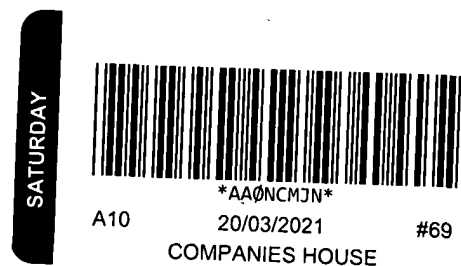




(A company limited by guarantee)

ANNUAL REPORT AND FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2020



Company Registration Number: 05067702 (England and Wales)

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NORTHERN SCHOOLS TRUST

REFERENCE AND ADMINISTRATIVE DETAILS

Members	G Wainwright I Mooney R Vigurs D Hornby	Until 01/10/2019
Trustees	G Wainwright N Ward S McKeown I Mooney L Hughes G Ashton R Dubrow-Marshall E Byrne	Chair of Trustees Accounting Officer Until 01/10/2019 From 12/05/2020
Company Secretary	L Hughes	
Senior Management Team	N Ward L Hughes P Ottley-Oconnor E Vernon J Davies	Chief Executive Director of Finance North Liverpool Academy North Liverpool Academy The Studio School / Liverpool Life Sciences UTC
Company Name	Northern Schools Trust	
Principal and Registered Office	120 Heyworth Street Liverpool L5 0SQ	
Company Registration Number	05067702 (England and Wales)	
Independent Auditor	Mitchell Charlesworth LLP 5 Temple Square Temple Street Liverpool L2 5RH	
Bankers	HSBC 99-101 Lord Street Liverpool L2 6PG	
Solicitors	Stone King LLP 13 Queen Square Bath BA1 2HJ	

TRUSTEES' REPORT

The Trustees present their annual report together with the financial statements and auditor's report of the charitable company for the year ended 31 August 2020. The annual report serves the purposes of both a Trustees' Report, and a Directors' Report under company law.

The Trust operates 3 secondary academies for pupils aged 11 to 19 across Liverpool (2018/19: 4). Its academies have a combined pupil capacity of 2,850 and had a roll of 2,125 in the school census in October 2020.

Structure, Governance and Management

Constitution

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

Details of the Trustees who served during the year are included in the Reference and Administrative Details on page 1.

Members' Liability

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

Trustees' Indemnities

In accordance with normal commercial practice the Trust has purchased insurance to protect Trustees, governors and officers from claims arising from negligent acts, errors or omissions occurring whilst on Trust business.

Method of Recruitment and Appointment or Election of Trustees

The Trust board structure is as follows:

- Up to 9 Directors appointed by the Principal Sponsor (NLA Trust)
- Up to 3 Directors (chairman of a Trust Local Governing Body)
- The Chief Executive Officer
- Co-opted Directors (no limit)

The Trust will follow processes for any new recruits that are appropriate and use criteria for recruitment based on a review of the existing board membership.

Policies and Procedures Adopted for the Induction and Training of Trustees

The induction, training and support programme for Trustees will differ according to the nature of the post and the varying needs and experience of the individual concerned.

TRUSTEES' REPORT (continued)

There are, however, some general principles outlined below which should be common to all:

- It is expected that the incumbent Trustees will provide a good deal of practical help, advice, guidance and encouragement in all aspects of Governance and in enabling new Trustees to integrate into a new situation.
- Prior to taking up the appointment the new member will be welcome to visit the Academies as necessary to meet key people as appropriate.
- The Trust's Equality & Diversity and related policies will be applicable to all.
- The other Trustees will be informed of any new appointments.
- Every Trustee should be prepared to offer support to new Trustees as appropriate. In some circumstances it may be advisable to appoint a short-term mentor to provide individual support.

Organisational Structure

The management structure consists of three levels: the Board of the Company (Trustees), the Local Governing Body of each academy and the Senior Management Team of each academy. The aim of this structure is to devolve responsibility to those best able to make the appropriate decisions. The Trustees encourage staff contributions at all levels and collaboration between the Academies in the Trust.

The Trustees are there to support the Local Governing Body, Senior Management Team and the community in the running of the Trust, and have no ambition to run the academies on a day-to-day basis. Along with this governance role the Trustees are there to give support and advice when asked and to be roving ambassadors for both the Trust and what it is trying to achieve.

Arrangements for setting pay and remuneration of key personnel

The remuneration of the Chief Executive is set by the Trust board. The Trust board delegates all other central services pay decisions to the Chief Executive. Central services staff pay is benchmarked against similar roles.

Each school has a Whole School Pay Policy which detailed how pay is set. The Local Governing Body of a school in conjunction with the Trust board set pay for the Principal.

Trade union facility time

Relevant union officials

Number of employees who were relevant union officials during the relevant period – 4

Full-time equivalent employee number – 4

Percentage of time spent on facility time

Percentage of time – 1% - 50%

Number of employees – 4

Percentage of pay bill spent on facility time

Total cost of facility time

£987

Total pay bill

£6,384,614

Percentage of the total pay bill spent on facility time, calculated as: (total cost of facility time ÷ total pay bill) × 100

0.02%

Paid trade union activities

Time spent on paid trade union activities as a percentage of total paid facility time hours calculated as: (total hours spent on paid trade union activities by relevant union officials during the relevant period ÷ total paid facility time hours) × 100

0.02%

TRUSTEES' REPORT (continued)

Related Parties and other Connected Charities and Organisations

The Trust is connected to the following organisations via Trustee related parties:

Organisation	Related Trustee	Type of Interest
Impact Data Metrics Ltd	G Wainwright	Director
Waimur Ltd	G Wainwright	Director
Neptune Brewery Ltd	G Wainwright	Director
Ideaswise Ltd	N Ward	Director
Liverpool City Region Academy Trust	N Ward	Director
UTC Lancashire (to 10/09/2019)	N Ward	Trustee
Impact Data Metrics Ltd	N Ward	Director
Geoff Ashton Consulting Ltd	G Ashton	Director
Feversham Education Trust	G Ashton	Director
Greater Manchester Sustainable Engineering UTC Ltd	G Ashton	Director
Quest (A Church of England Schools Trust)	G Ashton	Director
Preston Guild Link	R Dubrow-Marshall	Trustee
Akaal Academy Trust Derby Ltd	R Dubrow-Marshall	Trustee
ICSA	R Dubrow-Marshall	Director
UTC Lancashire (to 10/09/019)	R Dubrow-Marshall	Trustee
Waters' Edge (New Brighton) CIC	E Byrne	Director

The below organisations have been disclosed by Trustees as a potential interest. After consideration they do not meet the definition of a related party as they do not have control or sufficient influence over the organisation. These organisations have been listed for transparency.

Organisation	Trustee	Type of Interest
Knowsley Borough Council	S McKeown	Employee
Harper Collins Publishing (to 01/10/2019)	I Mooney	Employee
University of Salford	R Dubrow-Marshall	Employee

Engagement with employees (including disabled persons)

The Trustees recognise that equal opportunities should be an integral part of good practice within the workplace. The Trust will aim to establish equal opportunity in all areas of its activities including creating a working environment in which the contribution and needs of all people will be fully valued.

The Trustees ensure that professional development opportunities are available to all employees and it will fund appropriate Masters' degrees for staff.

All of our Governing Bodies have teacher governors amongst their membership and we feel this both strengthens the level of debate at the Governors meetings and increases the level of transparency within our organisation.

The policy of the Trust is to support recruitment and retention of students and employees with disabilities. The Trust does this by adapting the physical environment, by making support resources available and through training and career development.

TRUSTEES' REPORT (continued)

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

We have a proactive relationship with our suppliers and work with suppliers who both present the best value for money and have the same shared goals. Many of our suppliers and partner organisations provide out-reach opportunities for our schools and governors for our governing bodies.

Objectives and Activities

Objects and Aims

Northern Schools Trust was established to provide education for pupils of different abilities between the ages of 11 and 19.

- The main objectives and aims of the Trust are summarised below:
- to raise the standards of educational achievement of all pupils;
- to keep our students safe and well cared for in a safe environment. We take our safeguarding role very seriously and pay particular attention to the Government's national priorities.
- to ensure that every child enjoys the same high quality of education in terms of resourcing, tuition and care;
- to improve the effectiveness of the Trust by keeping the curriculum and organisational structure under continual review;
- to provide value for money for the funds expended;
- to comply with all appropriate statutory and curriculum requirements;
- to maintain close links with industry and commerce;
- to conduct business in accordance with the highest standards of integrity, probity, and openness;
- to provide supportive and challenging corporate governance to our schools, for the benefit of our students and their families.

Objectives, Strategies and Activities

Key activities and targets are identified in the Improvement and Development plan and are informed by the significant challenges and opportunities arising from national developments in education policy and funding.

The current targets include;

- Raising student achievement;
- Becoming a Trust with Academies that are graded outstanding by Ofsted;
- Improving Teaching and Learning through the use of Technology;
- Creating a shared support service that provides the foundations for outstanding teaching and learning.
- Ensuring that every single student progresses whilst in our care.

The Improvement and Development plan is supported by detailed activity targets and success criteria.

Public Benefit

The Trust has given a high priority to providing public benefit to a cross section of the community, but perhaps the greatest benefit that the Trust can offer is the provision of an education that maximises each student's potential to develop principled, informed, open minded and confident citizens who respect the beliefs of others and who are determined to make a positive contribution to society.

TRUSTEES' REPORT (continued)

In setting our objectives and planning our activities the Trustees have carefully considered the Charity Commission's general guidance on public benefit'.

Strategic Report

Achievements and Performance including Key Performance Indicators

The last year has been another of progress for both the Trust and the three schools within it. The management of our schools by our senior teams has been outstanding during the Coronavirus pandemic.

In addition to the excellent preventative measures that were put in place our students have had access to a full-time on-line curriculum, which very few schools in the country have been able to deploy. At the start of the pandemic, the Trust made the decision to purchase £19,000 of food vouchers to provide meals for our free school meal students right from the beginning of closure. Once the Government and Local Authority rolled out their vouchers and laptops, we continued to issue both food vouchers and additional laptops to vulnerable students. Indeed, we were able to ensure that every single six form student within our schools had access to their own laptop. We can confidently say that no child or family was left without support and guidance over the lockdown period. The net result was an exceptional effort by an exceptional team of professionals, acting selflessly during a once in a lifetime pandemic.

We would also like to thank everyone who works in or attends our academies. The ethos and culture within of our Trust is built around our total commitment to student progression along with us providing our students with strong pastoral support, so when our students leave us they are ready for the opportunities and challenges of the world of work or further education.

We are indebted also to the hard work and support of our numerous industrial, public sector organisations and university partners who tirelessly provide placements, educational and workplace opportunities for our students.

North Liverpool Academy, based in the Anfield area of Liverpool, is a popular school within the community and the demand for places remains strong with the school now being over-subscribed. The school is a true community school, serving the needs of the community well and providing its resources for a host of local clubs, community groups as well as parents and carers.

The Governing body and senior leadership team will ensure that the North Liverpool Academy continues to have a transformational impact on the community it serves. They are dedicated to continue with the impressive improvement made over the last two years and at the next Ofsted inspection the target is for the school to be rated Outstanding. Whilst this years A level results were encouraging and the best for many years, the highlight was that one of our students gained a place at Oxford University to read physics. This is hopefully the first of many to gain a place at Oxbridge and I'm confident more will follow in future years.

Liverpool Life Sciences UTC is located on the edge of Liverpool city centre and bordering Toxteth. The school opened in September 2013 and was the first school in the UK specialising in Science and Health Care for 14 to 19-year olds.

The UTC is a new type of school, where industrial partners and local universities help to both shape the curriculum offer and support the school by utilising their resources or partners.

TRUSTEES' REPORT (continued)

The school is working hard to develop the love of all things science within our students. It also has a programme of events for local primary schools, which give them access to state-of-the-art facilities, which hopefully will inspire the next generation of scientists and health care professionals.

Ofsted comments such as "the UTC is a haven for pupils" and "the UTC provides an exciting, forward thinking curriculum for science and healthcare" clearly show how far the school has travelled in a relatively short period of time. Liverpool Life Sciences UTC has again supported 100% of students to achieve a positive destination. All students successfully moved on to further education, higher education, a job or apprenticeship.

The summer results, in terms of attainment and progress 8, were amongst the best in the city of Liverpool with strong performances at both GCSE and A level. Pleasingly, our UTC is in the top three UTCs nationally for exam outcomes and student progression and its key stage five performance is in the top ten per cent nationally. During the early part of the calendar year, the UTC had its Ofsted inspection and whilst we were hoping for an Outstanding judgement, based on the progress since the last inspection and the attainment and progress of the students, we had to settle for a Good judgement.

The leadership team are committed to continually improving the school and having the school recognised as being truly outstanding and life –changing for our students.

The Studio Liverpool is a specialist school of just over three hundred students, between the ages of 14 to 19, who are keen on digital technologies or the creative arts. It is a very forward-thinking school which benefits from the significant input of over a dozen industrial partners alongside the support and encouragement of both local and national universities.

The summer results were encouraging and are now on a strong three-year trend with attainment well above national averages but with some more work still to do on student progress.

The academic results for both the UTC and Studio school are on an upward three-year trend and we very much expect that progress to continue. Along with continually improving examination results we are hoping that when Ofsted comes again both schools are judged as being Outstanding.

All of our schools are now being led by new senior leadership teams and we are beginning to see the benefits of new management and a renewed focus on continuous improvement.

Going Concern

After making appropriate enquiries, the Board of Trustees 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.

Promoting the success of the company

The Trust's success is the driving factor behind all decisions made by the Board and Governing Bodies. At the Trust Board we talk continually about our ethos and culture and the professional standards we and our schools follow.

TRUSTEES' REPORT (continued)

Our Governors follow the National Governors Association guidance on professional standards and at all times are excellent ambassadors for our schools and Trust.

The Trust carefully considers the impact of the business on the communities and environments in which the Trust operates and engages with suppliers and business partners to ensure the best opportunities for our students. Due consideration is paid to stakeholders, including but not limited to our students, suppliers, business partners and employees.

In all of its activities, the Trust requires that our employees and partners conduct business to the highest ethical and professional standards. The Trust is committed to making a positive contribution to the health and wellbeing of our students, employees and the communities where we are based.

Financial Review

Most of the Trust's income is obtained from the Department for Education in the form of grants, the use of which is restricted to particular purposes. The grants received from the Department for Education during the year ended 31 August 2020 and the associated expenditure are shown as restricted funds in the statement of financial activities.

The Trust also receives grants for fixed assets from the Department for Education. In accordance with the Charities Statement of Recommended Practice, 'Accounting and Reporting by Charities' (SORP 2005), such grants are shown in the Statement of Financial Activities as restricted income in the fixed asset fund. The restricted fixed asset fund balance is reduced by annual depreciation charged over the expected useful life of the assets concerned.

During the year ended 31 August 2020, total expenditure of £16,078k was covered by grant funding from the Department for Education together with other incoming resources. The excess of income over expenditure for the year (excluding restricted fixed asset funds and pension reserve) was £183k.

At 31 August 2020 the net book value of fixed assets was £36,281k and movements in tangible fixed assets are shown in note 12 to the accounts. The assets were used exclusively for providing education and the associated support services to the pupils of the Trust.

Reserves Policy

The Trust currently has £196k of unrestricted reserves. The Trustees have decided that all unrestricted reserves will be utilised in helping the Trust achieve its objectives.

The Trustees will endeavour to keep an appropriate level of GAG in reserve that it considers necessary for future operations and any capital projects or capital replacement.

The actuarial valuation of the pension scheme and the corresponding liability does not result in an immediate cash flow impact to the Trust. The Trustees are confident that any liabilities can be met as they fall due.

The current level of reserves is considered to be appropriate for the Trust. The reserves policy is reviewed annually.

TRUSTEES' REPORT (continued)

Investment Policy

The Trust's investments policy is consistent with its Charitable Status. Investments must always be made in accordance with written procedures adopted by the Governing Body and must always ensure that the maximum integrity of such investments. The priority for the Trust since opening and during the period of capital build and student number growth has been to have cash invested in liquid investment products that bear no risk with its bankers HSBC and Santander.

Principal Risks and Uncertainties

The Trustees annually reviews risk management which involved identifying the types of risk the Trust faces and the systems in place or that needed to be implemented to mitigate against the risks the Trust faces. The Trust Risk Management strategy aims to ensure that the Trust complies with risk management best practice and sets out the current processes and responsibilities for risk management in the Trust.

The main risks facing the Trust are not delivering improved outcomes for pupil, actual and potential financial challenges due to changing in funding and cost growth, and instability of student numbers in non-traditional schools. The Trustees are satisfied that systems are in place to mitigate any of the risks identified.

The Risk Management Review identified and reviewed the following risk areas:

- Governance
- Operational
- Financial
- Environmental or external factors
- Compliance (law and regulation)

Fundraising

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

Streamlined Energy and Carbon Reporting

UK Greenhouse gas emissions and energy use data for the period 1 September 2019 to 31 August 2020

Energy consumption used to calculate emissions (kWh)	4,606,643
<u>Scope 1 emissions in metric tonnes CO2e</u>	
Gas consumption	618.74
Owned transport – mini-buses	4.29
<u>Total scope 1</u>	623.04
<u>Scope 2 emissions in metric tonnes CO2e</u>	
Purchased electricity	284.16
<u>Scope 3 emissions in metric tonnes CO2e</u>	
Business travel in employee owned vehicles	1.06
Total gross emissions in metric tonnes CO2e	908.26
<u>Intensity ratio</u>	
Tonnes CO2e per pupil	0.43

TRUSTEES' REPORT (continued)

Quantification and Reporting Methodology

We have followed the 2019 HM Government Environmental Reporting Guidelines. We have also used the GHG Reporting Protocol – Corporate Standard and have used the 2020 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

Over the past 2 years we have worked to reduce gas and electric usage following an independent review. This has led to large reductions in electricity usage. The trust has also been exploring replacement of the existing boiler system at one of our sites to a more efficient system.

Plans for Future Periods

The Trust will continue to strive to improve both the attainment and progress of all of its students to provide them with the required life skills and confidence to progress in whichever direction they choose.

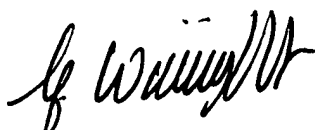
The Trust are considering alternative options for new schools to join the Trust. The Trust has a desire to grow and take on schools which fit both the ethos and culture of the Trust and which provide excellent educational provision in areas of economic and social disadvantage. However, the Trust recognises that quality of provision has priority over the desire to grow its network of schools.

Auditor

Insofar as the Trustees are aware:

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

Trustees' report, incorporating a strategic report, approved by order of the Board of Trustees, as the company directors, on 15 December 2020 and signed on the board's behalf by:



G Wainwright

Chair of Trustees

15 December 2020

GOVERNANCE STATEMENT

Scope of Responsibility

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

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

The Board of Trustees has delegated the day-to-day responsibility to the Chief Executive, as Accounting Officer, for ensuring financial controls conform with the requirements of both propriety and good financial management and in accordance with the requirements and responsibilities assigned to it in the funding agreement between Northern Schools Trust and the Secretary of State for Education. They are also responsible for reporting to the Board of Trustees any material weaknesses or breakdowns in internal control.

Governance

The information on governance included here supplements that described in the Trustees' Report and in the Statement of Trustees' Responsibilities. The Board of Trustees has formally met 5 times during the year. Attendance during the year at meetings of the Board of Trustees was as follows:

Trustee	Meetings attended	Out of a possible	
N Ward	5	5	Chief Executive
G Wainwright	5	5	Chair of Trustees
I Mooney	1	1	To 01/10/2019
S McKeown	5	5	
L Hughes	5	5	
G Ashton	4	5	
R Dubrow-Marshall	4	5	
E Byrne	2	2	From 12/05/2020

The audit committee is also a sub-committee of the main board of the Trustees. Its purpose is to minimise risk, by identifying key areas of risk and mitigating those, in conjunction to safeguarding the Trust's assets. Attendance during the year at meetings of the audit committee was as follows:

Trustee	Meetings attended	Out of a possible	
S McKeown	4	4	
I Mooney	0	0	To 01/10/2019
R Dubrow-Marshall	3	4	
G Ashton	3	4	From 01/10/2019

GOVERNANCE STATEMENT (continued)

Review of Value for Money

As Accounting Officer, the Chief Executive has responsibility for ensuring that the Trust delivers good value in the use of public resources. The Accounting Officer understands that value for money refers to the educational and wider societal outcomes achieved in return for the taxpayer resources received.

The Accounting Officer considers how the Trust's use of its resources has provided good value for money during each academic year, and reports to the Board of Trustees where value for money can be improved, including the use of benchmarking data where appropriate. The Accounting Officer for the Trust has delivered improved value for money during the year by:

- Better purchasing – ensuring value for money
- Maximising income generation
- Managing cash

The Purpose of the System of Internal Control

The system of internal control is designed to manage risk to a reasonable level rather than to eliminate all risk of failure to achieve policies, aims and objectives. It can therefore only provide reasonable and not absolute assurance of effectiveness. The system of internal control is based on an on-going process designed to identify and prioritise the risks to the achievement of Trust policies, aims and objectives, to evaluate the likelihood of those risks being realised and the impact should they be realised, and to manage them efficiently, effectively and economically. The system of internal control has been in place in Northern Schools Trust for the year ended 31 August 2020 and up to the date of approval of the annual report and financial statements.

Capacity to Handle Risk

The Board of Trustees has reviewed the key risks to which the Trust is exposed together with the operating, financial and compliance controls that have been implemented to mitigate those risks. The Board of Trustees is of the view that there is a formal on-going process for identifying, evaluating and managing the Trust's significant risks that has been in place for the year ended 31 August 2020 and up to the date of approval of the annual report and financial statements. This process is regularly reviewed by the Board of Trustees.

The Risk and Control Framework

The Trust's system of internal financial control is based on a framework of regular management information and administrative procedures including the segregation of duties and a system of delegation and accountability. In particular it includes:

- comprehensive budgeting and monitoring systems with an annual budget and periodic financial reports which are reviewed and agreed by the Board of Trustees;
- regular reviews by the Board of Trustees of reports which indicate financial performance against the forecasts and of major purchase plans, capital works and expenditure programmes;
- setting targets to measure financial and other performance;
- clearly defined purchasing (asset purchase or capital investment) guidelines;
- identification and management of risks.

GOVERNANCE STATEMENT (continued)

The Board of Trustees has considered the need for a specific internal audit function and has decided not to appoint an internal auditor. However, the Trustees have appointed HBD Accountancy Services LLP, to perform additional checks.

The role includes giving advice on financial matters and performing a range of checks on the Trust's financial systems. In particular the checks carried out in the current period include:

- testing of payroll systems;
- testing of purchase systems;
- testing of control account / bank reconciliations;

On a quarterly basis, the auditor reports to the Board of Trustees, through the audit committee on the operation of the systems of control and on the discharge of the Board of Trustees' financial responsibilities.

The Trustees confirm that the external auditor has delivered their schedule of work as planned and has been delivered in line with the ESFA's requirements.

Review of Effectiveness

As Accounting Officer, the Chief Executive has responsibility for reviewing the effectiveness of the system of internal control. During the year in question the review has been informed by:

- the work of the internal auditor;
- the work of the external auditor;
- the financial management and governance self-assessment process;
- the work of the executive managers 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 result of their review of the system of internal control by the audit committee and ensure continuous improvement of the system is in place.

Approved by order of the members of the Board of Trustees on 15 December 2020 and signed on its behalf by:



G Wainwright

Chair of Trustees



N Ward

Accounting Officer

NORTHERN SCHOOLS TRUST

STATEMENT ON REGULARITY, PROPRIETY AND COMPLIANCE

As Accounting Officer of Northern Schools Trust I have considered my responsibility to notify the Academy Trust Board of Trustees and the Education & Skills Funding Agency (ESFA) of material irregularity, impropriety and non-compliance with terms and conditions of all funding received by the Trust, under the funding agreement in place between the Trust and the Secretary of State for Education. As part of my consideration I have had due regard to the requirements of the Academies Financial Handbook 2019.

I confirm that I and the Academy Trust Board of Trustees are able to identify any material irregular or improper use of all funds by the Trust, or material non-compliance with the terms and conditions of funding under the Trust's funding agreement and the Academies Financial Handbook 2019.

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



N Ward

Accounting Officer

15 December 2020

STATEMENT OF TRUSTEES' RESPONSIBILITIES

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

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

- select suitable accounting policies and then apply them consistently
- observe the methods and principles in the Charities SORP 2019 and the Academies Accounts Direction 2019 to 2020
- make judgments 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 charitable company will continue in business

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

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

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

Approved by order of the members of the Board of Trustees on 15 December 2020 and signed on its behalf by:



G Wainwright

Chair of Trustees

NORTHERN SCHOOLS TRUST

INDEPENDENT AUDITOR'S REPORT ON THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS TO THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES OF NORTHERN SCHOOLS TRUST

Opinion

We have audited the accounts of Northern Schools Trust for the year ended 31 August 2020 which comprise the statement of financial activities, the balance sheet, the statement of cash flows and the notes to the accounts, 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, including Financial Reporting Standard 102 'The Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland' (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice), the Charities SORP 2019 and the Academies Accounts Direction 2019 to 2020 issued by the Education & Skills Funding Agency.

In our opinion the accounts:

- give a true and fair view of the state of the group's and parent charitable company's affairs as at 31 August 2020 and of its incoming resources and application of resources, including its income and expenditure, for the year then ended;
- have been properly prepared in accordance with United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice;
- have been prepared in accordance with the requirements of the Companies Act 2006; and
- have been prepared in accordance with the Charities SORP 2019 and the Academies Accounts Direction 2019 to 2020.

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

Conclusions relating to going concern

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

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

Other information

The other information comprises the information included in the annual report, other than the accounts and our auditor's report thereon. The Trustees are responsible for the other information. Our opinion on the accounts 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.

NORTHERN SCHOOLS TRUST

INDEPENDENT AUDITOR'S REPORT ON THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS TO THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES OF NORTHERN SCHOOLS TRUST (continued)

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

We have nothing to report in this regard.

Opinions on other matters prescribed by the Companies Act 2006

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

- the information given in the trustees' report including the incorporated strategic report for the financial year for which the accounts are prepared is consistent with the accounts; and
- the trustees' report including the incorporated strategic report have been prepared in accordance with applicable legal requirements.

Matters on which we are required to report by exception

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

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

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

Responsibilities of Trustees

As explained more fully in the statement of trustees' responsibilities, the Trustees are responsible for the preparation of the accounts 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 accounts that are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

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

Auditor's responsibilities for the audit of the accounts

Our objectives are to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the accounts 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

NORTHERN SCHOOLS TRUST

INDEPENDENT AUDITOR'S REPORT ON THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS TO THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES OF NORTHERN SCHOOLS TRUST (continued)

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 accounts.

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

Use of our report

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



Philip Griffiths (Senior Statutory Auditor)
for and on behalf of Mitchell Charlesworth LLP

15 December 2020

Chartered Accountants
Statutory Auditor

Mitchell Charlesworth LLP
3rd Floor
5 temple Square
Liverpool
Merseyside
L2 5PH

INDEPENDENT REPORTING ACCOUNTANT'S ASSURANCE REPORT ON REGULARITY TO NORTHERN SCHOOLS TRUST AND THE EDUCATION & SKILLS FUNDING AGENCY

In accordance with the terms of our engagement letter dated 23rd October 2020 and further to the requirements of the Education & Skills Funding Agency (ESFA) as included in the Academies Accounts Direction 2019 to 2020, we have carried out an engagement to obtain limited assurance about whether the expenditure disbursed and income received by Northern Schools Trust during the year ended 31 August 2020 have been applied to the purposes identified by Parliament and the financial transactions conform to the authorities which govern them.

This report is made solely to Northern Schools Trust and the ESFA in accordance with the terms of our engagement letter. Our work has been undertaken so that we might state to Northern Schools 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 Northern Schools Trust and ESFA, for our work, for this report, or for the conclusion we have formed.

Respective responsibilities of Northern Schools Trust's Accounting Officer and the reporting accountant

The Accounting Officer is responsible, under the requirements of Northern Schools Trust's funding agreement with the Secretary of State for Education dated 17 May 2013 and the Academies Financial Handbook, extant from 1 September 2018, for ensuring that expenditure disbursed and income received is applied for the purposes intended by Parliament and the financial transactions conform to the authorities which govern them.

Our responsibilities for this engagement are established in the United Kingdom by our profession's ethical guidance and are to obtain limited assurance and report in accordance with our engagement letter and the requirements of the Academies Accounts Direction 2019 to 2020. We report to you whether anything has come to our attention in carrying out our work which suggests that in all material respects, expenditure disbursed and income received during the year ended 31 August 2020 have not been applied to purposes intended by Parliament or that the financial transactions do not conform to the authorities which govern them.

Approach

We conducted our engagement in accordance with the Academies Accounts Direction 2019 to 2020 issued by ESFA. We performed a limited assurance engagement as defined in our engagement letter.

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

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

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

NORTHERN SCHOOLS TRUST

INDEPENDENT REPORTING ACCOUNTANT'S ASSURANCE REPORT ON REGULARITY TO NORTHERN SCHOOLS TRUST AND THE EDUCATION & SKILLS FUNDING AGENCY (continued)

The work undertaken to draw to our conclusion includes:

- Review of minutes, management accounts and discussions held with key personnel;
- Evaluation of internal control procedures and reporting lines, and the implementation of such controls as were considered relevant, was checked;
- Review of financial transactions for any unusual transactions which maybe improper;
- Ensure that expenditure does not contravene the funding agreement;
- Ensure that key staff and Trustees declared their interest in related parties and followed this up with discussion and testing.

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 ended 31 August 2020 has not been applied to purposes intended by Parliament and the financial transactions do not conform to the authorities which govern them.



Reporting Accountant

Mitchell Charlesworth LLP
3rd Floor
5 temple Square
Liverpool
Merseyside
L2 5PH

15 December 2020

NORTHERN SCHOOLS TRUST

CONSOLIDATED STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2020 (INCLUDING INCOME AND EXPENDITURE ACCOUNT)

		Unrestricted	Restricted	Restricted	2019/20	2018/19
	Note	Funds	General	Fixed	Total	Total
		£000	£000	Asset	£000	£000
				Funds		
				£000		
Incoming and endowments from:						
Donations and capital grants	2	-	3	85	88	221
Charitable activities:						
Funding for the Trust's educational operations	3	183	14,008	-	14,191	15,582
Other trading activities	4	87	-	-	87	104
Investments	5	3	-	-	3	4
Total		<u>273</u>	<u>14,011</u>	<u>85</u>	<u>14,369</u>	<u>15,911</u>
Expenditure on:						
Charitable activities:						
Trust educational operations	6	197	14,830	1,051	16,078	17,218
Exceptional costs	6	-	-	-	-	3,811
Total	6,7	<u>197</u>	<u>14,830</u>	<u>1,051</u>	<u>16,078</u>	<u>21,029</u>
Net income / (expenditure)		76	(819)	(966)	(1,709)	(5,118)
Transfers between funds	15	(829)	813	16	-	-
Other recognised gains / (losses):						
Actuarial gains / (losses) on defined benefit pension schemes	15,21	-	86	-	86	(3,161)
Net movement in funds		(753)	80	(950)	(1,623)	(8,279)
Reconciliation of funds						
Total funds brought forward		949	(9,993)	37,258	28,214	36,493
Total funds carried forward		<u>196</u>	<u>(9,913)</u>	<u>36,308</u>	<u>26,591</u>	<u>28,214</u>

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

A Statement of Total Recognised Gains and Losses is not required as all gains and losses are included in the Statement of Financial Activities.

NORTHERN SCHOOLS TRUST

BALANCE SHEET AS AT 31 AUGUST 2020

Company Number 05067702

		2020	Group and Company
	Notes	£000	2019
		£000	£000
Fixed assets			
Tangible assets	12	36,281	37,258
Current assets			
Debtors	13	630	798
Cash at bank and in hand		1,004	810
		<u>1,634</u>	<u>1,608</u>
Liabilities			
Creditors: Amounts falling due within one year	14	<u>(909)</u>	<u>(1,093)</u>
Net current assets		<u>725</u>	<u>515</u>
Net assets excluding pension liability		<u>37,006</u>	<u>37,773</u>
Defined benefit pension scheme liability	21	<u>(10,415)</u>	<u>(9,559)</u>
Total net assets		<u>26,591</u>	<u>28,214</u>
Funds of the multi academy trust:			
Restricted funds			
Fixed asset fund	15	36,308	37,258
Restricted income fund	15	502	(434)
Pension reserve	15	<u>(10,415)</u>	<u>(9,559)</u>
Total restricted funds		<u>26,395</u>	<u>27,265</u>
Unrestricted income funds	15	196	949
Total funds		<u>26,591</u>	<u>28,214</u>

The financial statements on pages 21 to 43 were approved by the Trustees, and authorised for issue on 15 December 2020 and are signed on their behalf by:



G Wainwright

Chair of Trustees

NORTHERN SCHOOLS TRUST

CONSOLIDATED STATEMENT OF CASH FLOWS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2020

	Notes	2020 £000	2019 £000
Cash flows from operating activities			
Net cash provided by (used in) operating activities	17	176	(379)
Cash flows from investing activities	18	15	150
Change in cash and cash equivalents in the reporting period		<u>194</u>	<u>(229)</u>
Cash and cash equivalents at 1 September 2019		810	1,039
Cash and cash equivalents at 31 August 2020	19	<u>1,004</u>	<u>810</u>

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 academy trust, which is a public benefit entity under FRS 102, have been prepared under the historical cost convention in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard Applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102), the Accounting and Reporting by Charities: Statement of Recommended Practice applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102) (Charities SORP (FRS 102)), the Academies Accounts Direction 2019 to 2020 issued by ESFA, the Charities Act 2011 and the Companies Act 2006.

Northern Schools Trust meets the definition of a public benefit entity under FRS 102.

1.2 Consolidated accounts

The group financial statements consolidate the financial statements of the company and all its subsidiaries.

Subsidiaries are all entities over which the group has the power to govern the financial and operating policies generally accompanying a shareholding of more than one half of the voting rights. Subsidiaries are fully consolidated from the date on which control is transferred to the group and are de-consolidated from the date on which control ceases.

All intra-group transactions are eliminated as part of the consolidation process. Accounting policies of subsidiaries have been changed where necessary to ensure consistency with the policies adopted by the group.

1.3 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 Trust has adequate resources to continue in operational existence for the foreseeable future and there are no material uncertainties about the Trust's ability to continue as a going concern, thus they continue to adopt the going concern basis of accounting in preparing the financial statements.

1.4 Income

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

Grants

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

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2020 (continued)

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

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

Sponsorship Income

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

Donations

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

Other Income

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

Donated goods, facilities and services

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

Transfer of existing academies into the Trust

Where assets and liabilities are received on the transfer of an existing academy into the Trust, the transferred net assets are measured at fair value and recognised in the balance sheet at the point when the risks and rewards of ownership pass to the Trust. An equal amount of income is recognised for the transfer of an existing academy into the Trust within Donations and capital grant income to the net assets acquired.

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 Trust's accounting policies.

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2020 (continued)

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 Trust to raise funds for its charitable purposes and includes costs of all fundraising activities events and non-charitable trading.

Charitable activities

These are costs incurred on the Trust's educational operations, including support costs and costs relating to the governance of the 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.

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

Freehold buildings	Over 50 years
Long leasehold buildings	Over 50 years
Fixtures, fittings and equipment	20% on cost
ICT equipment	25% on cost
Motor Vehicles	25% on cost

Assets in the course of construction are included at cost. Depreciation on these assets is not charged until they are brought into use.

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

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2020 (continued)

1.7 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.

1.8 Provisions

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

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

1.9 Leased Assets

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

1.10 Investments

The Trust's shareholding in the wholly owned subsidiary, North West Academy Services Limited, is consolidated in the accounts. There is no readily available market value and the cost of valuation exceeds the benefit derived.

For the year ended 31 August 2020 the Trust has given a guarantee under section 479A of the Companies Act 2006 for North West Academy Services Limited (company number 06338185) to be exempt from the requirements of the Act relating to the audit its individual accounts.

1.11 Financial Instruments

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

Financial assets – trade and other debtors are basic financial instruments and are debt instruments measured at amortised cost as detailed in note 13. Prepayments are not financial instruments. Amounts due to the charity's wholly owned subsidiary are held at face value less any impairment.

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

Financial liabilities – trade creditors, accruals and other creditors are financial instruments, and are measured at amortised cost as detailed in notes 14. Taxation and social security are not included in the financial instruments disclosure definition. Deferred income is not deemed to be a financial liability, as the cash settlement has already taken place and there is an obligation to deliver services rather than cash or another financial instrument. Amounts due to charity's wholly owned subsidiary are held at face value less any impairment.

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2020 (continued)

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 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 Pensions Benefits

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

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

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

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

1.14 Fund Accounting

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

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

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

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2020 (continued)

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.

Critical accounting estimates and assumptions

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

The present value of the Local Government Pension Scheme defined benefit liability depends on a number of factors that are determined on an actuarial basis using a variety of assumptions. The assumptions used in determining the net cost (income) for pensions include the discount rate. Any changes in these assumptions, which are disclosed in note 21, will impact the carrying amount of the pension liability. Furthermore, a roll forward approach which projects results from the latest full actuarial valuation performed at 31 March 2016 has been used by the actuary in valuing the pensions liability at 31 August 2019. 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.

1.16 Agency Arrangements

The academy trust acts as an agent in distributing 16-19 bursary funds from ESFA. Payments received from ESFA and subsequent disbursements to students are excluded from the statement of financial activities as the academy trust does not have control over the charitable application of the funds. The academy trust can use up to 5% of the allocation towards its own administration costs and this is recognised in the statement of financial activities. The funds received and paid and any balances held are disclosed in note 23.

2 Donations and capital grants

	Unrestricted Funds £000	Restricted Funds £000	Total 2019/20 £000	Total 2018/19 £000
Capital grants	-	50	50	221
Donated fixed assets	-	35	35	-
Donations	-	3	3	
	<u>-</u>	<u>88</u>	<u>88</u>	<u>221</u>
2019 total	<u>-</u>	<u>221</u>	<u>221</u>	

NORTHERN SCHOOLS TRUST

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2020 (continued)

3 Funding for the Multi Academy Trust's educational operations

	Unrestricted Funds £000	Restricted Funds £000	2019/20 Total £000	2018/19 Total £000
DfE / ESFA grants				
General Annual Grant (GAG)	-	11,832	11,832	12,926
Other DfE / ESFA grants		1,896	1,896	2,176
	-	13,785	13,785	15,102
Other Government grants				
Local authority grants	-	133	133	77
	-	133	133	77
Exceptional Government funding				
Coronavirus exceptional support	-	57	57	-
	-	57	57	-
Other income from the Trust's educational operations	183	90	273	403
	183	14,008	14,191	15,582
2019 total	285	15,297	15,582	

The academy trust has been eligible to claim additional funding in year from government support schemes in response to the coronavirus outbreak. The funding received is shown above under "exceptional government funding". The funding received for coronavirus exceptional support covers £57k of free school meal costs. These costs are included in notes 6 and 7 below as appropriate.

4 Other trading activities

	Unrestricted Funds £000	Restricted Funds £000	2019/20 Total £000	2018/19 Total £000
Sundry income	6	-	6	6
Catering	9	-	9	14
Hire of facilities	72	-	72	84
	87	-	87	104
2019 total	104	-	104	

NORTHERN SCHOOLS TRUST

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2020 (continued)

5 Investment income

	Unrestricted Funds £000	Restricted Funds £000	2019/20 Total £000	2018/19 Total £000
Short term deposits	3	-	3	4
	<u>3</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>4</u>
2019 total	<u>4</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>4</u>	

6 Expenditure

	Non pay expenditure			2019/20 Total £000	2018/19 Total £000
	Staff costs £000	Premises £000	Other £000		
Direct costs	9,800	944	1,054	11,798	16,126
Allocated support costs	2,306	1,017	957	4,280	4,903
	<u>12,106</u>	<u>1,961</u>	<u>2,011</u>	<u>16,078</u>	<u>21,029</u>
				2019/20 £000	2018/19 £000
Depreciation / Impairment				1,051	5,193
(Gain)/loss on disposal of fixed assets				(1)	(3)
Fees payable to auditor - audit				13	18
- other services				5	10

7 Charitable activities

	2019/20 £000	2018/19 £000
Direct costs	11,798	12,338
Direct costs - exceptional	-	3,788
Support costs	4,280	4,880
Support costs - exceptional	-	23
	<u>16,078</u>	<u>21,029</u>
	2019/20 £000	2018/19 £000
Allocated support costs		
Support staff costs	2,306	2,554
Depreciation	107	154
Technology costs	83	116
Premises costs	938	1,073
Other support costs	739	861
Governance costs	107	122
Impairment	-	23
	<u>4,280</u>	<u>4,903</u>

NORTHERN SCHOOLS TRUST

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2020 (continued)

8 Staff

a. Staff costs

Staff costs during the period were:

	2019/20 £000	2018/19 £000
Wages and salaries	8,145	8,717
Social security costs	790	852
Pension costs	2,534	1,784
Apprenticeship levy	26	29
	<u>11,495</u>	<u>11,382</u>
Agency staff costs	611	871
Staff restructuring costs	-	104
	<u>12,106</u>	<u>12,357</u>
Staff restructuring costs comprise:		
Redundancy payments	-	54
Severance payments	-	50
	<u>-</u>	<u>104</u>

b. Non statutory/non-contractual staff severance payments

There were no non-statutory/non-contractual payments in the year (2019: 1 – 17,154).

c. Staff numbers

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

	2019/20 No.	2018/19 No.
Teachers	137	152
Administration and support	139	146
Management	5	7
	<u>281</u>	<u>305</u>

d. Higher paid staff

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

	2019/20 No.	2018/19 No.
£60,001 to £70,000	1	4
£70,001 to £80,000	1	2
£80,001 to £90,000	2	2
£90,001 to £100,000	1	1
£100,001 to £110,000	-	1
£110,001 to £120,000	1	-
£140,001 to £150,000	1	1

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2020 (continued)

e. Key management personnel

The key management personnel of the 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 Trust was £670,583 (2019: £686,290).

9 Central Services

The Trust has provided the following central services to its academies during the year:

- | | |
|---------------------------------------|------------------------|
| - Human Resources | - Financial Management |
| - Enterprise and Marketing Management | - IT Management |
| - Facilities Management | - Clerking Services |
| - English Specialist Leader | |

Charges of 5% of General Annual Grant (GAG) were made for these services in the year. Services provided in addition to the above are charged to the relevant academy on a cost basis.

The actual amounts charged during the year were as follows:

	2019/20 £000	2018/19 £000
North Liverpool Academy	534	479
The Studio, Liverpool	117	148
Liverpool Life Sciences UTC	182	221
Wigan UTC	-	70
	833	918

10 Related Party Transactions - Trustees' remuneration and expenses

Two Trustees has been paid remuneration or has received other benefits from an employment with the Trust. The staff Trustees only receive remuneration in respect of services they provide undertaking the roles of staff members under their contracts of employment.

The value of Trustee's remuneration was as follows:

N Ward (Chief Executive)

Remuneration £140,000 - £145,000 (2019: £140,000 - £145,000)

Employer's pension contributions paid £15,000 - £20,000 (2019: £15,000 - £20,000)

L Hughes (Director of Finance)

Remuneration £60,000 - £65,000 (2019: £55,000 - £60,000)

Employer's pension contributions paid £5,000 - £10,000 (2019: £5,000 - £10,000)

During the year ended 31 August 2020, travel and subsistence expenses totalling £343 (2019: £1,456) were reimbursed to 1 Trustee (2019: 3).

NORTHERN SCHOOLS TRUST

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2020 (continued)

11 Trustees' and officers' insurance

In accordance with normal commercial practice the Trust has purchased insurance to protect Trustees and officers from claims arising from negligent acts, errors or omissions occurring whilst on Trust business. The insurance provides cover up to £5,000,000 on any one claim and the cost for the year ended 31 August 2019 was a part of the total cost for combined financial lines insurance of £24,948 (2019: £18,520). The cost of this insurance is included in the total insurance cost.

12 Tangible fixed assets (group and company)

	Freehold property	Leasehold property	Computer equipment	Furniture and equipment	Motor vehicles	Total
	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000
Cost						
At 1 September 2019	9,912	34,827	4,787	4,606	121	54,253
Additions	-	16	36	22	-	74
Disposals	-	-	(461)	(40)	-	(501)
At 31 August 2020	9,912	34,843	4,362	4,588	121	53,826
Depreciation						
At 1 September 2019	1,050	6,772	4,596	4,486	91	16,995
Charge for the year	200	695	95	49	12	1,051
Disposals	-	-	(461)	(40)	-	(501)
At 31 August 2020	1,250	7,467	4,230	4,495	103	17,545
Net book values						
At 31 August 2020	8,662	27,376	132	93	18	36,281
At 31 August 2019	8,862	28,055	191	120	30	37,258

13 Debtors (group and company)

	2020 £000	2019 £000
Trade debtors	21	12
VAT recoverable	84	125
Other debtors	6	14
Prepayments and accrued income	519	647
	630	798

NORTHERN SCHOOLS TRUST

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2020 (continued)

14 Creditors (group and company): amounts falling due within one year

	2020 £000	2019 £000
Trade creditors	185	294
Other taxation and social security	205	216
ESFA creditor: abatement of GAG	-	67
Other creditors	247	-
Accruals and deferred income	272	516
	<u>909</u>	<u>1,093</u>
Deferred income		
	2020 £000	2019 £000
Deferred income at 1 September 2019	283	441
Released from previous years	(283)	(441)
Resources deferred in the year	81	283
Deferred income at 31 August 2020	<u>81</u>	<u>283</u>

Deferred income held at 31 August 2020 relates to amounts received for the bursary fund, rates relief, high needs funding and one other grant received in the year but which relate to the periods after this date.

15 Funds

	Balance at 1 September 2019 £000	Income £000	Expenditure £000	Gains, losses and transfers £000	Balance at 31 August 2020 £000
Restricted general funds					
General Annual Grant (GAG)	(434)	11,832	(11,709)	813	502
Pupil premium	-	955	(955)	-	-
Other DfE/ESFA grants	-	998	(998)	-	-
Local authority grants	-	133	(133)	-	-
Other grants	-	93	(93)	-	-
Pension reserve	(9,559)	-	(942)	86	(10,415)
	<u>(9,993)</u>	<u>14,011</u>	<u>(14,830)</u>	<u>899</u>	<u>(9,913)</u>
Restricted fixed asset funds					
Capital grant	18,009	50	(544)	-	17,515
Capital expenditure from GAG	2,294	-	(29)	16	2,281
Other	16,955	35	(478)	-	16,512
	<u>37,258</u>	<u>85</u>	<u>(1,051)</u>	<u>16</u>	<u>36,308</u>
Total restricted funds	<u>27,265</u>	<u>14,096</u>	<u>(15,881)</u>	<u>915</u>	<u>26,395</u>
Unrestricted funds	949	273	(197)	(829)	196
Total funds	<u>28,214</u>	<u>14,369</u>	<u>(16,078)</u>	<u>86</u>	<u>26,591</u>

NORTHERN SCHOOLS TRUST

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2020 (continued)

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

- The General Annual Grant (GAG) is used to meet the day to day working capital commitments of the Trust. Under the funding agreement with the Secretary of State, the Trust was not subject to a limit on the amount of GAG that it could carry forward at 31 August 2020.
- Pupil premium funds activities that raise the attainment of disadvantaged pupils of all abilities and to close the gaps between them and their peers.
- Other DfE/ESFA grants is mainly made up of amounts received for deficit funding, rates relief, the 16-19 bursary fund and transitional funding.
- Local authority grants are mainly used to meet special educational needs costs.
- Other grants are used to meet costs of a specific project.
- The pension fund relates to the Trust's share of the deficit of the Local Government Pension Scheme (note 21).
- The capital grant has been used to fund the costs to date of computer and specialist equipment.

The Trustees have reviewed the balance on restricted general funds (excluding pension reserve) plus the balance on unrestricted funds at 31 August 2020. They consider that the current level of funds is sufficient for the Trusts future needs.

Analysis of academies by fund balance

Fund balances at 31 August were allocated as follows:

	Total £000
Central services	1
North Liverpool Academy	1,951
The Studio, Liverpool	(482)
Liverpool Life Sciences UTC	(772)
Total before fixed assets and pension reserve	<u>698</u>
Restricted fixed asset fund	36,308
Pension reserve	(10,415)
Total	<u>25,591</u>

Liverpool Life Sciences UTC is carrying a net deficit of £772k on these funds due to claw back of funding due to pupil number adjustments. The Trust has a repayment plan to return the academy to surplus.

The Studio, Liverpool is carrying a net deficit of £482k on these funds due to claw back of funding due to pupil number adjustments. The Trust has a repayment plan to return the academy to surplus.

NORTHERN SCHOOLS TRUST

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2020 (continued)

Total cost analysis by academy

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

	Teaching and educational support staff costs £000	Other support staff costs £000	Educational supplies £000	Other costs (excluding depreciation) £000	2019/20 Total £000	2018/19 Total £000
Central services	119	661	-	88	868	1,031
North Liverpool Academy	6,532	1,125	320	1,385	9,362	8,644
The Studio	1,170	147	57	210	1,584	1,577
Liverpool Life Sciences UTC	1,851	315	82	816	3,064	3,002
The Kingsway Academy	109	58	-	-	167	55
Wigan UTC	19	-	(20)	(17)	(18)	1,526
Academy Trust	9,800	2,306	439	2,482	15,027	15,835

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

	Balance at 1 September 2018 £000	Income £000	Expenditure £000	Gains, losses and transfers £000	Balance at 31 August 2019 £000
Restricted general funds					
General Annual Grant (GAG)	(1,774)	12,926	(12,696)	1,110	(434)
Pupil premium	-	936	(936)	-	-
Other DfE/ESFA grants	-	1,240	(1,240)	-	-
Local authority grants	-	77	(77)	-	-
Other grants	-	118	(118)	-	-
Pension reserve	(5,936)	-	(462)	(3,161)	(9,559)
	<u>(7,710)</u>	<u>15,297</u>	<u>(15,529)</u>	<u>(2,051)</u>	<u>(9,993)</u>
Restricted fixed asset funds					
Capital grant	18,319	221	(531)	-	18,009
Capital expenditure from GAG	2,471	-	(34)	(143)	2,294
Other	21,583	-	(4,628)	-	16,955
	<u>42,373</u>	<u>221</u>	<u>(5,193)</u>	<u>(143)</u>	<u>37,258</u>
Total restricted funds	<u>34,663</u>	<u>15,518</u>	<u>(20,722)</u>	<u>(2,194)</u>	<u>27,265</u>
Unrestricted funds	1,830	393	(307)	(967)	949
Total funds	<u>36,493</u>	<u>15,911</u>	<u>(21,029)</u>	<u>(3,161)</u>	<u>28,214</u>

NORTHERN SCHOOLS TRUST

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2020 (continued)

16 Analysis of net assets between funds

	Unrestricted Funds £000	Restricted Funds £000	Restricted Fixed Asset Funds £000	Total Funds £000
Tangible fixed assets	-	-	36,281	36,281
Current assets	196	1,411	27	1,634
Current liabilities	-	(909)	-	(909)
Pension scheme liability	-	(10,415)	-	(10,415)
Total net assets	196	(9,913)	36,308	26,591

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

	Unrestricted Funds £000	Restricted Funds £000	Restricted Fixed Asset Funds £000	Total Funds £000
Tangible fixed assets	-	-	37,258	37,258
Current assets	949	659	-	1,608
Current liabilities	-	(1,093)	-	(1,093)
Pension scheme liability	-	(9,559)	-	(9,559)
Total net assets	949	(9,993)	37,258	28,214

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

	2019/20 £000	2018/19 £000
Net income/(expenditure) for the reporting period (as per the statement of financial activities)	(1,709)	(5,118)
Depreciation (note 12)	1,051	5,193
Capital grants from DfE and other capital	(85)	(221)
(Loss)/profit on disposal of tangible fixed assets	(1)	(3)
Interest receivable (note 5)	(3)	(4)
Defined benefit pension scheme cost less contributions payable	649	361
Defined benefit pension scheme finance cost	270	89
Defined benefit pension administration costs	23	12
(Increase)/decrease in debtors	168	158
Increase/(decrease) in creditors	(157)	(846)
Net cash provided by / (used in) Operating Activities	179	(379)

NORTHERN SCHOOLS TRUST

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2020 (continued)

18 Cash flows from investing activities

	2019/20 £000	2018/19 £000
Dividends, interest and rents from investments	3	4
Profit on sale of tangible fixed assets	1	3
Purchase of tangible fixed assets	(74)	(78)
Capital grants from DfE/ESFA	85	221
Net cash provided by / (used in) investing activities	15	150

19 Analysis to changes in net funds

	2020 £000	2019 £000
Cash in hand and at bank	1,004	810
	<u>1,004</u>	<u>810</u>

20 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.

21 Pension and similar obligations

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

The latest actuarial valuation of the TPS related to the period ended 31 March 2012 and of the LGPS 31 March 2016.

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

Teachers' Pension Scheme

The Teachers' Pension Scheme (TPS) is a statutory, contributory, defined benefit scheme, governed by the Teachers' Pension Scheme Regulations 2014. Membership is automatic for full-time teachers in academies and, from 1 January 2007, automatic for teachers in part-time employment following appointment or a change of contract, although they are able to opt out.

The TPS is an unfunded scheme and members contribute on a 'pay as you go' basis – these contributions along with those made by employers are credited to the Exchequer. Retirement and other pension benefits are paid by public funds provided by Parliament.

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2020 (continued)

Valuation of the Teachers' Pension Scheme

The Government Actuary, using normal actuarial principles, conducts a formal actuarial review of the TPS in accordance with the Public Service Pensions (Valuations and Employer Cost Cap) Directions 2014 published by HM Treasury every 4 years. The aim of the review is to specify the level of future contributions. Actuarial scheme valuations are dependent on assumptions about the value of future costs, design of benefits and many other factors. The latest actuarial valuation of the TPS was carried out as at 31 March 2016. The valuation report was published by the Department for Education on 5 March 2019. The key elements of the valuation and subsequent consultation are:

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

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

The employer's pension costs paid to TPS in the period amounted to £1,180,807 (2019: £907,427).

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 Trust has accounted for its contributions to the scheme as if it were a defined contribution scheme. The 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 2020 was £572,425 (2019: £575,398), of which employer's contributions totalled £406,084 (2019: £413,174) and employees' contributions totalled £166,341 (2019: £162,224). The agreed contribution rates for future years are 13.8 – 16.7 per cent for employers and 5.5 - 12.5 per cent 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.

At the 2019 actuarial valuation the North Liverpool Academy scheme was in deficit. Additional contributions are made in addition to normal funding levels. The implied recovery period from 1 April 2019 is 16 years.

NORTHERN SCHOOLS TRUST

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2020 (continued)

Principal actuarial assumptions

	2020	2019
Rate of increase in salaries	3.5 – 3.8%	3.1 – 3.6%
Rate of increase for pensions in payment / inflation	2.1 – 2.4%	2.1 – 2.3%
Discount rate for scheme liabilities	1.8%	1.8 – 1.9%
Inflation assumption (CPI)	2.0 – 2.3%	2.0 – 2.3%

The current mortality assumptions include sufficient allowance for future improvements in mortality rates.

The assumed life expectations on retirement age 65 are:

	2020	2019
<i>Retiring today</i>		
Males	22.2	20.6 – 22.2
Females	25	23.1 – 25.0
<i>Retiring in 20 years</i>		
Males	25.2	22.0 – 25.2
Females	27.9	24.8 – 27.9

Sensitivity analysis

	2020 £000	2019 £000
Merseyside Pension Fund		
Discount rate +0.1%	(345)	(357)
CPI rate +0.1%	355	369
Pay growth +0.1%	41	67
Mortality assumption – 1 year increase	391	245

The analysis does not include figures for The Kingsway Academy and Wigan UTC.

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

	2020 £000	2019 £000
Equities	4,183	3,870
Government bonds	206	697
Other bonds	1,177	464
Property	758	653
Cash/liquidity	467	268
Other	1,697	1,434
Total market value of assets	8,488	7,386

The actual return on scheme assets was £42,000 (2019: £329,000).

NORTHERN SCHOOLS TRUST

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2020 (continued)

Amounts recognised in the Statement of Financial Activities

	2019/20 £000	2018/19 £000
Current service cost	(983)	(721)
Past service cost	(29)	-
Interest income	127	198
Interest cost	(397)	(287)
Administration expenses	(23)	(12)
Total amount recognised in the SOFA	(1,305)	(822)

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

	2019/20 £000	2018/19 £000
At 1 September	14,265	9,949
Adjustment to opening balance	2,680	-
Current service cost	983	721
Interest cost	397	287
Employee contributions	165	169
Past service cost	29	-
Experience (gain)/loss	(447)	344
Actuarial (gain)/loss	947	2,825
Change in demographic assumptions	-	(49)
Change in financial assumptions	-	105
Benefits paid	(116)	(86)
At 31 August	18,903	14,265

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

	2019/20 £000	2018/19 £000
At 1 September	4,706	4,013
Adjustment to opening balance	2,680	-
Return on plan assets (excluding net interest on the net defined pension liability)	127	198
Remeasurement	586	-
Actuarial gains / (losses)	-	64
Administration Expenses	(23)	(12)
Employer contributions	363	360
Employee contributions	165	169
Benefits paid	(116)	(86)
At 31 August	8,488	4,706

The adjustment to opening balance represents reanalysis of the The Kingsway Academy opening deficit to defined benefit obligations.

A balance of £3,133k for The Kingsway Academy pension scheme and £260k for Wigan UTC are included in the defined benefit pension scheme liability as per the final cessation valuations.

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2020 (continued)

22 Related party transactions

Owing to the nature of the Trust's operations and the composition of the board of governors being drawn from local public and private sector organisations, it is inevitable that transactions will take place with organisations in which a member of the board of governors may have an interest. All transactions involving such organisations are conducted at arm's length and in accordance with the Trust's financial regulations and normal procurement procedures.

No related party transactions took place in the period of account, other than certain trustee's remuneration and expenses already disclosed in note 10.

23 Agency arrangements

The Trust distributes 16-19 bursary funds to students as an agent for ESFA. In the accounting period ending 31 August 2020 the Trust received £61,675 (2019: £82,367) and disbursed £75,045 (2019: £109,010) from the fund. An amount of £246,080 (2019: £259,450) is included in other creditors relating to undistributed funds that is repayable to ESFA.