued at their fair value. The fair value has been derived based on that of equivalent items. The amounts have been recognised under the appropriate balance sheet categories, with a corresponding amount recognised in Donations - transfer from local authority on conversion in the Statement of Financial Activities and analysed under unrestricted funds, restricted general funds and restricted fixed asset funds. Further details of the transaction are set out in note 28.

1.5 Expenditure

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

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

drb Ignite Multi Academy Trust

(A company Limited by Guarantee)

Notes to the financial statements for the year ended 31 August 2023 (Continued)

1.5 Expenditure (continued)

- **Charitable activities**

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

All resources expended are inclusive of irrecoverable VAT.

1.6 Tangible fixed assets

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

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

The Academy acquired a number of assets from a predecessor school for which no payment was made. A notional donation of £7,761,198 has been recognised to represent their value at that date.

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

Long leasehold buildings	- straight line over 50 years
Furniture and equipment	- 15% straight line
Computer hardware	- 20-25% straight line

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

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

1.7 Debtors

Trade and other debtors are recognised at the settlement amount after any trade discount offered.

1.8 Cash at bank and in hand

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

1.9 Liabilities

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



drb Ignite Multi Academy Trust (A company Limited by Guarantee)

Notes to the financial statements for the year ended 31 August 2023 (Continued)

1. Accounting policies (continued)

1.10 Financial instruments

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

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

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

Financial liabilities - trade creditors, accruals and other creditors are financial instruments and are measured at amortised cost. Taxation and social security are not included in the financial instruments disclosure definition. Deferred income is not deemed to be a financial liability, as the cash settlement has already taken place and there is an obligation to deliver services rather than cash or another financial instrument.

1.11 Leased assets

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

1.12 Taxation

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

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

1.13 Pension benefits

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

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

drb Ignite Multi Academy Trust

(A company Limited by Guarantee)

Notes to the financial statements for the year ended 31 August 2023 (Continued)

1. Accounting policies (continued)

1.13 Pension benefits (continued)

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

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

1.14 Fund accounting

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

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

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

1.15 Critical accounting estimates and areas of judgement

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

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

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



drb Ignite Multi Academy Trust
(A company Limited by Guarantee)

Notes to the financial statements for the year ended 31 August 2023 (Continued)

2. Donations and capital grants

	Unrestricted funds	Restricted general fund	Restricted fixed asset funds	2022/23 Total	2021/22 Total
	£	£	£	£	£
Capital grants	-	-	839,953	839,953	701,508
Donated fixed assets	-	-	-	-	118,589
	-	-	839,953	839,953	820,097
2022 total	-	-	820,097	820,097	

3. Transfer from local authority on conversion

	Unrestricted funds	Restricted pension funds	Restricted general funds	Restricted fixed asset funds	2022/23 Total
	£	£	£	£	£
Fixed assets	-	-	-	7,761,198	7,761,198
Surplus on local authority funds	50,000	-	-	-	50,000
LGPS pension deficit	-	(1,134,000)	-	-	(1,134,000)
	50,000	(1,134,000)	-	7,761,198	6,677,198

4. Funding for the multi academy trust's educational operations

	Unrestricted funds	Restricted general fund	Restricted fixed asset funds	2022/23 Total	2021/22 Total
	£	£	£	£	£
DfE/ESFA grants					
General Annual Grant (GAG)	-	16,317,095	-	16,317,095	15,949,019
Other DfE/ESFA grants					
Pupil premium	-	2,554,666	-	2,554,666	2,381,751
Supplementary grant	-	484,982	-	484,982	200,380
Mainstreams school grant	-	242,607	-	242,607	-
UIFSM	-	239,941	-	239,941	225,079
National tutoring programme	-	190,183	-	190,183	240,347
Sports premium	-	161,893	-	161,893	170,560
Other DfE Group grants	-	51,877	-	51,877	59,538
	-	20,243,244	-	20,243,244	19,226,674
Other government grants					
Local authority grants	-	1,346,502	-	1,346,502	1,202,496
	-	1,346,502	-	1,346,502	1,202,496
Other income from the academy trust's educational operations					
Covid-19 additional funding (DfE/ESFA)	228,911	-	-	228,911	161,594
Recovery premium	-	260,825	-	260,825	251,551
	228,911	1,607,327	-	1,836,238	1,615,641
	228,911	21,850,571	-	22,079,482	20,842,315
172 2022 total	161,594	20,680,721	-	20,842,315	

drb Ignite Multi Academy Trust
(A company Limited by Guarantee)

Notes to the financial statements for the year ended 31 August 2023 (Continued)

5. Other trading activities

	Unrestricted funds	Restricted funds	2022/23 Total	2021/22 Total
	£	£	£	£
Hire of facilities	19,971	-	19,971	27,751
	<u>19,971</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>19,971</u>	<u>27,751</u>
2022 total	27,751	-	27,751	

6. Investment income

	Unrestricted funds	Restricted funds	2022/23 Total	2021/22 Total
	£	£	£	£
Short term deposits	28,805	-	28,805	1,819
	<u>28,805</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>28,805</u>	<u>1,819</u>
2022 total	1,819	-	1,819	

7. Expenditure

	Non pay expenditure			2022/23 Total	2021/22 Total
	Staff costs	Premises	Other		
	£	£	£	£	£
Academy's educational operations					
Direct costs	14,672,137	763,321	1,282,390	16,717,848	14,941,512
Allocated support costs	3,191,227	1,120,679	2,193,824	6,505,730	8,076,911
	<u>17,863,364</u>	<u>1,884,000</u>	<u>3,476,214</u>	<u>23,223,578</u>	<u>23,018,423</u>
2022 total	17,857,712	1,891,632	3,269,079	23,018,423	

Net income/(expenditure) for the period includes :

		2022/23	2021/22
		£	£
Operating leases	- plant and machinery	71,673	66,067
	- other	54,206	46,106
Depreciation		1,167,432	1,182,693
Interest paid on equal pay loans		6,506	7,487
Fees payable to auditor	- audit	31,850	30,350
	- other services	750	315
		<u>750</u>	<u>315</u>



drb Ignite Multi Academy Trust
(A company Limited by Guarantee)

Notes to the financial statements for the year ended 31 August 2023 (Continued)

8. Charitable activities

	Unrestricted funds	Restricted pension fund	Other restricted funds	2022/23 Total	2021/22 Total
	£	£	£	£	£
Educational operations					
Direct costs					
Educational operations	35,007	-	16,682,841	16,717,848	14,941,512
Support costs					
Educational operations	242,680	(125,000)	6,388,050	6,505,730	8,076,911
	<u>277,687</u>	<u>(125,000)</u>	<u>23,070,891</u>	<u>23,223,578</u>	<u>23,018,423</u>
2022 total	<u>191,164</u>	<u>1,612,000</u>	<u>21,215,259</u>	<u>23,018,423</u>	

Analysis of support costs

	Other restricted funds	2022/23 Total	2021/22 Total
	£	£	£
Support staff costs	3,191,227	3,191,227	5,042,410
Depreciation	404,111	404,111	390,287
Technology costs	143,867	143,867	211,519
Premises costs	842,447	842,447	816,342
Legal costs - conversion	24,098	24,098	-
Legal costs - other	25,852	25,852	31,480
Other support costs	1,824,888	1,824,888	1,538,728
Governance costs	49,240	49,240	46,145
Total support costs	<u>6,505,730</u>	<u>6,505,730</u>	<u>8,076,911</u>
2022 total	<u>8,076,911</u>	<u>8,076,911</u>	

9. Staff

Staff costs during the year were:

	2022/23 Total	2021/22 Total
	£	£
Wages and salaries	11,810,449	11,396,041
Social security costs	1,175,037	1,094,638
Pensions costs	2,960,044	4,402,509
	<u>15,945,530</u>	<u>16,893,188</u>
Agency staff costs	1,902,769	952,554
Staff restructuring costs	15,065	11,970
	<u>17,863,364</u>	<u>17,857,712</u>
Staff restructuring costs comprise :		
Severance payments	15,065	11,970

drb Ignite Multi Academy Trust
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Notes to the financial statements for the year ended 31 August 2023 (Continued)

9. Staff (continued)

b) Severance payments

The academy trust paid 4 severance payments in the year, disclosed in the following bands:

	2022/23 Number	2021/22 Number
£0- £25,000	4	3

c) Special staff severance payments

Included in staff restructuring costs are special severance payments totalling £15,065 (2022 : £11,970). Individually, the payments were: £10,031 and £5,034.

d) Staff numbers

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

	2022/23 Number	2021/22 Number
Teachers	203	170
Administration and support	292	340
Management	7	10
	502	520

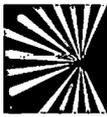
e) Higher paid staff

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

	2022/23 Number	2021/22 Number
£60,001 - £70,000	13	7
£70,001 - £80,000	3	3
£80,001 - £90,000	-	5
£90,001 - £100,000	3	1
£100,001 - £110,000	1	-
£130,001 - £140,000	-	1
£140,001 - £150,000	1	-

f) Key management personnel

The key management personnel of the multi academy trust comprise the trustees and the senior management team as listed on page 1. The total amount of employee benefits (including employer pension contributions and employer national insurance contributions) received by key management personnel for their services to the multi academy trust was £734,113 (2022: £471,249)



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Notes to the financial statements for the year ended 31 August 2023 (Continued)

10. Central services

From 1 September 2020 the budget model was revised in line with the funding agreement to encapsulate GAG pooling. As a result, central services were no longer charged separately to individual academies. The Trust has provided the following central and operational services to the academies during the year:

- Executive Leadership Team
- External Audit and Internal Assurance
- Trust Website and Marketing
- Trust MIS system
- External Challenge Consultancy
- Trust Board operation costs
- Educational Improvement priorities
- Governance and Legal
- Trust CPD

11. Related Party Transactions - Trustees' remuneration and expenses

One or more trustees has been paid remuneration or has received other benefits from employment with the multi academy trust. The principal and other staff trustees only receive remuneration in respect of services they provide undertaking the roles of principal and staff members under their contracts of employment.

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

Robert Bowater (CEO and staff trustee)	
Remuneration	£140,000 - £145,000 (2022: £135,000 - £140,000)
Employer's pension contributions paid	£35,000 - £40,000 (2022: £25,000 - £30,000)

During the year ended 31 August 2023 travel and subsistence expenses totalling £101 (2022: £nil) were reimbursed or paid directly to one member (2022 : none).

Other related party transactions involving the trustees are set out in note 27.

12. Trustees' and officers' insurance

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

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Notes to the financial statements for the year ended 31 August 2023 (Continued)

13. Tangible fixed assets

	Leasehold land and buildings £	Furniture and equipment £	Computer hardware £	Total £
Cost or valuation				
At 1 September 2022	42,392,006	983,877	1,776,699	45,152,582
Transfer on conversion	7,603,000	98,500	59,698	7,761,198
Additions	671,095	-	112,956	784,051
At 31 August 2023	<u>50,666,101</u>	<u>1,082,377</u>	<u>1,949,353</u>	<u>53,697,831</u>
Depreciation				
At 1 September 2022	5,009,493	763,080	1,388,482	7,161,055
Charge for the year	861,268	107,025	199,139	1,167,432
At 31 August 2023	<u>5,870,761</u>	<u>870,105</u>	<u>1,587,621</u>	<u>8,328,487</u>
Net book values				
At 31 August 2023	<u>44,795,340</u>	<u>212,272</u>	<u>361,732</u>	<u>45,369,344</u>
At 31 August 2022	<u>37,382,513</u>	<u>220,797</u>	<u>388,217</u>	<u>37,991,527</u>

The trust's acquisition relating to land and buildings was the taking up of a leasehold on The Oaks Primary School, Bells Lane, Duids Heath, Birmingham for a peppercorn rent over a term of 125 years.

The leasehold property acquired on conversion was valued at 1 July 2023 by FHP Property Consultants and the furniture and equipment and computer hardware were valued at the same date by the trustees. The basis on which the valuations were made was depreciated replacement cost.

14. Debtors

	2023 £	2022 £
Debtors from operations	52,270	83,526
VAT recoverable	379,899	250,340
Prepayments and accrued income	741,211	561,319
Other debtors	50,000	-
	<u>1,223,380</u>	<u>895,185</u>



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Notes to the financial statements for the year ended 31 August 2023 (Continued)

15. Creditors

(a) Amounts falling due within one year :	2023	2022
	£	£
Creditors from operations	940,560	44,766
Accruals and deferred income	282,636	1,179,008
Loans	7,188	7,489
Other creditors	658,704	4,765,953
	<u>1,889,088</u>	<u>5,997,216</u>
Deferred income		
Deferred income at 1 September 2022	133,562	141,479
Resources deferred in the year	147,939	133,562
Amounts released from previous years	(133,562)	(141,479)
	<u>147,939</u>	<u>133,562</u>
Deferred income at 31 August 2023	<u>147,939</u>	<u>133,562</u>

At the balance sheet date the multi academy trust was holding funds received in advance for universal infant free school meals from the The Education and Skills Funding Agency.

(b) Amounts falling due after more than one year:	2023	2022
	£	£
Loans	165,114	171,997
	<u>165,114</u>	<u>171,997</u>

Loans due after more than one year represents two loans from Dudley Metropolitan Borough Council repayable in yearly instalments. The loans are charged at the following annual interest rates; Authority's actual General Fund Borrowing Rate (currently approximately 2.4%) and 2.5%. The amount repayable after more than five years is £136,361. (2022: £133,562). The amount due within one year is shown in note 15(a).

drb Ignite Multi Academy Trust

(A company Limited by Guarantee)

Notes to the financial statements for the year ended 31 August 2023 (Continued)

16. Funds	Balance at 1 September 2022	Income	Expenditure	Gains, losses and transfers	Balance at 31 August 2023
	£	£	£	£	£
Restricted general funds					
General Annual Grant (GAG)	1,597,290	16,317,095	(16,272,503)	(120,143)	1,521,739
UIFSM	-	239,941	(239,941)	-	-
Pupil premium	-	2,554,666	(2,554,666)	-	-
LA (deficit) on conversion	(179,489)	-	-	7,187	(172,302)
Recovery premium	97,480	260,825	(358,305)	-	-
Other grants	-	2,478,044	(2,478,044)	-	-
	-	-	-	(112,956)	1,349,437
Restricted general funds					
Transfer on conversion	33,888,667	7,761,198	(810,757)	-	40,839,108
DfE Group capital grants	3,458,098	839,953	(238,875)	-	4,059,176
Capital expenditure from GAG	569,831	-	(71,094)	112,956	611,693
Other capital grants	34,869	-	(659)	-	34,210
From unrestricted funds	5,969	-	(4,971)	-	998
Donations	341,470	-	(41,076)	-	300,394
	38,298,904	8,601,151	(1,167,432)	112,956	45,845,579
Pension reserve	(7,076,000)	(1,134,000)	125,000	3,825,000	(4,260,000)
Total restricted funds	32,738,185	29,317,722	(22,945,891)	3,825,000	42,935,016
Unrestricted funds					
Other income	863,683	327,687	(277,687)	-	913,683
Total unrestricted funds	863,683	327,687	(277,687)	-	913,683
Total funds	33,601,868	29,645,409	(23,223,578)	3,825,000	43,848,699

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

Restricted general funds

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

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

Unrestricted funds

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

Restricted fixed asset funds

These comprise resources which are to be applied to specific capital purposes imposed by the ESFA and Birmingham City Council and Dudley Metropolitan Council where the asset acquired or created is held for a specific purpose.

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Notes to the financial statements for the year ended 31 August 2023 (Continued)

16. Funds (continued)	Balance at 1 September 2021	Income	Expenditure	Gains, losses and transfers	Balance at 31 August 2022
	£	£	£	£	£
Restricted general funds					
General Annual Grant (GAG)	1,050,790	15,949,019	(15,254,098)	(148,421)	1,597,290
UIFSM	-	225,079	(225,079)	-	-
Pupil premium	-	2,381,751	(2,381,751)	-	-
LA (deficit) on conversion	(181,712)	-	(4,676)	6,899	(179,489)
Recovery/Catch-up premium	139,570	251,551	(293,641)	-	97,480
Other grants	-	1,873,321	(1,873,321)	-	-
	<u>1,008,648</u>	<u>20,680,721</u>	<u>(20,032,566)</u>	<u>(141,522)</u>	<u>1,515,281</u>
Restricted general funds					
Transfer on conversion	34,725,909	-	(837,242)	-	33,888,667
DfE Group capital grants	2,976,014	701,508	(219,424)	-	3,458,098
Capital expenditure from GAG	502,643	-	(74,334)	141,522	569,831
Other capital grants	35,643	-	(774)	-	34,869
From unrestricted funds	11,575	-	(5,606)	-	5,969
Donations	268,194	118,589	(45,313)	-	341,470
	<u>38,519,978</u>	<u>820,097</u>	<u>(1,182,693)</u>	<u>141,522</u>	<u>38,298,904</u>
Pension reserve	(21,898,000)	-	(1,612,000)	16,434,000	(7,076,000)
Total restricted funds	17,630,626	29,317,722	(22,945,891)	16,434,000	32,738,185
Unrestricted funds					
Other income	863,683	191,164	(191,164)	-	863,683
Total unrestricted funds	863,683	191,164	(191,164)	-	863,683
Total funds	<u>33,601,868</u>	<u>21,691,982</u>	<u>(23,018,423)</u>	<u>16,434,000</u>	<u>33,601,868</u>

Total funds analysis by academy

Fund balances at 31 August 2023 were allocated as follows:	2022/23 Total	2021/22 Total
	£	£
Trust	2,263,120	2,378,964
Total before fixed assets and pension reserve	<u>2,263,120</u>	<u>2,378,964</u>
Restricted fixed asset fund	45,845,579	38,298,904
Pension reserve	(4,260,000)	(7,076,000)
Total funds	<u>43,848,699</u>	<u>33,601,868</u>

From 1 September 2020, the Trust amended its financial operating model such that GAG income and revenue reserves are pooled at the Trust level. As a result, funds held by individual academies are no longer separately monitored.

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Notes to the financial statements for the year ended 31 August 2023 (Continued)

16. Funds (continued)

Total cost by academy

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

	Teaching & educational support staff costs	Other support staff costs	Educational supplies	Other costs (excluding depreciation)	Total 2022/23
	£	£	£	£	£
Audley Primary School	3,318,999	492,040	90,143	738,830	4,640,012
Beechwood Church of England Primary School	914,281	103,541	17,774	241,009	1,276,605
Hob Green Primary School	1,323,830	191,176	23,744	278,383	1,817,133
Jervoise School	869,003	124,343	25,125	251,265	1,269,736
Princethorpe Schools	1,920,903	349,271	41,821	425,341	2,737,336
The Bromley - Pensnett Primary School	1,201,108	165,401	17,713	245,505	1,629,727
The Oaks Primary School and Nursery	325,401	99,838	1,911	26,679	453,829
The Oval School	2,479,402	380,546	100,884	486,481	3,447,313
Wychall Primary School	1,884,446	216,872	66,780	365,126	2,533,224
Trust	434,764	1,068,199	118,869	629,399	2,251,231
Academy trust	14,672,137	3,191,227	504,764	3,688,018	22,056,146
2022 total	12,815,302	5,042,410	283,965	3,694,053	21,835,730

17. Analysis of net assets between funds

Fund balances at 31 August 2023 are represented by:

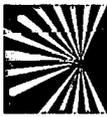
	Unrestricted funds	Restricted pension funds	Restricted general funds	Restricted fixed asset funds	Total funds
	£	£	£	£	£
Tangible fixed assets	-	-	-	45,369,344	45,369,344
Current assets	913,683	-	3,403,639	476,235	4,793,557
Current liabilities	-	-	(1,889,088)	-	(1,889,088)
	913,683	-	1,514,551	45,845,579	48,273,813
Creditors due after one year	-	-	(165,114)	-	(165,114)
Pension scheme liability	-	(4,260,000)	-	-	(4,260,000)
Total net assets	913,683	(4,260,000)	1,349,437	45,845,579	43,848,699

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Notes to the financial statements for the year ended 31 August 2023 (Continued)

17. Analysis of net assets between funds (continued)

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

	Unrestricted funds	Restricted pension funds	Restricted general funds	Restricted fixed asset funds	Total funds
	£	£	£	£	£
Tangible fixed assets	-	-	-	37,991,527	37,991,527
Current assets	863,863	-	7,684,494	307,377	8,855,554
Current liabilities	-	-	(5,997,216)	-	(5,997,216)
	<u>863,863</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>1,687,278</u>	<u>38,298,904</u>	<u>40,849,865</u>
Creditors due after one year	-	-	(171,997)	-	(171,997)
Pension scheme liability	-	(7,076,000)	-	-	(7,076,000)
Total net assets	<u>863,863</u>	<u>(7,076,000)</u>	<u>1,515,281</u>	<u>38,298,904</u>	<u>33,601,868</u>

18. Capital commitments

	2023	2022
	£	£
Contracted for but not provided in the financial statements	<u>310,000</u>	<u>284,000</u>

19. Commitments under operating leases

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

	Total 2023	Total 2022
	£	£
Contracted for but not provided in the financial statements	66,372	51,565
Amounts due within one year	<u>34,671</u>	<u>31,509</u>
	<u>101,043</u>	<u>83,074</u>

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

	2022/23 Total	2021/22 Total
	£	£
Net income/(expenditure) for reporting year (as per the SoFA)	6,421,831	(1,326,441)
Adjusted for :		
Depreciation (note 13)	1,167,432	1,182,693
Capital grants from DfE and other capital income	(839,953)	(701,508)
Cash transferred on conversion to academy trust	(50,000)	-
Assets transferred on conversion to multi academy trust	(7,761,198)	-
Donated fixed assets	-	(118,589)
Interest receivable (note 6)	(28,805)	(1,819)
Defined benefit pension scheme obligation inherited	1,134,000	-
Defined benefit pension scheme cost less contributions payable (note 26)	(430,000)	1,238,000
Defined benefit pension scheme finance cost/(income) (note 26)	305,000	374,000
Decrease / (increase) in debtors	(328,195)	(229,522)
Increase / (decrease) in creditors	<u>(4,107,827)</u>	<u>3,785,143</u>
Net cash provided by / (used in) operating activities	<u>(4,517,715)</u>	<u>4,201,957</u>

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Notes to the financial statements for the year ended 31 August 2023 (Continued)

21. Cash flows from investing activities

	2022/23 Total	2021/22 Total
	£	£
Interest received	28,805	1,819
Purchase of tangible fixed assets	(784,051)	(864,131)
Capital grants from DfE Group	839,953	701,508
Net cash provided by / (used in) investing activities	84,707	(160,804)

22. Cash flows from financing activities

	2022/23 Total	2021/22 Total
	£	£
Loan repayments in period	(7,184)	(7,487)
Net cash used in financing activities	(7,184)	(7,487)

23. Analysis of cash and cash equivalents

	At 31 August 2023	At 31 August 2022
	£	£
Cash at bank and in hand	3,570,177	7,960,369
	3,570,177	7,960,369

24. Analysis of changes in net debt

	At 31 August 2022	Cash flows	Other non-cash changes	At 31 August 2023
	£	£	£	£
Cash at bank and in hand	7,960,369	(4,390,192)	-	3,570,177
Loans falling due within one year	(7,489)	301	-	(7,188)
Loans falling due after more than one year	(171,997)	6,883	-	(165,114)
	7,780,883	(4,383,008)	-	3,397,875

25. Members' liability

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



drb Ignite Multi Academy Trust (A company Limited by Guarantee)

Notes to the financial statements for the year ended 31 August 2023 (Continued)

26. Pension and similar obligations

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

The latest actuarial valuation of the TPS related to the year ended 31 March 2016 and of the LGPS 31 March 2022.

Contributions amounting to £388,730 (2022 : £164,474) 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' Pension Scheme Regulations 2014. Membership is automatic for teachers in academies. All teachers have the option to opt-out of the TPS following enrolment

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

Valuation of the Teachers' Pension Scheme

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

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

The next valuation is due to be implemented from 1 April 2024.

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(A company Limited by Guarantee)

Notes to the financial statements for the year ended 31 August 2023 (Continued)

26. Pension and similar obligations (continued)

Valuation of the Teachers' Pension Scheme (continued)

The employer's pension costs paid to TPS in the year amounted to £1,587,165 (2022: £1,498,791). A copy of the valuation report and supporting documentation is on the Teachers' Pensions website.

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

Local Government Pension Scheme

The LGPS is a funded defined benefit pension scheme, with the assets held in separate trustee-administered funds. The total contribution made for the year ended 31 August 2023 was £2,067,000 (2022 : £1,619,000), of which employer's contributions totalled £1,733,000 (2022 : £1,345,000) and employees' contributions totalled £334,000 (2022 : £274,000). The agreed contribution rates for future years are 30.0% for employers and between 5.5% and 11.4% 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.

The trustees have agreed that the trust will make additional contributions in addition to normal funding levels over the next 27 years.

	At 31 August 2023	At 31 August 2022
Principal actuarial assumptions		
Rate of increase in salaries	4.00%	4.05%
Rate of increase for pensions in payment / inflation	3.00%	3.05%
Discount rate for scheme liabilities	5.20%	4.25%
Inflation assumption (CPI)	3.00%	3.05%
Commutation of pensions to lump sums	50.00%	50.00%
Sensitivity analysis	At 31 August 2023	At 31 August 2022
	£'000s	£'000s
Discount rate +0.1%	(477)	(509)
Discount rate -0.1%	477	509
Mortality assumption 1 year increase	414	849
Mortality assumption 1 year decrease	(414)	(849)
CPI rate +0.1%	813	411
CPI rate -0.1%	(813)	(411)

Outstanding
pupil experience

Excellence
in education

Impactful
teaching

Effective
partnerships

drb Ignite Multi Academy Trust
(A company Limited by Guarantee)

Notes to the financial statements for the year ended 31 August 2023 (Continued)

26. Pension and similar obligations (continued)

Local Government Pension Scheme (continued)

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

	At 31 August 2023	At 31 August 2022
Retiring today		
Males	20.6	21.2
Females	22.8	23.6
Retiring in 20 years		
Males	19.7	22.9
Females	24.6	25.4

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

	At 31 August 2023	At 31 August 2022
	£	£
Equities	10,921,000	9,519,000
Bonds	3,374,000	2,983,000
Property	1,130,000	1,136,000
Cash and other liquid assets	643,000	568,000
Total market value of assets	16,068,000	14,206,000

The actual negative return on scheme assets was 1.2% (2022 : 3.3% negative).

	2022/23	2021/22
	£	£
Amount recognised in the statement of financial activities		
Current service cost	1,303,000	2,583,000
Interest income	(648,000)	(230,000)
Interest cost	953,000	604,000
Total amount recognised in the SOFA	1,608,000	2,957,000

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

	2022/23	2021/22
	£	£
At 1 September 2022	21,282,000	35,038,000
Conversion of academy trusts	1,636,000	-
Current service cost	1,303,000	2,583,000
Interest cost	953,000	604,000
Employee contributions	334,000	274,000
Actuarial gains/(losses) - financial assumptions	(5,901,000)	(17,021,000)
Actuarial gains/(losses) - demographic assumptions	(1,084,000)	(110,000)
Actuarial gains/(losses) - experience gains/losses	1,997,000	43,000
Benefits paid	(192,000)	(129,000)
At 31 August 2023	20,328,000	21,282,000

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(A company Limited by Guarantee)

Notes to the financial statements for the year ended 31 August 2023 (Continued)

26. Pension and similar obligations (continued)

Local Government Pension Scheme (continued)

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

	2022/23	2021/22
	£	£
At 1 September 2022	14,206,000	13,140,000
Conversion of academy trusts	502,000	-
Interest income	648,000	230,000
Return on assets less interest	(840,000)	(654,000)
Employer contributions	1,733,000	1,345,000
Employee contributions	334,000	274,000
Benefits paid net of transfers in	(192,000)	(129,000)
Settlement prices received	(323,000)	-
At 31 August 2023	<u>16,068,000</u>	<u>14,206,000</u>
Net pension scheme liability	<u>(4,260,000)</u>	<u>(7,076,000)</u>

27. Related party transactions

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

No related party transactions took place in the year of account other than certain trustees' remuneration and expenses already disclosed in note 11.



drb Ignite Multi Academy Trust (A company Limited by Guarantee)

Notes to the financial statements for the year ended 31 August 2023 (Continued)

28. Conversion to a multi academy trust

On 1 July 2023 The Oaks Primary School converted to multi academy trust status under the Academies Act 2010 and all the operations and assets and liabilities were transferred to drb Ignite Multi Academy Trust from Birmingham City Council for £nil consideration.

The transfer has been accounted for as a combination that is in substance a gift. The assets and liabilities transferred were valued at their fair value and recognised in the balance sheet under the appropriate headings with a corresponding net amount recognised as a net gain in the Statement of Financial Activities as Donations - transfer from local authority on conversion.

The following table sets out the fair values of the identifiable assets and liabilities transferred and an analysis of their recognition in the SOFA.

	Unrestricted funds	Restricted pension funds	Restricted general funds	Restricted fixed asset funds	Total funds
	£	£	£	£	£
Tangible fixed assets :					
Leasehold land and buildings	-	-	-	7,603,000	7,603,000
Other tangible fixed assets	-	-	-	158,198	158,198
Current assets :					
Cash- representing budget surplus on local authority funds	50,000	-	-	-	50,000
Non-current liabilities :					
LGPS pension (deficit)	-	(1,134,000)	-	-	(1,134,000)
Total net assets	50,000	(1,134,000)	-	7,761,198	6,677,198

The transfer agreement requires the company to run the academy known as The Oaks Primary School on the present site; transfers all property, undertakings, rights, assets whether tangible or intangible to the multi academy trust; and sets out the responsibilities of the academy with regards to the employees of the former local authority controlled school. The transfer included the lease of property for a period of 125 years.

'All pupils
achieve the
highest standard
of educational
outcomes
regardless of
circumstance or
background'

