

Company Registration Number: 08231006 (England & Wales)

LINKS MULTI ACADEMY TRUST

(A company limited by guarantee)

ANNUAL REPORT AND FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2020



LINKS MULTI ACADEMY TRUST
(A company limited by guarantee)

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LINKS MULTI ACADEMY TRUST
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REFERENCE AND ADMINISTRATIVE DETAILS

Members

M Lynch, Chair of Trustees
I R Woods
J Elbourne-Cload (resigned 21 September 2020)
A Henshall
J Camp
R Boxer (resigned February 2020)

Trustees

D Allen
M Chapman
J Elbourne-Cload (resigned 21 September 2020)
M Gauthier
D P Osman
A Henshall (resigned as a Trustee, remains as a member 10 December 2020)
M Lynch
K Haswell
M Raybone
I R Woods
S Hundal
D Bullock (appointed 21 September 2020)

Company registered number

08231006

Company name

Links Multi Academy Trust

Principal and registered office

1 Hixberry Lane, St Albans, Herts, AL4 0TZ

Company secretary

J Butterworth

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REFERENCE AND ADMINISTRATIVE DETAILS (CONTINUED)
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2020

Senior management team

David Allen, Executive Headteacher
Charlotte Brown, Assistant Headteacher
Gemma Nash, Assistant Headteacher
Rosie Marwaha, School Business Manager
Mark Fuller, Assistant Headteacher
Sarah Stagg, Assistant Headteacher (Links Hatfield)
Tom Laud, Assistant Headteacher (Links Hatfield)
Matthew Slater, Head of School (Links Hatfield)
Ben Rice, Assistant Headteacher (Links Hatfield)
Natalie Huseyin, School Business Manager (Links Hatfield)

Independent auditors

MHA MacIntyre Hudson, 6th Floor, 2 London Wall Place, London, EC2Y 5AU

Bankers

Lloyds Bank, 36 Chequer Street, St Albans, AL1 3YQ

Solicitors

Stone King LLP, Boundary House, 91 Charterhouse Street, London, EC1M 6HR

LINKS MULTI ACADEMY TRUST
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TRUSTEES' REPORT
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2020

The trustees present their annual report together with the financial statements and auditor's report of the charitable company for the year / period 1 September 2019 until 31 August 2020. The annual report serves the purposes of both a trustees' report, and a directors' report under company law. It is worth noting that Links Academy became Links Multi Academy Trust as from 1 October 2019; when it combined with Links Hatfield Academy previously a Local Authority Maintained school known as The Park Education Support Centre (ESC).

The Academy Trust operates one primary and two secondary academies serving the St Albans, Harpenden, Welwyn, Hatfield and Hertsmere areas. Its academies have a combined pupil capacity of 103 and had a roll of 79 in the school census in January 2020. This includes 6 places allocated to the Cedars Primary Support Base which operates on Links Academy St Albans site funded via a service level agreement funded by Hertfordshire County Council.

STRUCTURE, GOVERNANCE AND MANAGEMENT

Constitution

The Academy Trust is a company limited by guarantee and an exempt charity. The charitable company's memorandum and articles of association are the primary governing documents of the Academy Trust. The trustees of Links Multi Academy Trust are also the directors of the charitable company for the purposes of company law. The charitable company operates as Links Multi Academy Trust trading as Links Academy and Links Hatfield Academy.

Details of the trustees who served during the year, and to the date these accounts are approved are included in the Reference and Administrative Details on pages 1 and 2.

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.

Principal Activities

The Academy's principal activity, as set out in the Articles of Association and funding agreement is to advance for the public benefit education in the United Kingdom through its carrying on as a school offering a broad curriculum for pupils that have been or are, at risk of being permanently excluded from their current mainstream provision.

Trustees' Indemnities

Trustees benefit from indemnity insurance to cover the liability of the Trustees which by virtue of any rule of law would otherwise attach to them in respect of any negligence, default or breach of trust or breach of duty of which they may be guilty in relation to the Academy Trust. The element relating to Trustee indemnity insurance cannot be separately identified.

Method of Recruitment and Appointment or Election of Trustees

The management of the academy is the responsibility of the Trustees who are elected and co-opted under the terms of the Trust deed.

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TRUSTEES' REPORT (continued)
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2020

Policies and Procedures Adopted for the Induction and Training of Trustees

All trustees are provided with access to policies, procedures, terms of reference of sub committees, minutes, budget plans and other documents that they need to undertake their roles as Trustees. Further training is provided by Herts for Learning on an individual need basis.

Organisational Structure

The organisational structure of the trust consists of the following:-

- Trustees Board
- ARAC (Academy Resources and Audit Committee) and AAIC (Academy Academic Improvement Committee) Sub Committees
- Links Senior Leadership Teams

The strategic direction of the academy is led by the Executive Headteacher, supported by the Trustees Board and Senior Leadership Teams of both Academies.

Trustees Board

The Trustees Board is responsible for the overall strategic direction of the Trust and for those statutory duties which may not be delegated to sub-committees. The Trustees Board has a scheme of delegation which specifies delegated authorities to each subcommittee. The Trustees Board has undertaken a skill set audit and identified training needs for the new academic year.

Leadership Team

The day to day management is delegated to the Senior Leadership Team consisting of:

David Allen	Headteacher (appointed 1 January 2014 – resigned 30 September 2019)
David Allen	Executive Headteacher – with effect from 1 October 2019
Matthew Slater	Head of School - with effect from 1 October 2019
Charlotte Brown	Assistant Headteacher (appointed 1 September 2014)
Gemma Nash	Assistant Headteacher (appointed 16 April 2018)
Ben Rice	Assistant Headteacher with effect from 1 October 2019
Mark Fuller	Assistant Headteacher with effect from 1 October 2019
Sarah Stagg	Assistant Headteacher with effect from 1 October 2019
Tom Laud	Assistant Headteacher with effect from 1 October 2019
Rosie Marwaha	School Business Manager (appointed 3 July 2017)
Natalie Huseyin	School Business Manager – with effect from 1 October 2019

The Senior Leadership Team of each academy meets at least weekly to review the operation of the Academy and the implementation of the policies and procedures. The Senior Leadership Team reviews the effectiveness of its activities and the quality of Teaching and Learning which is regularly and routinely presented to the Trustees Board.

The Executive Headteacher is the Accounting Officer as required by the Funding Agreement with the Department for Education.

Arrangements for setting pay and remuneration of key management personnel

These are set by the Academy Resources and Audit Committee using local benchmarks and then ratified by the Trustees Board, following appraisals with Trustees.

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TRUSTEES' REPORT (continued)
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2020

Trade union facility time

There were no staff involved in trade union activities and the academy had no paid Trade Union facility time.

Related Parties and other Connected Charities and Organisations

Links Multi Academy Trust works very closely with local secondary, primary and JMI schools (St Albans only) within the boundaries St Albans, Harpenden, Welwyn, Hatfield and Hertsmere areas to provide high quality educational provision for students in their home/school setting and at the Links where appropriate. Links Multi Academy Trust opened The Cedars Primary Support Base in September 2019, to provide the same high quality educational provision to Primary students in the same area.

Staff from two local secondary schools are Members of Links Multi Academy Trust Board. These are Maire Lynch (Chair of Trustees/Headteacher Loreto College) and Alan Henshall (Member/Headteacher Roundwood Park).

In addition, staff from three local secondary schools and one local primary school are trustees of the Links Academy. These are: Maire Lynch (Headteacher Loreto College), Margaret Chapman (Headteacher STAGS), Matt Gauthier, (Headteacher Samuel Ryder Academy), Justine Elbourne-Cloud, (Headteacher Cunningham Hill Junior School). A member of the Hertfordshire County Council, ISL Team, Silvia Hundal is also a trustee of Links Academy.

Trustees	School	Number of Secondary Students/attending in year (total 37)
Maire Lynch	Loreto College	1/37
Alan Henshall	Roundwood Park	0/37
Matt Gauthier	Samuel Ryder Academy	2/37
Margaret Chapman	St Albans Girls School (STAGS)	0/37
Justine Elbourne- Cloud	Cunningham Hill Junior School	1/6 (primary students in year)

These student numbers relate to Links Academy St Albans only and include 6th day provision places. No students from related party schools attended Links Hatfield Academy during 2019/2020.

OBJECTIVES AND ACTIVITIES

The Trust's objectives are defined in their Articles of Association. They are to advance for the public benefit education in the UK, in particular but without prejudice to the generality of the foregoing by establishing, maintaining, carry on, managing and developing an educational institution which is principally concerned with providing full time or part time education for children of compulsory school age who, by reason of illness, exclusion from school or otherwise may not for any period receive a suitable education unless alternative provision is made for them.

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TRUSTEES' REPORT (continued)
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2020

Objects and Aims

The core aim of the Academy is to promote integration, inclusion and education of students/pupils through individually focused learning programmes in partnership with schools, parents/carers and other agencies.

The Academy provides several programmes of support for students/pupils and for other agencies, teachers and staff in schools.

This includes:

- A. Onsite education for primary (St Albans) and secondary (St Albans and Hatfield) school students permanently excluded from school with a view to either reintegration into a new mainstream school or providing/facilitating alternative education and work related provision.
- B. At risk secondary placements for more intensive support and assessment of need for those at risk of permanent exclusion, students having other challenges such as attendance, mental health issues or external family trauma.
- C. Preventative Outreach work for secondary, primary and nursery students/pupils in the St Albans and Harpenden area. No primary outreach in Hatfield/Hertsmere.
- D. Training for staff and agencies with support for parents/carers.

Public Benefit

The Trustees confirm that they have referred to the guidance contained in the Charity Commission's general guidance on Public Benefit when reviewing the charity's aims and objectives and in planning future activities. In particular the trustees consider how planned activities will contribute to the aims and objectives they have set. The Academy Trustees have complied with their duty to have due regard to the guidance on public benefit published by the Charity Commission in exercising their powers.

STRATEGIC REPORT

Achievements and Performance

The Ofsted report for St Albans was on the 5 and 6 October 2016 at the end of which the school was judged to be 'good' in all areas.

Ofsted's summary of key findings included:

- The Headteacher provides outstanding leadership and receives excellent support from senior leaders and governors in driving improvements forward.
- The school continues to improve year-on-year. Teaching, pupils' personal development, behaviour and welfare, and pupils' outcomes have moved from requiring improvement to good.
- Leaders are effective in promoting pupils' physical wellbeing and their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
- Teachers have high expectations for learning. They use their good subject knowledge and effective questioning to enable pupils to learn well. All adults work well together to promote each pupil's learning.
- The school provides good welfare and guidance for pupils and promotes pupils' wellbeing and safety effectively. As a result pupils feel safe.
- Pupils make good and occasionally outstanding progress across a wide range of subjects including English and Mathematics.
- Most able disadvantaged pupils make outstanding progress.

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TRUSTEES' REPORT (continued)
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2020

COVID-19

During the academic year 2019/2020 the school faced unprecedented circumstances when a worldwide pandemic was announced by the World Health Organisation (WHO) in March 2020 caused by the Covid-19 virus. This resulted in changes to the original plans for the Trust during the year.

To ensure that the Academy could ensure a Covid-19 safe environment the Trust managed to carry out emergency works; this included refurbishment to both St Albans and Hatfield learning areas as follows:-

St Albans

- Refurbishments of student toilets – to convert to individual unisex cubicles.
- Conversion of a toilet area to provide an additional classroom to accommodate social distancing.
- Removal of wall in a classroom to open the learning space to accommodate social distancing.

Hatfield

- Refurbishments of student toilets – to convert to individual unisex cubicles.
- Conversion of a toilet area and outside storage are to provide additional learning spaces to accommodate social distancing.

Measures were also put in place across the Trust to include additional cleaning and sanitisation as follows:-

- Wash stations were put in main entrances, dining and communal areas.
- De-fogging machines were purchased to sanitise areas as required.
- Social distancing and 'please wash your hands' signs were put up.
- Antibacterial gel, hand wipes, face masks and face shields were provided to all staff.
- Desk partitions were purchased to segregate admin staff work stations.
- Projectors installed in main halls to enable socially distanced training and briefings.

Whilst not participating in the government scheme for Free School Meals (FSM) the Trust provided supermarket vouchers for students that were eligible for Pupil Premium as well as FSM funded by its revenue funds.

The total of this additional non-budgeted expenditure cost the Trust approximately £100,000.

GCSE examinations and vocational programmes were also affected by COVID-19 as all paper based external examinations were cancelled and the process for claiming qualifications changed. Grades were all based on teacher assessments and the Trust had to adapt to the changing deadlines and procedures.

Key Performance Indicators

Exam Results 2019/20 Links Academy St Albans

Results by cohort: (A*-G/1-9)

Subject	2015-2016 {19}	2016-17 {16}	2017-18 {14}	2018-19 {18}	2019-20 {16}
English	79%	63%	79%	78%	94%
Maths	53%	50%	71%	78%	94%
Science	63%	38%	79%	83%	81%

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TRUSTEES' REPORT (continued)
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2020

Results by Entries: (A*-G/1-9)

Cohort size in { }

Subject	2015-2016 {19}	2016-17 {16}	2017-18 {14}	2018-19 {18}	2019-20 {16}
English	100% (15)	85% (13)	85% (13)	78% (18)	100% (14)
Maths	71% (14)	73% (11)	77% (13)	82% (17)	100% (14)
Science	100% (9)	100% (5)	92% (12)	94% (16)	93% (14)
Entry Science		56% (9)	80% (10)	67% (15)	100% (13)
English Literature			86% (7)	100% (2)	

	Aug 2018	Aug 2019	Aug 2020
Seven or more qualifications	50%	50%	81%
Six or more qualifications	71%	61%	81%
Five or more qualifications	86%	83%	81%

16 students in total attended Year 11 at Links Academy St Albans in 2019/2020 and although the Covid-19 pandemic resulted in the cancellation of students sitting exams during summer 2020 all students successfully left with a range of skills and qualifications to enable them to access further education or move on to the next stage of their lives through apprenticeship or employment. Links Academy endeavours to enter all Year 11 students for English, Maths and Science. This is not always possible due to the late start of students at the Links Academy.

In the academic year 2019/2020 81% of students left Links Academy with five or more qualifications and 81% of students achieved eight or more qualifications.

Functional skills results were also achieved at Links Academy but were not included in the above tables. There were successes for our most able disadvantaged students who achieved GCSEs at Grade 6 in English and Biology and Grade 5 for History, with two students achieving a Grade 5 in Maths. The students have continued on to further education, joining Oaklands College and following an apprenticeship. There were also successes for one student gaining thirteen qualifications including a Grade 4 in English, Maths and Biology. At Links Academy, we take a personalised approach to learning catering for the needs of all the students and therefore the disadvantaged students achieved in line with all students.

The Year 11 destinations for students 2019/2020 included the following:

Oaklands College courses in multi trades, carpentry, health and social care, plumbing and equine studies. North Herts College for carpentry. West Herts College for courses in Hair and Beauty. London Hair Academy for an apprenticeship in barbering.

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TRUSTEES' REPORT (continued)
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2020

Exam Results 2019/2020 Links Hatfield Academy

Results by cohort A*-G and 9-1

	Park Esc	Park Esc	Park Esc	Park Esc	Links Hatfield Academy
	2015-2016 (17)	2016-2017 (22)	2017-2018 (20)	2018-19 (17)	2019-20 (24)
English	12%	55%	70%	76%	96%
Maths	18%	55%	70%	63%	100%
Science	47%	36%			58%

Results by entries A*-G and 9-1

	Park Esc	Park Esc	Park Esc	Park Esc	Links Hatfield Academy
	2015-2016	2016-2017	2017-2018	2018-19	2019-20
English	50% (1)	92% (13)	100% (14)	100%	100%
Maths	100% (3)	82% (12)	100% (14)	75%	100%
Science	62% (8)	73% (8)			82%*
English Literature					100%
Additional Science					

* 3 candidates withdrawn before grades submitted

2019-20 (Including all entry level and vocational qualifications)

46% achieved 7 or more qualification
63% achieved 6 or more qualifications
67% achieved 5 or more qualifications

24 students in total attended Year 11 at Links Hatfield Academy 2019/2020 and although the Covid-19 pandemic resulted in the cancellation of students sitting exams during summer 2020 all students successfully left with a range of skills and qualifications to enable them to access further education or move on to the next stage of their lives through apprenticeship or employment.

Changes to the curriculum with an increase in core subject teaching provision, the reintroduction of GCSE Science and an expanded option subject offer during 2019/2020 has enabled students to gain access to a higher number of qualifications. There has been a substantial increase of students achieving 7 or more qualifications from 0% in 2019 to 46% in 2020, students gaining 6 or more qualifications has increased from 24% in 2019 to 63% in 2020, students gaining 5 or more qualifications has increased from 41% in 2019 to 67% in 2020. 100% of students this year gained at least one GCSE qualification, an improvement of 18% from 2019 results. Results for GCSE English have continued to improve with 96% gaining a 9-1 grade compared to 76% in 2018-19.

The disadvantaged student cohort performance has continued to improve with 64% of disadvantaged students achieving 5 or more qualifications compared to the previous year at 36%. 100% of disadvantaged students achieved at least 1 qualification compared to 82% in 2019.

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TRUSTEES' REPORT (continued)
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2020

Year 11 destinations

Students from the Year 11 2019/2020 cohort have been offered the following courses for the forthcoming academic year; Business, Carpentry, Plumbing, Animal care, Horticulture, Vehicle Maintenance, Hair & Beauty, Construction Skills, Child Care and Pathways courses at Oaklands College, Child Care at West Herts College, Electrical Installation and ICT at Barnet & Southgate College and Catering at City & Islington College. One student has been accepted on an apprenticeship with The Shire golf course.

Going Concern

The Members and Trustees are confident that the last few years, despite the Covid-19 pandemic, have put the Academy on to a much stronger financial footing with funding carry forwards in all years. We anticipate that this trend will continue.

In September 2019 Links Academy opened the Cedars Primary Support Base to provide support for local primary age children at risk of permanent exclusion or who have been permanently excluded from local primary schools. The base welcomed its first cohort of 6 primary aged students in September 2019. This provision is funded by the Local Authority.

In October 2019 Links Academy became a Multi Academy Trust, incorporating The Park ESC into the Trust, as Links Hatfield Academy. The amalgamation of the two schools will strengthen the financial position of both schools by providing the opportunity to share staffing, resources and Best Practice. Additional discounts may be received with trust wide purchases due to Economies of Scale.

In March 2020 the government closed schools due to the Covid-19 pandemic. As a school with a high proportion of vulnerable students with high needs; the school remained fully operational throughout the crisis, providing students with ongoing educational and emotional support. The Academy also extended the Free School Meal plan to include food vouchers for all students across the Academy that were entitled to Pupil Premium.

After making appropriate enquiries, the Trustees Board has a reasonable expectation that the academy trust has adequate resources to continue in operational existence for the foreseeable future. For this reason it continues to adopt the going concern basis in preparing the financial statements. Further details regarding the adoption of the going concern basis can be found in the Statement of Accounting Policies.

FINANCIAL REVIEW

Reserves Policy

The Trustees have reviewed the level of reserves held by the Trust and intend to continually review this as part of the annual budget setting process and the regular review of management accounts. The policy of the trust is to maintain a level of reserves that will be adequate to provide a stable basis for the continuing activity of the trust having in mind such factors as fluctuations in anticipated student numbers.

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TRUSTEES' REPORT (continued)
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2020

At 31 August 2020 the total funds comprised:

Unrestricted		£216,963
Restricted:	Fixed asset funds	£7,793,148
	Pension reserve	£(1,569,000)
	Other	£496,565
		<u>£6,937,676</u>

The Academy currently holds surplus funds earmarked for future capital projects, including an all-weather sports pitch (Hatfield site), Phase 3 Hatfield building renovations and procurement of school vehicles upon completion of the current leases.

The Academy is always looking for ways to improve the facilities and opportunities for the students that it cares for and endeavours to make in year savings wherever possible to enable the academy to achieve this aim.

Investment Policy

As the Trust has only relatively recently been established, the focus of its investment policy is ensuring that the Trust manages its cash balances to provide for the day to day working capital requirements of its operations and ensuring that there is no loss of these cash funds. During the 2018/2019 financial year the trust moved £340,000 of working capital into a 32 day notice treasury account with its current bank provider. The purpose of this is to gain some additional interest without detriment to the day to day funding.

Principal Risks and Uncertainties

Risk Management

The Trustees are responsible for the overseeing of the risks faced by the Trust. Detailed considerations of risk are delegated to the Senior Management of the Academies. Risks are identified, assessed and controls established throughout the year. A formal review of the risk management processes is undertaken on an annual basis.

The main risks that the Governors have identified and the plans to manage those risks are:

- **Reputation.** The Trust's success is built on its reputation for the education and well-being of our pupils. We manage this risk through safeguarding policies, staff recruitment policies, pastoral support for both pupils and staff and active identification and resolution of health and safety related issues.
- **Finance.** The Trust's ability to continue is reliant on funding from different streams, including ESFA and Hertfordshire County Council and the ability to pay bills as they fall due. This risk is managed by robust financial policies, procedures and controls.

Through the risk management processes established for the Trust, the Trustees are satisfied that the major risks identified have been adequately mitigated where necessary. It is recognised that systems can only provide reasonable but not absolute assurance that major risks have been adequately managed.

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TRUSTEES' REPORT (continued)
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2020

Local Government Pension Scheme

The Trustees recognise the Local Government Pension Scheme represents a potential liability. The deficit on the pension reserve relates to the non-teaching pension scheme where, unlike the Teachers' Pension Scheme, separate assets are held to fund future liabilities. The deficit can be met in the longer term from any combination of an increase in employer or employee contributions, increase in government funding or changes to the scheme benefits. The Academy is able to meet its known annual contributions for the foreseeable future.

FUNDRAISING

The Academy Trust does not use any external fundraisers. No fundraising was undertaken during the 2019/2020 financial year. The Trustees co-ordinate and monitor all fundraising activity.

PLANS FOR FUTURE PERIODS

The Academy has a School Improvement Plan that details the plans and objectives of the school and includes strategies and time frames to support the journey to outstanding from good.

These plans are discussed at length with the Members, Trustees and local Headteachers throughout the academic year.

The Links Multi Academy Trust has two academies working from three sites offering provision across all Key Stages from KS1 to KS4. There is also an Outreach provision which is delivered from the Woollam Crescent site and a 'rolling door' programme for KS3 designed to prevent permanent exclusion and improve the success rate of managed moves.

The Links Academy St Albans supports a strong and supportive group of local secondary Headteachers, known as STASSH (of which the Executive Headteacher is Chair), which consists of 14 schools (one special, one EBD).

The Links Hatfield Academy supports a strong and supportive group of local secondary Headteachers, known as WHASSH (DSPL5) which consists of 6 schools including one specialist school for the hearing impaired; and HECs (DSPL6) which consists of 6 secondary Schools.

Within the group the predominant Ofsted grading is 'Outstanding'. The academy has joined an umbrella trust consisting of the schools of St Albans and Harpenden. The Academy Trust has also set up a Primary Support Base for primary age students that was operational from 1st September 2019.

During the academic year 2019/2020 the school faced unprecedented circumstances when a worldwide pandemic was announced by the World Health Organisation (WHO) in March 2020 caused by the Covid-19 virus. This resulted in changes to the original plans for the Trust during the year.

Whilst Links Multi Academy Trust kept its doors open to all students during this time; other services and suppliers were forced to close; as a result and with carefully financial planning; the Trust managed to make savings in year. The Trust had significant staff shortages throughout the year prior to the pandemic, and was in the process of recruiting to these positions when the lockdown hit; therefore these vacancies were put on hold until the autumn 2020. Non-emergency refurbishment works at the Hatfield site were also put on hold as the contractors were unable to get the necessary supplies for the works to proceed.

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TRUSTEES' REPORT (continued)
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Following discussions with the Trustees the Trust has earmarked the funding to ensure that projects that have been delayed by the pandemic can be achieved in the next academic year: e.g.

- Replacement vehicles at both Hatfield and St Albans (estimated £60,000).
- Upgrade current IT to facilitate remote learning i.e. laptops, G-suite, Chromebooks, staff training (estimated £42,000).
- Refurbishment works at Hatfield site that were postponed due to Covid-19 i.e. Phase 2 refurbishments and staff toilet refurbishments (estimated £157,000).
- Project management costs for above works (estimated £7,000).
- Installation of an all-weather pitch (estimated £100,000).

All of the above will ensure that the Links Multi Academy Trust achieves its objectives and that investments are made in the infrastructure that will enhance the educational opportunities for students across the Trust going forward.

FUNDS HELD AS CUSTODIAN TRUSTEE ON BEHALF OF OTHERS

During the year from 1 September 2019 to the 31 August 2020 Links Academy Trust did not hold any funds as a custodian trustee on behalf of any other charitable organisation.


AUDITOR

In so far as the trustees are aware:

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

The Auditors, MHA Macintyre Hudson, were appointed by the Trustees in 2018 and have indicated their willingness to continue in office.

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


Maire Lynch
Chair of Trustees

Date: 17/4/20.

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**GOVERNANCE STATEMENT
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2020**

SCOPE OF RESPONSIBILITY

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

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

The Trustees Board has delegated the day-to-day responsibility to the Executive Headteacher as accounting officer, for ensuring financial controls conform with the requirements of both propriety and good financial management and in accordance with the requirements and responsibilities assigned to it in the funding agreement between Links Multi Academy Trust and the Secretary of State for Education. They are also responsible for reporting to the Trustees Board 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 Trustees Board has formally met 4 times during the year. Attendance during the year at meetings of the Trustees Board was as follows:

Trustees	Meetings attended	Out of a possible
Maire Lynch – Chair of Trustees	4	4
David Allen – Executive Headteacher and Principal Accounting Officer	4	4
Justine Elbourne-Cload	4	4
Margaret Chapman	3	4
Silvia Hundal	1	4
Damian Osman (appointed October 2019)	1	3
Ian Woods	2	4
Karen Haswell (appointed October 2019)	2	3
Matthew Gauthier	4	4
Marian Raybone (appointed October 2019)	2	3
Chris Stratton (Associate)	4	4

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GOVERNANCE STATEMENT (continued)
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2020

The Academy Resources and Audit Committee (ARAC) is a sub-committee of the main Trustees Board. Its purpose is to have strategic oversight of the school's finances and premises:

Attendance at meetings in the year was as follows:

Trustees	Meetings attended	Out of a possible
Matthew Gauthier – Chair of ARAC	4	4
David Allen – Executive Headteacher and Principal Accounting Officer	4	4
Justine Elbourne-Cload	4	4
Damian Osman (appointed October 2019)	0	3
Ian Woods	4	4
Marion Raybone	2	3
Chris Stratton (Associate)	4	4

REVIEW OF VALUE FOR MONEY

As accounting officer the Executive Headteacher has responsibility for ensuring that the academy trust delivers good value in the use of public resources. The accounting officer understands that value for money refers to the educational and wider societal outcomes achieved in return for the taxpayer resources received.

The accounting officer in consultation with Trustees and SLT considers how the Academy Trust's use of its resources and provides good value for money during each academic year, and reports to the Trustees Board where value for money can be improved, including the use of benchmarking data where appropriate. The accounting officer for the academy trust has delivered improved value for money during the year in the following areas:

The School Business Managers at each site review the systems and procedures. A successful budget monitoring system has been rolled out to the Links Hatfield Academy and has assisted in ensuring the accounts are run very effectively ensuring good cash flow and prompt reclaiming of monies from grants, VAT, or other schools. This judgement is supported by the internal auditor visits and ongoing support from IA FD Services.

Staffing costs are monitored closely and savings are made wherever possible. It is however important for all to understand that due to the nature of the students the Academy support staff levels are significantly higher than in a mainstream setting.

The Academy is always looking to gain value for money and all purchases are reviewed to ensure best value. In the current academic year the academy received funding to convert a LA maintained school into an academy and amalgamate into a Multi Academy Trust. This also involved closing two sites that the maintained school occupied and combining them into one new site in Hatfield. The new site in Hatfield had to undergo extensive renovations before it was fit for purpose.

The first phase of works were carried out by the Local Authority; with the responsibility for the second tranche of works being passed to Links Multi Academy Trust. This enabled smaller, local contractors to be involved in the works; lower the costs of the renovations due to smaller company overheads, whilst maintaining quality services and workmanship.

All of the internal fixtures and fittings were also sourced using the best value methodology; as a result the building and resources were completed allowing the school to open its doors to students as scheduled on 1st January 2020.

LINKS MULTI ACADEMY TRUST
(A company limited by guarantee)

GOVERNANCE STATEMENT (continued)
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2020

Since becoming a Multi Academy Trust the schools have been able to combine their buying power and negotiate multi-site discounts in telephones, signing in systems and photocopying services, whilst having the opportunity to upgrade and future proof the services currently received.

This approach to procurement is encouraged across the Multi Academy Trust; and staff are always striving to find good quality products for a reasonable price.

The Academy has taken advantage of the Crown Purchasing Consortium to acquire additional quotations for an ICT/internet project. This has assisted the Academy in self-regulation; and has provided a benchmark to compare quotations from the current Local Authority providers to confirm best value.

THE PURPOSE OF THE SYSTEM OF INTERNAL CONTROL

The system of internal control is designed to manage risk to a reasonable level rather than to eliminate all risk of failure to achieve policies, aims and objectives. It can, therefore, only provide reasonable and not absolute assurance of effectiveness. The system of internal control is based on an on-going process designed to identify and prioritise the risks to the achievement of Academy Trust policies, aims and objectives, to evaluate the likelihood of those risks being realised and the impact should they be realised, and to manage them efficiently, effectively and economically. The system of internal control has been in place in Links Multi Academy Trust for the period 1st September 2019 to 31 August 2020 and up to the date of approval of the annual report and financial statements.

CAPACITY TO HANDLE RISK

The Trustees Board has reviewed the key risks to which the Academy Trust is exposed together with the operating, financial and compliance controls that have been implemented to mitigate those risks. The Trustees Board is of the view that there is a formal on-going process for identifying, evaluating and managing the Academy Trust's significant risks that has been in place for the period 1 September 2019 to 31 August 2020 and up to the date of approval of the annual report and financial statements. This process is regularly reviewed by the Trustees Board.

THE RISK AND CONTROL FRAMEWORK

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

- comprehensive budgeting and monitoring systems with an annual budget and periodic financial reports which are reviewed and agreed by the Trustees Board.
- regular reviews by the finance and general purposes committee of reports which indicate financial performance against the forecasts and of major purchase plans, capital works and expenditure programmes.
- setting targets to measure financial and other performance.
- clearly defined purchasing (asset purchase or capital investment) guidelines.
- delegation of authority and segregation of duties.
- identification and management of risks.
- the Trustees Board meets at least 3 times per year, as specified in the Academies Handbook. In addition the financial responsibilities for the Trust are delegated to the Academy Resources and Audit Committee (ARAC) that also meet 4 times per year and feedback findings to the full Trustees Board.

LINKS MULTI ACADEMY TRUST
(A company limited by guarantee)

GOVERNANCE STATEMENT (continued)
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2020

The Trustees Board has considered the need for a specific internal audit function and has decided:

- to engage Macintyre Hudson as internal auditor/responsible officer for 2019/2020; a different internal auditor will be appointed for future years.

The internal auditor's role includes giving advice on financial matters and performing a range of checks on the academy trust's financial systems. In particular the checks carried out in the current period included:

- testing of payroll systems;
- testing of purchase systems;
- testing of control account bank reconciliations;
- testing of petty cash systems; and
- testing of staff joiners/leavers.

On a quarterly basis, the audit report is presented to the Trustees Board, through the Resources Committee on the operation of the systems of control and on the discharge of the Trustees Board' financial responsibilities.

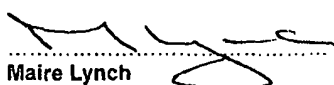
REVIEW OF EFFECTIVENESS

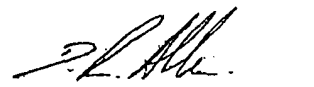
As accounting officer, the Executive Headteacher has responsibility for reviewing the effectiveness of the system of internal control. During the year in question the review has been informed by:

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

The accounting officer has been advised of the implications of the result of their review of the system of internal control by Academy Resources and Audit Committee and a plan to address weaknesses and ensure continuous improvement of the system is in place.

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


Maire Lynch
Chair of Trustees


David Allen
Executive Headteacher
Accounting Officer

Date: 17/12/20

Date:
17 December 2020

LINKS MULTI ACADEMY TRUST
(A company limited by guarantee)

STATEMENT ON REGULARITY, PROPRIETY AND COMPLIANCE

As accounting officer of Links Multi Academy Trust I have considered my responsibility to notify the academy board of Trustees and the Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA) of material irregularity, impropriety and non-compliance with terms and conditions of all funding received by the academy, under the funding agreement in place between the academy 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 board of Trustees are able to identify any material irregular or improper use of all funds by the academy, or material non-compliance with the terms and conditions of funding under the academy'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.



David Allen
Executive Headteacher
Accounting Officer

Date:

17 December 2020

LINKS MULTI ACADEMY TRUST
(A company limited by guarantee)

STATEMENT OF TRUSTEES' RESPONSIBILITIES
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2020

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

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


- select suitable accounting policies and then apply them consistently;
- observe the methods and principles of 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 and signed on its behalf by:


Maire Lynch
Chair of Trustees

Date: 17/12/20

LINKS MULTI ACADEMY TRUST
(A company limited by guarantee)

**INDEPENDENT AUDITORS' REPORT ON THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS TO THE MEMBERS OF LINKS
MULTI ACADEMY TRUST**

Opinion

We have audited the financial statements of Links Multi Academy Trust (the 'academy') for the year ended 31 August 2020 which comprise the Statement of financial activities, the Balance sheet, the Statement of cash flows and the related notes, including a summary of significant accounting policies. The financial reporting framework that has been applied in their preparation is applicable law, United Kingdom Accounting Standards (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice), including Financial Reporting Standard 102 'The Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland', the Charities SORP 2019 and the Academies Accounts Direction 2019 to 2020 issued by the Education and Skills Funding Agency.

In our opinion the financial statements:

- give a true and fair view of the state of the academy'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; and
- have been prepared in accordance with the requirements of the Companies Act 2006, the Charities SORP 2019 and the Academies Accounts Direction 2019 to 2020 issued by the Education and Skills Funding Agency.

Basis for opinion

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

Conclusions relating to going concern

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

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

Emphasis of matter

We draw your attention to note 13 in the financial statements, which indicates an uncertainty over the valuation of the leasehold land and buildings inherited on Links Hatfield's conversion to an Academy. Our opinion is not modified in respect of this matter.

LINKS MULTI ACADEMY TRUST
(A company limited by guarantee)

**INDEPENDENT AUDITORS' REPORT ON THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS TO THE MEMBERS OF LINKS
MULTI ACADEMY TRUST (CONTINUED)**

Other information

The Trustees are responsible for the other information. The other information comprises the information included in the Annual report, other than the financial statements and our Auditors' report thereon. Other information includes the Reference and administrative details, the Trustees' report including the Strategic report, and the Governance statement. Our opinion on the financial statements does not cover the other information and, except to the extent otherwise explicitly stated in our report, we do not express any form of assurance conclusion thereon.

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

We have nothing to report in this regard.

Opinion on other 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 Strategic report for the financial year for which the financial statements are prepared is consistent with the financial statements.
- the Trustees' report and the 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 our knowledge and understanding of the academy and its environment obtained in the course of the audit, we have not identified material misstatements in the Trustees' report including the 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 financial statements are not in agreement with the accounting records and returns; or
- certain disclosures of Trustees' remuneration specified by law are not made; or
- we have not received all the information and explanations we require for our audit.

LINKS MULTI ACADEMY TRUST
(A company limited by guarantee)

**INDEPENDENT AUDITORS' REPORT ON THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS TO THE MEMBERS OF LINKS
MULTI ACADEMY TRUST (CONTINUED)**

Responsibilities of trustees

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

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

Auditors' responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements

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

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

Use of our report

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



Brendan Sharkey FCA (Senior statutory auditor)

for and on behalf of

MHA MacIntyre Hudson

Chartered Accountants & Statutory Auditors

6th Floor

2 London Wall Place

London

EC2Y 5AU

Date: 07 January 2021

LINKS MULTI ACADEMY TRUST
(A company limited by guarantee)

**INDEPENDENT REPORTING ACCOUNTANT'S ASSURANCE REPORT ON REGULARITY TO LINKS
MULTI ACADEMY TRUST AND THE EDUCATION AND SKILLS FUNDING AGENCY**

In accordance with the terms of our engagement letter dated 03 September 2020 and further to the requirements of the Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA) as included in the Academies Accounts Direction 2019 to 2020, we have carried out an engagement to obtain limited assurance about whether the expenditure disbursed and income received by Links Multi Academy Trust during the year 1 September 2019 to 31 August 2020 have been applied to the purposes identified by Parliament and the financial transactions conform to the authorities which govern them.

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

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

The accounting officer is responsible, under the requirements of Links Multi Academy Trust's funding agreement with the Secretary of State for Education dated 31 January 2013 and the Academies Financial Handbook, extant from 1 September 2019, for ensuring that expenditure disbursed and income received is applied for the purposes intended by Parliament and the financial transactions conform to the authorities which govern them.

Our responsibilities for this engagement are established in the United Kingdom by our profession's ethical guidance and are to obtain limited assurance and report in accordance with our engagement letter and the requirements of the Academies Accounts Direction 2019 to 2020. We report to you whether anything has come to our attention in carrying out our work which suggests that in all material respects, expenditure disbursed and income received during the year 1 September 2019 to 31 August 2020 have not been applied to purposes intended by Parliament or that the financial transactions do not conform to the authorities which govern them.

LINKS MULTI ACADEMY TRUST
(A company limited by guarantee)

**INDEPENDENT REPORTING ACCOUNTANT'S ASSURANCE REPORT ON REGULARITY TO LINKS
MULTI ACADEMY TRUST AND THE EDUCATION & SKILLS FUNDING AGENCY (CONTINUED)**

Approach

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

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

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

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

The work undertaken to draw to our conclusion includes:

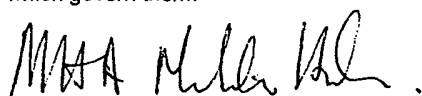
- reviewing the Minutes of the meetings of the Governing Body and other evidence made available to us, relevant to our consideration of regularity;
- a review of the objectives and activities of the academy, with reference to the income streams and other information available to us as auditors of the academy;
- testing of a sample of payroll payments to staff;
- testing of a sample of payments to suppliers and other third parties;
- testing of a sample of grants received and other income streams;
- evaluating the internal control procedures and reporting lines, and testing as appropriate and making appropriate enquires of the Accounting Officer; and
- consideration of governance issues.

LINKS MULTI ACADEMY TRUST
(A company limited by guarantee)

**INDEPENDENT REPORTING ACCOUNTANT'S ASSURANCE REPORT ON REGULARITY TO LINKS
MULTI ACADEMY TRUST AND THE EDUCATION & SKILLS FUNDING AGENCY (CONTINUED)**

Conclusion

In the course of our work, nothing has come to our attention which suggest in all material respects the expenditure disbursed and income received during the year 1 September 2019 to 31 August 2020 has not been applied to purposes intended by Parliament and the financial transactions do not conform to the authorities which govern them.



Reporting Accountant
MHA MacIntyre Hudson
Chartered Accountants & Statutory Auditors
6th Floor
2 London Wall Place
London
EC2Y 5AU

Date: 7 January 2021

LINKS MULTI ACADEMY TRUST
(A company limited by guarantee)

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

	Note	Unrestricted funds 2020 £	Restricted funds 2020 £	Restricted fixed asset funds 2020 £	Total funds 2020 £	Total funds 2019 £
Income from:						
Donations and capital grants:	2					
Inherited on conversion		325,485	(363,000)	3,246,000	3,208,485	-
Other donations and capital grants		-	-	9,856	9,856	337,824
Charitable activities	3	697	4,383,961	-	4,384,658	1,941,582
Investments	5	1,870	-	-	1,870	1,248
Total income		328,052	4,020,961	3,255,856	7,604,869	2,280,654
Expenditure on:						
Charitable activities	7	-	3,610,310	314,593	3,924,903	2,006,703
Total expenditure		-	3,610,310	314,593	3,924,903	2,006,703
Net income		328,052	410,651	2,941,263	3,679,966	273,951
Transfers between funds	16	(164,812)	(708,490)	873,302	-	-
Net movement in funds before other recognised gains/(losses)		163,240	(297,839)	3,814,565	3,679,966	273,951
Other recognised gains/(losses):						
Actuarial losses on defined benefit pension schemes	23	-	(185,000)	-	(185,000)	(329,000)
Net movement in funds		163,240	(482,839)	3,814,565	3,494,966	(55,049)

LINKS MULTI ACADEMY TRUST
(A company limited by guarantee)

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

	Unrestricted funds 2020 £	Restricted funds 2020 £	Restricted fixed asset funds 2020 £	Total funds 2020 £	Total funds 2019 £
Note					
Reconciliation of funds:					
Total funds brought forward	53,723	(589,596)	3,978,583	3,442,710	3,497,759
Net movement in funds	163,240	(482,839)	3,814,565	3,494,966	(55,049)
Total funds carried forward	216,963	(1,072,435)	7,793,148	6,937,676	3,442,710

The Statement of financial activities includes all gains and losses recognised in the year.

The notes on pages 31 to 56 form part of these financial statements.

LINKS MULTI ACADEMY TRUST
(A company limited by guarantee)
REGISTERED NUMBER: 08231006

BALANCE SHEET
AS AT 31 AUGUST 2020

	Note	2020 £	2019 £
Fixed assets			
Tangible assets	13	7,628,336	3,969,712
		<u>7,628,336</u>	<u>3,969,712</u>
Current assets			
Debtors	14	100,771	92,235
Cash at bank and in hand	20	1,274,010	848,176
		<u>1,374,781</u>	<u>940,411</u>
Creditors: amounts falling due within one year	15	(496,441)	(585,413)
Net current assets		<u>878,340</u>	<u>354,998</u>
Total assets less current liabilities		<u>8,506,676</u>	<u>4,324,710</u>
Net assets excluding pension liability		<u>8,506,676</u>	<u>4,324,710</u>
Defined benefit pension scheme liability	23	(1,569,000)	(882,000)
Total net assets		<u><u>6,937,676</u></u>	<u><u>3,442,710</u></u>


LINKS MULTI ACADEMY TRUST
(A company limited by guarantee)

BALANCE SHEET (CONTINUED)
AS AT 31 AUGUST 2020

	Note	2020 £	2019 £
Funds of the academy			
Restricted income funds:			
Restricted fixed asset funds	16	7,793,148	3,978,583
Restricted income funds	16	496,565	292,404
		<hr/>	<hr/>
Restricted funds excluding pension asset	16	8,289,713	4,270,987
Pension reserve	16	(1,569,000)	(882,000)
		<hr/>	<hr/>
Total restricted funds	16	6,720,713	3,388,987
Unrestricted income funds	16	216,963	53,723
		<hr/>	<hr/>
Total funds		6,937,676	3,442,710
		<hr/>	<hr/>

The financial statements on pages 26 to 56 were approved and authorised for issue by the Trustees and are signed on their behalf, by:


Maire Lynch
Chair of Trustees


David Allen
Executive Headteacher
Accounting Officer

Date: 20 December 2020

The notes on pages 31 to 56 form part of these financial statements.

LINKS MULTI ACADEMY TRUST
(A company limited by guarantee)

STATEMENT OF CASH FLOWS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2020

	Note	2020 £	2019 £
Cash flows from operating activities			
Net cash provided by operating activities	18	1,141,325	606,734
Cash flows from Investing activities	19	(715,491)	(73,246)
Change in cash and cash equivalents in the year		425,834	533,488
Cash and cash equivalents at the beginning of the year		848,176	314,688
Cash and cash equivalents at the end of the year	20, 21	<u>1,274,010</u>	<u>848,176</u>

The notes on pages 31 to 56 form part of these financial statements

LINKS MULTI ACADEMY TRUST
(A company limited by guarantee)

**NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2020**

1. Accounting policies

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

1.1 Basis of preparation of financial statements

The financial statements of the academy, which is a public benefit entity under FRS 102, have been prepared under the historic 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.

Links Multi Academy Trust meets the definition of a public benefit entity under FRS 102.

Links Multi Academy Trust is a company limited by guarantee incorporated in England and Wales. The address of the registered office, principal place of operation and registered number are detailed on page 1. The nature of the Academy Trust's operations and principal activity are detailed in the Trustees Report.

The financial statements are prepared in sterling, which is the functional currency of the Academy Trust, rounded to the nearest pound.

1.2 Going concern

The Trustees have assessed the use of going concern and have considered possible events or conditions that might cast significant doubt on the ability of the Trust to continue as a going concern including the impact of COVID-19. The Trustees have made this assessment for a period of at least one year from the date of the approval of these financial statements. The Trustees have concluded that there is a reasonable expectation 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. The Trust therefore continues to adopt the going concern basis in preparing these financial statements.

LINKS MULTI ACADEMY TRUST
(A company limited by guarantee)

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2020

1. Accounting policies (continued)

1.3 Income

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

• **Grants**

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

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

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

• **Donations**

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

• **Other Income**

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

• **Transfer on conversion**

Where assets and liabilities are received by the academy on conversion to an academy, the transferred 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 academy. An equal amount of income is recognised as a transfer on conversion within 'Income from Donations and Capital Grants' to the net assets received.

1.4 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.

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**NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2020**

1. Accounting policies (continued)

1.4 Expenditure (continued)

- **Charitable activities**

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

All resources expended are inclusive of irrecoverable VAT.

1.5 Interest receivable

Interest on funds held on deposit is included when receivable and the amount can be measured reliably by the academy; this is normally upon notification of the interest paid or payable by the institution with whom the funds are deposited.

1.6 Taxation

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

Accordingly, the academy 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.

1.7 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.

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NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2020

1. Accounting policies (continued)

1.7 Tangible fixed assets (continued)

Depreciation is provided on all tangible fixed assets, at rates calculated to write off the cost of these assets, less their estimated residual value, over their expected useful lives on the following bases:

Leasehold property - land	- Over the length of the lease (125 years)
Leasehold property - buildings	- 2% straight line
Leasehold improvements	- 10% straight line
Plant and machinery	- 20% - 33.3% reducing balance
Computer equipment	- 25% straight line
Fixtures and fittings	- 20% straight line

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

1.8 Debtors

Trade and other debtors are recognised at the settlement amount after any trade discount offered. Prepayments are valued at the amount prepaid net of any trade discounts due.

1.9 Cash at bank and in hand

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

1.10 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 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.

1.11 Financial instruments

The academy only holds basic financial instruments as defined in FRS 102. The financial assets and financial liabilities of the academy and their measurement bases 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 14. Prepayments are not financial instruments.

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

Financial liabilities - trade creditors, accruals and other creditors are financial instruments, and are measured at amortised cost as detailed in note 15. 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.

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NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2020

1. Accounting policies (continued)

1.12 Operating leases

Rentals paid under operating leases are charged to the Statement of financial activities on a straight line basis over the lease term.

1.13 Pensions

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

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

The LGPS is a funded multi-employer scheme and the assets are held separately from those of the academy 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 academy at the discretion of the Trustees.

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

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

Investment income, gains and losses are allocated to the appropriate fund.

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NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2020

1. Accounting policies (continued)

1.15 Critical accounting estimates and areas of judgment

Estimates and judgments 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 academy 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 or income for pensions include the discount rate. Any changes in these assumptions, which are disclosed in note 23, will impact the carrying amount of the pension liability. Furthermore a roll forward approach which projects results from the latest full actuarial valuation performed at 31 March 2016 has been used by the actuary in valuing the pensions liability at 31 August 2020. Any differences between the figures derived from the roll forward approach and a full actuarial valuation would impact on the carrying amount of the pension liability.

Critical areas of judgment:

The Trustees have reviewed the asset lives and associated residual values of all fixed asset classes, and have concluded that the asset lives and residual values are appropriate.

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NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2020

2. Income from donations and capital grants

	Unrestricted funds 2020 £	Restricted funds 2020 £	Restricted fixed asset funds 2020 £	Total funds 2020 £	Total funds 2019 £
Funds inherited on conversion of Links Hatfield	325,485	(363,000)	3,246,000	3,208,485	-
Devolved formula capital & primary support base	-	-	9,856	9,856	337,824
Total 2020	325,485	(363,000)	3,255,856	3,218,341	337,824
Total 2019	-	10,000	327,824	337,824	

3. Income from charitable activities

	Unrestricted funds 2020 £	Restricted funds 2020 £	Total funds 2020 £	Total funds 2019 £
Educational activities	697	4,172,382	4,173,079	1,788,075
AWPU income	-	211,579	211,579	153,507
Total 2020	697	4,383,961	4,384,658	1,941,582
Total 2019	14,480	1,927,102	1,941,582	

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NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2020

4. Funding for the Academy's educational operations

	Unrestricted funds 2020 £	Restricted funds 2020 £	Total funds 2020 £	Total funds 2019 £
DfE/ESFA grants				
General Annual Grant (GAG)	-	894,926	894,926	412,937
Pupil premium	-	45,313	45,313	9,397
Other DfE/ESFA grants	-	102,894	102,894	7,106
	-	1,043,133	1,043,133	429,440
Other government grants				
SLA funding	-	2,543,090	2,543,090	1,157,850
Other government grants	-	560,990	560,990	186,305
	-	3,104,080	3,104,080	1,344,155
Other funding				
Other income	697	25,169	25,866	14,480
	697	25,169	25,866	14,480
Total 2020	697	4,172,382	4,173,079	1,788,075
Total 2019	14,480	1,773,595	1,788,075	

There are no unfulfilled conditions or other contingencies attached to the government grants above.

5. Investment income

	Unrestricted funds 2020 £	Total funds 2020 £	Total funds 2019 £
Interest receivable	1,870	1,870	1,248
Total 2019	1,248	1,248	

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**NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2020**

6. Expenditure

	Staff Costs 2020 £	Premises 2020 £	Other 2020 £	Total 2020 £	Total 2019 £
Direct costs	1,898,982	-	89,267	1,988,249	935,717
Support costs	986,000	448,874	501,780	1,936,654	1,070,986
Total 2020	2,884,982	448,874	591,047	3,924,903	2,006,703
Total 2019	1,457,150	263,475	286,078	2,006,703	

In 2020, of the total expenditure, £Nil (2019 - £Nil) was from unrestricted funds, £314,593 (2019 - £224,714) was from restricted fixed asset funds and £3,610,310 (2019 - £1,781,989) was from restricted funds.

7. Charitable activities

	Direct costs 2020 £	Support costs 2020 £	Total funds 2020 £	Total funds 2019 £
Educational operations	1,988,249	1,936,654	3,924,903	2,006,703
Total 2019	935,717	1,070,986	2,006,703	

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NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2020

7. Charitable activities (continued)

Analysis of support costs

	Educational operations 2020 £	Total funds 2020 £	Total funds 2019 £
Staff costs	986,000	986,000	573,595
Premises maintenance costs	131,777	131,777	38,762
Heat and light	41,824	41,824	16,649
Cleaning and caretaking	59,004	59,004	16,648
Rent and rates	13,682	13,682	4,587
Catering costs	10,930	10,930	2,476
Professional fees	90,084	90,084	40,346
Technology costs	66,582	66,582	41,944
Insurance	8,566	8,566	21,024
Printing, postage and stationary	26,839	26,839	18,606
Other support costs	181,882	181,882	69,821
Governance costs	4,891	4,891	1,815
Depreciation	314,593	314,593	224,713
Total 2020	1,936,654	1,936,654	1,070,986
Total 2019	1,070,986	1,070,986	

8. Net Income

Net income for the year includes:

	2020 £	2019 £
Operating lease rentals	5,046	11,628
Depreciation of tangible fixed assets	314,593	224,801
Fees paid to auditors for:		
- audit	10,250	7,000
- other services	4,350	5,625

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**NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2020**

9. Staff

a. Staff costs

Staff costs during the year were as follows:

	2020 £	2019 £
Wages and salaries	1,839,376	1,040,223
Social security costs	181,675	98,178
Pension costs	534,800	245,917
	<u>2,555,851</u>	<u>1,384,318</u>
Supply teacher costs	329,131	72,832
	<u>2,884,982</u>	<u>1,457,150</u>

b. Staff numbers

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

	2020 No.	2019 No.
Teachers	24	12
Administration and support	32	23
Management	7	5
	<u>63</u>	<u>40</u>

c. Higher paid staff

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

	2020 No.	2019 No.
In the band £60,001 - £70,000	1	2
In the band £70,001 - £80,000	2	-
In the band £90,001 - £100,000	1	1
	<u>4</u>	<u>3</u>

All of the above employees (2019 - 3) participated in the Teachers' Pension Scheme. During the year ended 31 August 2020, pension contributions for these staff amounted to £83,799 (2019 - £37,203).

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NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2020

9. Staff (continued)

d. Key management personnel

The key management personnel of the academy comprise the Trustees and the senior management team as listed on page 1. The total amount of employee benefits (including employer pension contributions and employer national insurance contributions) received by key management personnel for their services to the academy was £614,603 (2019 - £303,015).

10. Central services

No central services were provided by the academy to its academies during the year and no central charges arose.

11. Trustees' remuneration and expenses

One or more Trustees has been paid remuneration or has received other benefits from an employment with the academy. The principal and other staff Trustees only receive remuneration in respect of services they provide undertaking the roles of principal and staff members under their contracts of employment. The value of Trustees' remuneration and other benefits was as follows:

		2020	2019
		£	£
D Allen, Headteacher	Remuneration	95,000 - 100,000	90,000 - 95,000
	Pension contributions paid	20,000 - 25,000	10,000 - 15,000
S Abraham (resigned 1 October 2019)	Remuneration	0 - 5,000	25,000 - 30,000
	Pension contributions paid	0 - 5,000	0 - 5,000

During the year ended 31 August 2020, no Trustee expenses have been incurred (2019 - £NIL).

12. Trustees' and Officers' insurance

The Academy Trust opted into the Department for Education's risk protection arrangement (RPA), in the current year, an alternative to insurance where the UK government cover losses that arise. This scheme protects Trustees' and officers from claims arising from negligent acts, errors or omissions occurring whilst on Academy business, and provides unlimited cover (2019 - £5,000,000 cover, non RPA). It is not possible to quantify the Trustees and Officers indemnity element from the overall cost of the RPA scheme. The cost of this insurance is included in the total insurance cost.

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NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2020

13. Tangible fixed assets

	Leasehold property £	Leasehold improvements £	Fixtures & fittings £	Plant & machinery £	Computer equipment £	Total £
Cost or valuation						
At 1 September 2019	3,230,751	1,449,624	71,725	123,399	145,622	5,021,121
Additions	-	558,717	36,064	31,312	101,124	727,217
On conversion to Academy Trust	3,246,000	-	-	-	-	3,246,000
At 31 August 2020	6,476,751	2,008,341	107,789	154,711	246,746	8,994,338
Depreciation						
At 1 September 2019	335,319	482,693	46,464	80,726	106,207	1,051,409
Charge for the year	94,870	155,043	13,512	10,734	40,434	314,593
At 31 August 2020	430,189	637,736	59,976	91,460	146,641	1,366,002
Net book value						
At 31 August 2020	6,046,562	1,370,605	47,813	63,251	100,105	7,628,336
At 31 August 2019	2,895,432	966,931	25,261	42,673	39,415	3,969,712

The brought forward leasehold property was inherited on conversion to Academy status and was valued at 31 March 2013 using the Depreciated Replacement Cost methodology. The Trustees consider that this value remains appropriate at 31 August 2020.

During the year, the Trust inherited the leasehold property of Links Hatfield on conversion. The Trustees have valued the leasehold property at £3,246,000. The Trustees have considered the valuation of their site in St Albans, surrounding building valuations and other items in coming to the final valuation. No professional valuation has been undertaken on the leasehold property and the valuation is therefore subject to material uncertainty. A professional valuation will be carried out in 2021.

At the balance sheet date, leasehold land was valued at £2,408,368 (2019 - £1,111,628).

The leasehold properties are owned by Hertfordshire County Council. The Academy Trust has a 125 year lease at a peppercorn rent.

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NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
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14. Debtors

	2020 £	2019 £
Due within one year		
Trade debtors	5,708	16,858
Other debtors	-	2,648
Prepayments and accrued income	17,336	17,541
VAT recoverable	77,727	55,188
	<u>100,771</u>	<u>92,235</u>

15. Creditors: Amounts falling due within one year

	2020 £	2019 £
Trade creditors	206,184	173,679
Other taxation and social security	45,742	22,009
Other creditors	95,153	63,993
Accruals and deferred income	149,362	325,732
	<u>496,441</u>	<u>585,413</u>

	2020 £	2019 £
Deferred income		
Deferred income at 1 September 2019	197,973	-
Resources deferred during the year	-	197,973
Amounts released from previous periods	(197,973)	-
	<u>-</u>	<u>197,973</u>

Deferred income held at 31 August 2020 was £Nil (2019 - £197,973 which related to grant funding received in advance).

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**NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
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16. Statement of funds

	Balance at 1 September 2019 £	Income £	Expenditure £	Transfers in/out £	Gains/ (Losses) £	Balance at 31 August 2020 £
Unrestricted funds						
General funds	53,723	328,052	-	(164,812)	-	216,963
Restricted general funds						
General Annual Grant (GAG)	144,411	894,926	(749,699)	-	-	289,638
Other DfE/ESFA grants	10,718	409,197	(115,056)	(121,578)	-	183,281
Other restricted funds	137,275	3,079,838	(2,606,555)	(586,912)	-	23,646
Pension reserve	(882,000)	(363,000)	(139,000)	-	(185,000)	(1,569,000)
	<u>(589,596)</u>	<u>4,020,961</u>	<u>(3,610,310)</u>	<u>(708,490)</u>	<u>(185,000)</u>	<u>(1,072,435)</u>
Restricted fixed asset funds						
Fixed Asset Fund	3,969,712	3,255,856	(314,593)	717,361	-	7,628,336
Unspent capital	8,871	-	-	155,941	-	164,812
	<u>3,978,583</u>	<u>3,255,856</u>	<u>(314,593)</u>	<u>873,302</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>7,793,148</u>
Total Restricted funds	<u>3,388,987</u>	<u>7,276,817</u>	<u>(3,924,903)</u>	<u>164,812</u>	<u>(185,000)</u>	<u>6,720,713</u>
Total funds	<u>3,442,710</u>	<u>7,604,869</u>	<u>(3,924,903)</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>(185,000)</u>	<u>6,937,676</u>

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NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2020

16. Statement of funds (continued)

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

Unrestricted funds are to be used towards meeting any of the charitable objectives of the Academy Trust at the discretion of the Trustees.

The General Annual Grant (GAG) must be used for the normal running costs of the Academy. Under the funding agreement with the Secretary of State, the Academy Trust was not subject to limits on the amount of GAG that it could carry forward at 31 August 2020.

The remaining restricted funds relate to various school and educational activities which are not funded by the General Annual Grant. This includes pupil premium and other Local Authority funding for which income received is used to cover costs associated with these activities.

The defined benefit pension reserve relates to the pension deficit arising on the LGPS pension scheme. The fund is in deficit, but given the nature of the liability this is not payable immediately and plans are in place to meet the deficit.

The fixed asset fund recognises the tangible assets held by the Academy Trust and is equivalent to the net book value of tangible fixed assets. Depreciation is allocated to this fund.

The transfer between the restricted funds and restricted fixed asset funds of £708,490 (2019 - £83,364) represents restricted revenue funds spent on fixed asset additions in the year.

The funds of the Academy Trust at 31 August 2020 include £164,812 of funding allocated by the Trustees for future capital projects which have been delayed due to the implications brought about by Covid-19.

Total funds analysis by academy

Fund balances at 31 August 2020 were allocated as follows:

	2020 £	2019 £
Links Hatfield	379,069	-
Links St Albans	334,459	346,127
	<hr/>	<hr/>
Total before fixed asset funds and pension reserve	713,528	346,127
Restricted fixed asset fund	7,793,148	3,978,583
Pension reserve	(1,569,000)	(882,000)
	<hr/>	<hr/>
Total	6,937,676	3,442,710
	<hr/>	<hr/>

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NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2020

16. Statement of funds (continued)

Total cost analysis by academy

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

	Teaching staff costs £	Other staff costs £	Other costs excluding depreciation £	Total 2020 £	Total 2019 £
Links Hatfield	777,233	356,586	318,899	1,452,718	-
Links St Albans	1,112,606	638,557	406,429	2,157,592	1,781,990
Academy	1,889,839	995,143	725,328	3,610,310	1,781,990

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NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
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16. Statement of funds (continued)

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

	Balance at 1 September 2018 £	Income £	Expenditure £	Transfers in/out £	Gains/ (Losses) £	Balance at 31 August 2019 £
Unrestricted funds						
General Funds	37,995	15,728	-	-	-	53,723
Restricted funds						
General Annual Grant (GAG)	108,736	412,936	(377,261)	-	-	144,411
Other DfE/ESFA grants	10,718	16,504	(16,504)	-	-	10,718
Other restricted funds	44,201	1,507,662	(1,331,224)	(83,364)	-	137,275
Pension reserve	(496,000)	-	(57,000)	-	(329,000)	(882,000)
	<u>(332,345)</u>	<u>1,937,102</u>	<u>(1,781,989)</u>	<u>(83,364)</u>	<u>(329,000)</u>	<u>(589,596)</u>
Restricted fixed asset funds						
Fixed Asset Funds	3,792,109	318,953	(224,714)	83,364	-	3,969,712
Unspent CIF funding	-	8,871	-	-	-	8,871
	<u>3,792,109</u>	<u>327,824</u>	<u>(224,714)</u>	<u>83,364</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>3,978,583</u>
Total Restricted funds	<u>3,459,764</u>	<u>2,264,926</u>	<u>(2,006,703)</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>(329,000)</u>	<u>3,388,987</u>
Total funds	<u>3,497,759</u>	<u>2,280,654</u>	<u>(2,006,703)</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>(329,000)</u>	<u>3,442,710</u>

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**NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
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17. Analysis of net assets between funds

Analysis of net assets between funds - current period

	Unrestricted funds 2020 £	Restricted funds 2020 £	Restricted fixed asset funds 2020 £	Total funds 2020 £
Tangible fixed assets	(164,812)	-	7,793,148	7,628,336
Current assets	381,775	993,006	-	1,374,781
Creditors due within one year	-	(496,441)	-	(496,441)
Pension scheme liability	-	(1,569,000)	-	(1,569,000)
Total	216,963	(1,072,435)	7,793,148	6,937,676

Analysis of net assets between funds - prior period

	Unrestricted funds 2019 £	Restricted funds 2019 £	Restricted fixed asset funds 2019 £	Total funds 2019 £
Tangible fixed assets	-	-	3,969,712	3,969,712
Current assets	53,723	877,817	8,871	940,411
Creditors due within one year	-	(585,413)	-	(585,413)
Pension scheme liability	-	(882,000)	-	(882,000)
Total	53,723	(589,596)	3,978,583	3,442,710

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NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
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18. Reconciliation of net income to net cash flow from operating activities

	2020 £	2019 £
Net income for the period (as per Statement of financial activities)	3,679,966	273,951
Adjustments for:		
Depreciation charges	314,593	224,801
Interest receivable	(1,870)	(1,248)
Profit on the disposal of fixed assets	-	(86)
(Increase)/decrease in debtors	(8,536)	(61,385)
Increase/(decrease) in creditors	(88,972)	441,525
Capital grants from DfE and other capital income	(9,856)	(327,824)
FRS102 pension adjustments	139,000	57,000
Transfer of fixed assets and pension liabilities from local authority on conversion	(2,883,000)	-
Net cash provided by operating activities	1,141,325	606,734

19. Cash flows from investing activities

	2020 £	2019 £
Interest receivable	1,870	1,248
Proceeds from the sale of tangible fixed assets	-	708
Purchase of tangible fixed assets	(727,217)	(403,026)
Capital grants	9,856	327,824
Net cash used in investing activities	(715,491)	(73,246)

20. Analysis of cash and cash equivalents

	2020 £	2019 £
Cash at bank and in hand	1,274,010	848,176
Total cash and cash equivalents	1,274,010	848,176

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**NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
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21. Analysis of changes in net debt

	At 1 September 2019 £	Cash flows £	At 31 August 2020 £
Cash at bank and in hand	848,176	425,834	1,274,010
	<u>848,176</u>	<u>425,834</u>	<u>1,274,010</u>

22. Capital commitments

	2020 £	2019 £
Contracted for but not provided in these financial statements		
Contracted for but not provided in these financial statements	-	115,900
	<u>-</u>	<u>115,900</u>

Funds of £Nil were committed at the year end.

In the prior year, funds were committed to in relation to academisation £70,900, kitchen improvements £32,000, website update £8,000 and building entry £5,000.

23. Pension commitments

The academy'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 Hertfordshire County Council. Both are multi-employer defined benefit schemes.

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

Contributions amounting to £47,215 were payable to the schemes at 31 August 2020 (2019 - £21,157) and are included within creditors.

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. All teachers have the option to opt-out of the TPS following enrolment.

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

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23. Pension commitments (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 year amounted to £267,000 (2019 - £99,000).

A copy of the valuation report and supporting documentation is on the Teachers' Pensions website (<https://www.teacherspensions.co.uk/news/employers/2019/04/teachers-pensions-valuation-report.aspx>).

Under the definitions set out in FRS 102, the TPS is an unfunded multi-employer pension scheme. The academy has accounted for its contributions to the scheme as if it were a defined contribution scheme. The academy 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 £160,000 (2019 - £111,000), of which employer's contributions totalled £129,000 (2019 - £90,000) and employees' contributions totalled £ 31,000 (2019 - £21,000). The agreed contribution rates for future years are 22.7 per cent for employers and 5.5 - 12.5 per cent for employees.

As described in note 16 the LGPS obligation relates to the employees of the academy, who were the employees transferred as part of the conversion from the maintained school and new employees who were eligible to, and did, join the Scheme in the year. The obligation in respect of employees who transferred on conversion represents their cumulative service at both the predecessor school and the academy at the balance sheet date.

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.

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**NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
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23. Pension commitments (continued)

Principal actuarial assumptions

	2020 %	2019 %
Rate of increase in salaries	2.60%	2.40%
Discount rate for scheme liabilities	1.70%	1.90%
Inflation assumption (CPI)	2.20%	2.30%

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

	2020 Years	2019 Years
<i>Retiring today</i>		
Males	21.9	21.5
Females	24.1	23.7
<i>Retiring in 20 years</i>		
Males	22.8	22.3
Females	25.5	25.0

Sensitivity analysis

	2020 £000	2019 £000
Discount rate -0.5%	523	310
Pension Increase Rate +0.5%	477	286
Salary Increase Rate +0.5%	38	21

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

	2020 £	2019 £
Equities	1,223,000	606,000
Corporate bonds	808,000	482,000
Property	208,000	99,000
Cash and other liquid assets	69,000	50,000
Total market value of assets	2,308,000	1,237,000

The actual return on scheme assets from 1 October 2019 to 30 June 2020 was 3.5% (2019 - £8.6%).

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23. Pension commitments (continued)

The amounts recognised in the Statement of financial activities are as follows:

	2020 £	2019 £
Current and past service cost	(243,000)	(133,000)
Interest income	31,000	31,000
Interest cost	(56,000)	(45,000)
Total amount recognised in the Statement of financial activities	(268,000)	(147,000)

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

	2020 £	2019 £
At 1 September	2,119,000	1,534,000
Transferred in on conversion to Academy	739,000	-
Current service cost	243,000	133,000
Interest cost	56,000	45,000
Employee contributions	31,000	21,000
Actuarial losses/(gains)	700,000	391,000
Benefits paid	(11,000)	(5,000)
At 31 August	3,877,000	2,119,000

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

	2020 £	2019 £
At 1 September	1,237,000	1,038,000
Transferred in on conversion to Academy	376,000	-
Employer contributions	129,000	90,000
Actuarial gains/(losses)	515,000	62,000
Employee contributions	31,000	21,000
Benefits paid	(11,000)	(5,000)
Interest income	31,000	31,000
At 31 August	2,308,000	1,237,000

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24. Operating lease commitments

At 31 August 2020 the academy had commitments to make future minimum lease payments under non-cancellable operating leases as follows:

	2020 £	2019 £
Not later than 1 year	5,800	5,046
Later than 1 year and not later than 5 years	1,145	-
	<u>6,945</u>	<u>5,046</u>

25. Company limited by guarantee

The Academy Trust is a company limited by guarantee and does not have share capital.

26. 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.

27. Related party transactions

Owing to the nature of the academy and the composition of the board of trustees being drawn from local public and private sector organisations, transactions may take place with organisations in which the trustees have an interest. All transactions involving such organisations are conducted in accordance with the requirements of the Academies Financial Handbook, including notifying the ESFA of all transactions made on or after 1 April 2019 and obtaining their approval where required, and with the academy's financial regulations and normal procurement procedures relating to connected and related party transactions.

No further related party transactions took place in the period, other than the transactions disclosed in note 11.

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NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
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28. Transfer of existing academies into the academy

Links Hatfield

	Value reported by transferring trust £	Transfer in recognised £
Tangible fixed assets		
Leasehold property	3,246,000	3,246,000
Current assets		
Other assets	325,485	325,485
Liabilities		
Pensions		
Pensions - pension scheme assets	376,000	376,000
Pensions - pension scheme liabilities	(739,000)	(739,000)
Net assets	<u>3,208,485</u>	<u>3,208,485</u>