

Company Registration Number: 09308398 (England & Wales)

AD ASTRA ACADEMY TRUST
(A Company Limited by Guarantee)

ANNUAL REPORT AND FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2022

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AD ASTRA ACADEMY TRUST
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REFERENCE AND ADMINISTRATIVE DETAILS

Members

L Ashurst
G Baldwin
S Prandle
C J Simmons
A Steel

Trustees

C J Simmons, Chair of Trustees
R Priestman, Vice Chair of Trustees
R C Broad
A A Brown OBE, Chief Executive Officer and Accounting Officer
G Brown
Father G Buttery (resigned 16 November 2021)
J G Maddison
M Tilling (appointed 24 September 2021)
A Wilson

Company registered number

09308398

Company name

Ad Astra Academy Trust

Principal and registered office

Hub Two
The Innovation Centre Venture Court
Queens Meadow Business Park
Hartlepool
TS25 5TG

Senior Leadership Team

A A Brown OBE, Chief Executive Officer
H Jackson, Head of School Improvement
P Kermotschuk, Deputy Lead for School Improvement (resigned 24 April 2022)
P Wiley, School Improvement Lead (appointed 25 April 2022)
S Lister, Chief Operating Officer
A Degnan, Finance Manager
M Ingram, HR Manager
J Dunning, Estates Manager
C Haylock, Executive Headteacher, (Ayresome Primary School & West View Primary School)
A Hall, Headteacher (West Park Primary School)
S Greenan, Headteacher (Brougham Primary School)
L Todd, Headteacher (Rosebrook Primary School)
C Twiby, Headteacher (Crooksbarrow Primary School)
L Furness, Acting Headteacher (West View Primary School)
L Walker, Headteacher (Barnard Grove Primary School)
J Sutton, Headteacher (Sunnyside Primary School) from 1 April 2022
H Durnion, Deputy Headteacher (West Park Primary School)
G Kelly, Deputy Headteacher (Brougham Primary School)

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REFERENCE AND ADMINISTRATIVE DETAILS (CONTINUED)
FOR THE PERIOD ENDED 31 AUGUST 2022

F Nicholson, Deputy Headteacher (Rosebrook Primary School)
C Hoffman, Deputy Headteacher (Crooksbar Primary School)
A Goring, Deputy Headteacher (Ayresome Primary School)
N Wilkinson, Deputy Headteacher (Crooksbar Primary School)
J Cowie, Deputy Headteacher (Barnard Grove Primary School)
C Hall, Deputy Headteacher (Sunnyside Primary School) from 1 April 2022
N Boagey, Assistant Headteacher (West View Primary School)
S McIntosh, Assistant Headteacher (West View Primary School)
H Smith, Assistant Headteacher (Rosebrook Primary School)
E Cooper, Assistant Headteacher (Ayresome Primary School)
E Lavelle, Assistant Headteacher (Ayresome Primary School)
L Wesson, Assistant Headteacher (Barnard Grove Primary School)
D Kelly, Assistant Headteacher (Sunnyside Primary School) from 1 April 2022
R Rathmell, Assistant Headteacher (Sunnyside Primary School) from 1 April 2022
C Tyreman, Lead Practitioner (Brougham Primary School)

Independent auditors

Clive Owen LLP
Chartered Accountants & Statutory Auditors
140 Coniscliffe Road
Darlington
County Durham
DL3 7RT

Bankers

Lloyds Bank LLP
128-132 York Road
Hartlepool
TS26 9DD

Solicitors

Ward Hadaway
102 Quayside
Newcastle upon Tyne
NE1 3DX

AD ASTRA ACADEMY TRUST
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TRUSTEES' REPORT
FOR THE PERIOD ENDED 31 AUGUST 2022

The Trustees present their annual report together with the financial statements and auditors' report of the charitable company for the period 1 September 2021 to 31 August 2022. The annual report serves the purposes of both a Trustees' report and a directors' report and strategic report under company law.

The Trust operates 8 primary academies in Hartlepool, Stockton and Middlesbrough. Its academies have a combined pupil capacity (reception to year six) of 3,042 including three SEN resource bases with a combined capacity of 71 places at Sunnyside Academy; a 30-place visual impaired unit, 16-place hearing impaired unit and 25-place moderate learning difficulty unit and had a roll of 2,863 in the school census on 19 May 2022. Pupils are admitted into each academy based upon the approved admissions criteria set by the relevant Local Authority.

Structure, governance and management

Constitution

The Trust is a company limited by guarantee and an exempt charity. The charitable company's Memorandum and Articles of Association are the primary governing documents of the Trust. The Trustees of Ad Astra Academy Trust are also the directors of the charitable company for the purposes of company law. The charitable company is known as Ad Astra Academy Trust.

Details of the Trustees who served during the period, and to the date these accounts are approved are included in the Reference and administrative details on page 1.

Members' liability

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

Trustees' indemnities

The Trust is a member of the Risk Protection Arrangements (RPA) to protect Trustees from claims arising against negligent acts, errors or omissions occurring whilst on academy business. Further details are provided in note 13.

Method of recruitment and appointment or election of Trustees

The Members appoint a minimum of six Trustees. The term of office for any Trustee shall be four years, save that this time limit shall not apply to the Chief Executive Officer or any post held ex officio. Subject to remaining eligible to be a particular type of Trustee, any Trustee may be re-appointed or re-elected. The Trustees are able to consider appointing additional directors under the Articles should a vacancy exist, and their skills and expertise be deemed beneficial to Trust operations. An application and due diligence process will be undertaken to ensure any future board members share the ethos and values of the Trust and to ensure that their appointment will bring added value to the Trust Board.

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TRUSTEES' REPORT (CONTINUED)
FOR THE PERIOD ENDED 31 AUGUST 2022

Structure, governance and management (continued)

Policies adopted for the induction and training of Trustees

The training and induction provided for new Trustees depends on their existing experience. Where necessary induction and training is provided on charity, educational, legal and financial matters. All new Trustees are usually offered a tour of each academy and the chance to meet with staff and pupils, although during the period, these visits have been limited due to the COVID risk. All Trustees are provided with copies of policies, procedures, minutes, accounts, budgets, plans and other documents that they will need to undertake their role as Trustees. Induction tends to be done informally and is tailored specifically to the individual. During this period all Trustees were given the opportunity to attend the inaugural 'Essential Trustee' training delivered virtually by the Confederation of School Trusts, and which covered a range of topics such as finance, safeguarding and school improvement. This will be considered for any new Trustee joining the Board in the future.

Organisational structure

During the year the Trust operated a unified leadership and governance structure consisting of 6 levels: the Trust Board, two Trust Committees (Challenge and Resources), the Trust Executive Leadership Team, the Headteacher Board, the Local Academy Committee and the Senior Leadership Team within each school across the Trust. The aim of this structure is to devolve responsibility and encourage involvement in decision making at all levels. The decision-making authority of each layer is detailed in the Trust Scheme of Delegation.

The Trustees

The Trust Board is responsible for the strategic direction of the Trust and ensuring high standards of corporate governance are maintained at all levels. It exercises its functions and powers by addressing such matters as:

- Developing, implementing, and monitoring plans articulating the strategic vision of the Trust from both an educational and business perspective and ensuring these are financially viable.
- To monitor the effectiveness of the support arrangements to ensure satisfaction with the level of service and that they represent value for money.
- Being responsible for school improvement performance of schools within the Trust with appropriate rigor and challenge to ensure high standards of achievement and attainment for all children.
- Appointing senior members of staff with the necessary skills and attributes and undertaking rigorous performance management of such staff to ensure they deliver an outstanding service to the Trust.
- To approve the Trust budget and ensure financial accountability to the Department for Education for all schools within the Trust.
- To monitor statutory educational and business compliance requirements.

The Trust Board has two committees; Challenge and Resources, which monitor these specific areas of Trust business in more depth. These committees report back to the Trust Board to ensure all Trustees are well informed.

Local Academy Committees

The Local Academy Committee is the local governance layer and is responsible for ensuring the implementation of the strategic direction of the Trust within their respective academy. It exercises its functions and powers by addressing such matters as:

- Monitor the progress of the attainment and progress of children within the academy with rigour and challenge.
- Being accountable for standards of teaching and learning, celebrating success and taking action at a local level to address any areas of underperformance.
- Approving and monitoring the self-evaluation form and school development plan, ensuring these are appropriately resourced.

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TRUSTEES' REPORT (CONTINUED)
FOR THE PERIOD ENDED 31 AUGUST 2022

Structure, governance and management (continued)

- Ensuring the curriculum diet of the academy is broad and balanced and to monitor its effectiveness.
- Ensuring the academy is inclusive to all learners and other stakeholders.
- Working with the Headteacher and the Trust Finance team to ensure the allocated budget is monitored effectively and meets the needs of all learners and the priorities identified in the school development plan.
- Monitoring the use of specific funds given to the academy to ensure this meets the purpose for which it has been given. To particularly monitor the use of Pupil Premium funding to ensure this is used effectively to narrow the gap between social disadvantage and attainment.
- Supporting the Headteacher in ensuring that the Trust school improvement and business support functions meet the needs of the school by delivering an effective, equitable and compliant service.

Trust Executive Team

The Trust Executive Team operates under the leadership and direction of the Chief Executive Officer, and comprises the Head of School Improvement, School Improvement Lead and Chief Operating Officer. This team is responsible for the effective delivery of educational and business support functions across the Trust to support schools in raising standards and providing an excellent educational experience for all pupils. The Chief Operating Officer is supported by a wider Trust central team comprising HR, Finance and Estates staff as well as external IT support.

Headteacher Board

Headteacher Board meetings are in place to ensure communication from schools and Local Academy Committees is effective. It also supports in the preparation for Trust Board meetings, where the position of each school in terms of standards, HR and finance and compliance is discussed. It also provides the opportunity for Headteachers to give their views in terms of Trust operations to allow these to be fed into the Trust Board decision making process.

Senior Leadership Teams

At individual school level, the Senior Leadership Team is responsible for the operational aspect of the strategic plan being locally responsible and accountable for.

- High standards of teaching and learning with a relentless focus on continuous school improvement.
- High levels of attainment and achievement for all pupils irrespective of their starting point.
- Effective safeguarding of pupils.
- Undertaking effective performance management to ensure all pupils attending Trust schools are taught by high quality staff who have high expectations and aspirations for the children they teach.
- Demonstrating strong leadership skills to ensure a highly motivated and supportive school culture that breeds success.
- Effective and efficient use of resources to support teaching and learning priorities.
- Compliance in all aspects of school policies and procedures, statutory and otherwise.

Setting of Pay and Remuneration for Key Management Personnel

Pay and remuneration for key management personnel is determined by the Trustees in line with:

- The National Agreement on Pay and Conditions of Service for Local Government Services (Green Book) and local job evaluation criteria and scoring in respect of support staff posts.
- School Teachers Pay and Conditions in respect of teaching and education roles.
- Local Authority Chief Officer Conditions of Service in respect of the Chief Executive Officer and Chief Operating Officer.

Trustees and local governors may claim expenses under Article 6.5 of the Articles of Association of Ad Astra Academy Trust which allows for the reimbursement of 'reasonable expenses properly incurred when acting on

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TRUSTEES' REPORT (CONTINUED)
FOR THE PERIOD ENDED 31 AUGUST 2022

Structure, governance and management (continued)

behalf of the Academy Trust.' This makes clear the ability to claim expenses is only in cases where a Trustee or Local Governor has incurred the expense while undertaking their governance role.

Trade union facility time

Relevant union officials

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

Percentage of time spent on facility time

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

Percentage of pay bill spent on facility time £000

Total cost of facility time	3,425
Total pay bill	12,999,328
Percentage of total pay bill spent on facility time	0.03 %

Paid trade union activities

Time spent on paid trade union activities as a percentage of total paid facility time hours calculated;(total hours spent on paid trade union activities by relevant union officials during the relevant period / total paid facility time x 100)	68.18 %
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Connected Organisations, Including Related Party Relationships

West View Primary works closely with a local community interest company called West View Project that provides alternative educational opportunities and youth services for children and young people. The schools procure the services of the Project to deliver a variety of specialist activities, including School Council support, vulnerable pupil support and outdoor learning activities. The impact of using the services of West View Project has seen particular impact for working with our most vulnerable children and has seen positive improvements in behaviour and helped them to re-engage with learning. One Trustee of Ad Astra Academy Trust who is also the Chair of the Trust Board and was the Chair of the Local Academy Committee of West View Primary School until November 2021, is also a member of the Board of Directors of West View Project. This interest has been declared openly and the Trustee concerned is not part of the school's decision-making process when considering the services of the West View Project.

R Priestman (Trustee and Vice-Chair of the Board), is practice manager of Davies Tracey Chartered Accountants & Business Advisors who provide internal audit services to the Trust. This interest has been declared openly to the Trust Board.

Further details are stated in note 29 to the Financial Statements.

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TRUSTEES' REPORT (CONTINUED)
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Structure, governance and management (continued)

Engagement with Employees (including Disabled Persons)

The Trustees of Ad Astra Academy Trust expect that information regarding matters relating to staff, flow from the CEO and central team directly to employees, through the Headteacher via the bespoke communication arrangements in each school. The Trust employs a central HR Manager to manage and coordinate changes to contractual and policy information. Ad Astra Academy Trust has its own Trade Union recognition agreement and all proposed changes to employee contractual terms or HR policies which affect them, are formally consulted upon with the Trade Unions on behalf of all staff. Comments and suggested changes are taken into consideration through the consultation process and amended and included where appropriate. In addition, schools undertake 'staff voice' questionnaires where feedback on specific staff-related topics is gathered. Results are collated and analysed by Headteachers, and the results are used to direct future policy at each school. In addition, regular hub meetings take place with staff and senior and middle leaders where ideas and suggestions relating to education, pastoral care and curriculum provision are discussed and consulted upon from across all schools in the Trust. This helps to foster open and transparent dialogue between professionals and ensure that feedback can be provided and acted upon. These hub meetings also allow all staff to be aware of changes in performance requirements such as the treatment of educational data by the DfE and changes to the Ofsted inspection framework.

Disabled employees are treated equally in all aspects of their career development and continuous professional development. Recruitment practices are open, fair and transparent and adhere to the Ad Astra Academy Trust Safer Recruitment policy. Applications are welcomed from all candidates that can demonstrate they meet the requirements in the agreed person specification. Shortlisting is conducted without sight of personal information including disability. Recruitment records are kept for the required period of time and are subject to independent audit. Disabled people are able to work within Ad Astra Academy Trust schools successfully as a result of a number of building and site adaptations such as the installation of lifts, ramps and disabled toilets. Door widths are also adequate to enable wheelchair access to all main areas of the Trust estate. Where necessary further adaptations to the physical environment is undertaken as appropriate.

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

The principal 'customers' of Ad Astra Academy Trust, are the pupils (and their parents/carers) who attend the schools and benefit from the educational provision. Despite being primary aged children, schools consult with their pupils on a range of topics pertinent to them, such as their views on learning, communication, behaviour, uniform, homework and school meals. Parents are also asked about similar topics. These usually take the form of questionnaires, which are completed, collated and analysed at individual school level. The results are used to identify trends and determine future policy within each school. Overall feedback is provided to the Local Academy Committee in each school who hold the Headteacher to account for local school performance.

Ad Astra Academy Trust proactively makes efforts to ensure it fosters sound business relationships with its suppliers. The Trust strives to pay its suppliers within their business terms so that their cash flow is not adversely affected. Internal controls and financial processes are in place to ensure accurate payments are also made. Regular dialogue takes place with service suppliers to ensure the schools and central team achieve the best provision for the benefit of all pupils and staff, and these are formally reviewed periodically when contracts are due for renewal to ensure they remain fit for purpose.

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Objectives and activities

Objects and aims

The principal object and activity of the charitable company is the operation of Ad Astra Academy Trust to provide education for students of different abilities between the ages of 2 and 11 years.

In accordance with the Articles of Association the charitable company has adopted a 'Scheme of Government' approved by the Secretary of State for Education. The Scheme of Government specifies, amongst other things, the basis for admitting students to the Trust, the catchment area from which the students are drawn, and that the curriculum should comply with the substance of the National Curriculum.

The main objectives of the Trust during the year ended 31 August 2022 are summarised below.

- Continue to support all our schools as they recover from the impact of the COVID pandemic and ensure that children are supported to meet learning expectations.
- Support all our schools to aim towards an OFSTED grading of Outstanding.
- Ensure that leadership and the quality of teaching and learning is good or better in all our schools.
- Enable staff in our Trust to be innovative, lifelong learners and to work collaboratively.
- Budget effectively, to build capacity within the Trust and to deploy our resources efficiently for the benefit of pupils and staff.
- Develop strong relationships between families, the community, and stakeholders.
- Embed and evaluate the reviewed Trust governance arrangements to ensure all layers of governance are effective in the leadership of the organisation.
- Facilitate intelligent growth of the Trust to further strengthen the Trust's position in the academy marketplace.
- Prepare a strategic business plan for the Trust, clearly articulating activities that will drive the Trust forward and improve outcomes.

Objectives, strategies and activities

To support and complement the objectives above, the Trust devised five key values that were designed and approved during the period, they are as follows.

- **Support** - All employees, pupils and other stakeholders within the Trust will be given the support needed not only to achieve their ambitions but to enjoy and thrive within our Trust. We will enable and support children by removing barriers to their success.
- **Togetherness** - Togetherness is hugely important to us it unites us and provides a community of support and challenge. We have a genuine ambition to build something together.
- **Achieve** - Children are at the heart of everything we do, and pupil achievement is our primary focus.
- **Respect** - We operate in a culture of respect and integrity; qualities that make for a successful organisation. We value everyone in the Trust treating them with dignity.
- **Success** - A belief that every pupil matters and deserves the best education is what drives us.

Our strapline is "Working Together for Children" and our underlying mission statement is, 'to grow a strong, resilient and compliant Trust where the quality of education is excellent, by ensuring effective resources are in place, intelligent growth is applied, and talent management including succession planning and well-being are embedded, in order to be an organisation at the heart of the community with a reputation for improving schools to enhance children's outcomes and prospects.

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TRUSTEES' REPORT (CONTINUED)
FOR THE PERIOD ENDED 31 AUGUST 2022

Objectives and activities (continued)

Ad Astra Academy Trust believes that highly skilled and committed staff led by strong and effective leadership is the key to success for each school within the Trust. All schools have continued to work collaboratively to identify areas of good practice and to support each other, despite challenges presented by the COVID pandemic. This has proved particularly successful with staff relishing the opportunity to look beyond the boundaries of their own school to identify innovative practices to transfer back into their own setting. The continued impact of this is apparent with a successful network and talent-pool of teachers and leaders in place to provide inter-school moderation, peer-review opportunities, support and professional development.

1. All schools have continued in their relentless focus to improve outcomes for all pupils regardless of their starting point. Improved standards of teaching and learning have been achieved by continuous review and analysis of pupil performance data. Once restrictions were lifted, regular pupil progress reviews resumed to inform this process; celebrating success and identifying where improvements can be made. Analysis of this work is shared and discussed with the Local Academy Committees of each school and also with Trustees so that they have an awareness of the work that is being undertaken to ensure each child is receiving the best education possible.
2. The School Improvement team have worked relentlessly across all schools to provide support and challenge in terms of school improvement priorities. Although some turbulence has been experienced within the team with a protracted absence and a resignation, the appointment of a new school improvement lead in April has been very successful, supported by secondments from other key members of school improvement staff, both internal and external to Ad Astra, providing their expertise and experience in order to drive the Trust forward. They have done this by undertaking 'key priority' meetings alongside school leadership teams, where they triangulate evidence from Headteachers, leaders, and teachers in relation to the priorities identified in the School Development Plan. They have also undertaken specific school improvement project work in specific areas identified for development and they have provided bespoke support to all staff where this has been requested both on a one to one basis, and in wider groups. This model has provided some resilience and given the team an excellent insight into the performance of Ad Astra schools.
3. Senior and Middle Leadership Teams in each school have worked collaboratively to determine a consistent approach to teaching and learning with cross-school moderation and learning forums proving particularly successful. All schools within the Trust have worked together towards embedding a transparent assessment system that is clear to all staff as well as understood by pupils and parents.
4. A rigorous approach to performance management and professional development have been a common theme in all schools during the period. Ad Astra Academy Trust recognises that high quality teaching carried out by enthusiastic and committed staff is the key to success. All schools have continued to use rigorous performance management which breaks down the key elements of successful teaching and learning and staff are assessed accordingly.
5. The Trustees continue to recognise that the key to allowing the educational experts to focus and deliver a high-quality pupil experience is to have an effective business leadership structure in place to deliver on all non-educational outcomes. The Trust has an established central team including a CEO, Head of School Improvement, School Improvement Lead, Chief Operating Officer, Finance Manager, HR Manager and Estates Manager. In support of these leadership positions, a School Business Partner was recruited internally during the period, in order to provide middle leadership capacity in driving the operational aspects of the business function forward. An existing Business Support Officer is also in post, with two more recruited during the summer term. This has greatly enhanced the capacity in the finance and payroll function to ensure support for schools at a transactional level. An IT Managed Service Provider was formally appointed in June 2021, and this external team supports the delivery of IT support across the Trust, whilst also providing resilience. The Trustees also recognise that the central team needs to be further developed and strengthened in the future to provide an effective infrastructure to adequately support planned future expansion. With this in mind, the Trustees approved the addition of a HR Officer post onto the central team structure. With little interest in the HR Officer recruitment during the period, this is a priority moving forward in order to provide much needed resilience and capacity for the growing organisation.
6. Building capacity is intrinsically linked to expanding the number of schools within the Trust and therefore this continues to be a focus of the Trust strategic growth plan. During the period, Ad Astra successfully welcomed Sunnyside Academy, based in Middlesbrough into the Trust as its eighth school in April 2022. As an existing Single Academy Trust, this process was a transfer as opposed to a conversion, however much of the legal process was the same. Further growth continues to be a focus; however, this is not a strategy that is taken lightly by the Trustees. Everyone involved in Ad Astra wants to expand but in an intelligent way that

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TRUSTEES' REPORT (CONTINUED)
FOR THE PERIOD ENDED 31 AUGUST 2022

Objectives and activities (continued)

- demonstrates a measured, prudent and professional approach. By doing so this will ensure that the schools that join Ad Astra Academy Trust do so in the knowledge that the organisation is prepared and structured to take on the intricacies of growing and developing a complex organisation. Ad Astra has taken advantage of the renewed energy in the academisation programme, and has taken an active role in speaking to other schools and supporting them in their initial journey in considering academy status.
7. Following the successful transfer of Sunnyside Academy in April 2022, a formal significant change request was submitted to the Department for Education, to re-designate the SEND support base provision. This was following a request from Middlesbrough Local Authority to all schools across the borough as they sought to enhance their SEND base provision. Sunnyside was successful and resulted in the formulation of a 34-place learning and SEMH base as well as the continuation of the 40-place hearing and visual impaired base. This re-designation presented an opportunity to ensure financial viability for the SEND base provision, with funding from Middlesbrough Local Authority to be secured contractually for a period of five years based on need rather than banding of individual children, which can be financially difficult to manage. This ensures that highly specialised staff supporting pupils with very complex SEND needs can be retained, making the provision more financially sustainable while also delivering stability for pupils.
 8. All schools have continued to work closely with families to ensure each child is given support to achieve their potential. Strong partnership working with outside agencies including social services and family support teams has continued and is seen as a strength by these organisations in their work to improve social outcomes for those involved. Enhanced social and pastoral care for families has been even more critical following the COVID pandemic and the continued cost of living crisis.
 9. The Trust central team, in consultation with other stakeholders including Headteachers and Trustees, formulated a strategic business plan during the summer term, to define the key priorities to enable the Trust to move forward successfully. This involved an in-depth review and evaluation of the current position, identifying the overarching strategic objectives, while identifying the critical success factors and associated projects needed to achieve these. This resulted in a coherent plan to drive the Trust forward which will be continuously reviewed and evaluated to ensure projects are completed and the objectives met.
 10. The Trustees commissioned Safeguarding Alliance as a professional partner to undertake work across all areas of safeguarding to provide external assurance in terms of policies and practice across the Trust. This has involved each school receiving an audit visit from professional experts in the field to identify good practice and areas for improvement.
 11. The Trust implemented the revised governance arrangements that were agreed following the governance consultation exercise that took place during the last period (2020/21) and these have begun to embed across the organisation throughout the current period. This resulted in the re-branding of Local Governing Bodies into Local Academy Committees (to acknowledge the changing role of local governance upon conversion to academy status), as well as the launch of the new scheme of delegation which clearly defines the roles and responsibilities of both staff and each governance layer; local and Trust level. The Trust embarked upon a professional partnership with an external governance support organisation, Berry Education, in order to not only deliver capacity for the central team in such a critical area, but also to ensure that the revised operational governance arrangements are well supported. Having an external organisation involved, has been extremely valuable in moderating and continually improving the Trust approach to governance.

The activities undertaken above to achieve these objectives are all intended to provide the highest quality of education in the public sector for students between the ages of 2 and 11 years.

Public benefit

The Trust's aims and achievements are set out within this report and have been undertaken to further its charitable purposes for the public benefit. The Trustees have complied with the duty under Section 4 of the Charities Act 2011 to have due regard to public benefit guidance published by the Charity Commission for England and Wales and the Trustees have considered this guidance in deciding what activities the Trust should undertake.

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TRUSTEES' REPORT (CONTINUED)
FOR THE PERIOD ENDED 31 AUGUST 2022

Strategic report

Achievements and performance

During the period Ad Astra Academy Trust has undergone a significant further period of development and has achieved the following:

The Trust continues to review its Trust Board arrangements to ensure they meet the needs of the organisation. In September 2021, the Trustees appointed Mark Tilling into the vacant Trustee position, bringing the number of Trustees to the optimum level of nine. As a serving Headteacher in a local school (not in Ad Astra), Mr Tilling's appointment brought significant expertise and experience in educational leadership. Unfortunately, Fr Graham Buttery resigned his Trusteeship on 16 November 2021 due to work commitments which resulted in a further vacancy on the Board. The Trustees further reviewed their existing membership skills and felt a Trustee with a legal background would be appropriate and have spent time during the period in exploring this. As at 31 August 2022 this position has not been filled but it is expected that this is likely to be addressed early in the 2022/23 academic year.

The Trust secured Trust Capacity Funding of over £200,000 during the period. This has enabled the Trust to address a number of outstanding priorities such as initial funding to support the School Business Partner appointment, the purchase of an asset and compliance software system, procurement support, staff professional development and building condition surveys. This fund also covered some of the costs associated with the Sunnyside Academy transfer into Ad Astra, given they were already a Single Academy Trust and did not qualify for the usual start up grant.

A professional partnership with Ward Hadaway law firm commenced during the period. Since the incorporation of the Trust, Ad Astra had partnered with a local law firm very successfully. However, as key staff left that organisation and with the significant growth Ad Astra has seen since 2015, it was felt a firm with a wider skills base, especially in the educational arena, was more appropriate to suit business needs. As the Trust has grown, so has the complexity of legal queries and so trustees felt it was time to ensure that legal services reflected this.

The CEO supported by the central team was delighted to be able to resume the annual Ad Astra conference for all schools in the Trust which took place in July 2022. This was a successful day with contributions from renowned speakers as well as the CEO himself, who provided an overview of the educational landscape and the Trust for all teaching as well as some support staff. Workshops on specific topics identified by schools were delivered by both internal and external staff. Feedback was very positive and it provided a fantastic opportunity to be able to enjoy professional development with colleagues from across the organisation as well as showcase a positive image of the professionalism of the Trust to external guests.

In January 2021, the temporary Executive Headteacher for Ayresome and West View was appointed to the permanent substantive post of Headteacher for Ayresome Primary. While Mrs. Haylock retained Executive Headship across both schools during this reporting period, she will commence a full-time role solely for Ayresome Primary from September 2022. Following an internal recruitment, the Acting Headteacher for West View Primary was subsequently appointed to this position permanently also from September 2022.

Two schools in the Trust achieved excellent progress scores in the 2022 national tests; Ayresome Primary were in the top 25% in the country for progress in Key Stage 2 reading and maths scores, and the top 40% for progress in writing. West Park Primary were in the top 25% in the country for progress in writing and maths and the top 40% for reading. Given the impact of recent years, this is an excellent achievement.

Schools have continued to play a pivotal role in providing essential support for families during the period. The ongoing implications arising from communities living with COVID, as well as the current cost of living crisis has seen schools have to manage increasingly complex caseloads including a rise in safeguarding issues. It would be inappropriate not to recognize the work and the commitment of staff across the Trust in navigating such difficult circumstances, notwithstanding the increased pressure for school recovery and improvement, which has placed a 'perfect storm' of demands on schools.

The peer-review programme has successfully resumed with in-person visits taking place, with staff from across Ad Astra undertaking visits to other schools, and welcoming others into their school to moderate schools'

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TRUSTEES' REPORT (CONTINUED)
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Strategic report (continued)

priorities and improvement plans. Schools find this approach very useful and it adds further evidence to demonstrate a commitment to continuous improvement.

The Chief Operating Officer successfully completed the CIPFA-accredited level 7 qualification in 'School Financial and Operational Leadership' during the period, following a 12-month course of study via the Institute of School Business Leadership (ISBL). This qualification is recommended for Trust business professionals and further demonstrates compliance with the Academy Trust Handbook requirements

Key performance indicators

Financial Performance

Figures pro-rata'd to a full academic year for comparison purposes.

Key Performance Indicator	West View	West Park	Brougham	Rosebrook	Crooksbar	Ayresome	Barnard Grove	Sunnyside
Total income per pupil	£5,665	£4,522	£6,240	£5,792	£4,358	£6,380	£5,447	£9,236
Total GAG income per pupil	£4,191	£3,623	£4,693	£4,279	£3,431	£5,179	£4,324	£5,247
Staff costs per pupil	£4,358	£3,808	£4,771	£4,710	£3,591	£4,628	£4,791	£7,917
Total costs per pupil	£5,443	£4,496	£6,354	£5,618	£4,371	£5,656	£5,552	£9,362
Staff costs as % of total costs	80.1%	84.7%	75.1%	83.8%	82.2%	81.8%	86.3%	84.6%
Staff costs as % of total income	76.9%	84.2%	76.5%	81.3%	82.4%	72.5%	88.0%	85.7%
Pupil to teacher ratio	24.5	24.9	20.1	26.9	24.5	18.9	25.3	16.7
Net current assets / income	19.8%	6.9%	7.0%	15.3%	3.1%	17.1%	5.4%	45.6%
Ofsted rating	Good	Good	Good	Good	Requires Improvement	Requires Improvement	Good	Requires Improvement

The above KPI's come directly from the management accounts of the Trust, which may categorise items of income and expenditure differently to the statutory accounts. Note - Sunnyside's net current assets ratio includes the reserves received into the trust.

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TRUSTEES' REPORT (CONTINUED)
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Strategic report (continued)

Educational Performance

Ad Astra Academy Trust Published Data Summer 2022		2022 Nat Av	(Schools with high mobility such as Ayresome can show their stable cohort data predictions below in brackets as a comparison)							
			Ayresome	Barnard Grove	Brougham	Crooksbar	Rosebrook	Sunnyside	West Park	West View
1	Good Level Development	72%	33% (35%)	59.1%	57.9%	62.2%	60%	57%	80%	61%
2	Year 1 Phonics Screening Check	75%	58.1% (54%)	84.2%	75.7%	90%	73.5%	82%	86.7%	81.5%
3	KS1 Reading – Expected Standard	67%	46.6% (65%)	56.4%	60%	59.5%	43.5%	55%	77.8%	61.8%
4	KS1 Writing – Expected Standard	58%	25% (35%)	43.6%	54.3%	45.9%	41.9%	48%	62.2%	54.5%
5	KS1 Mathematics – Expected Standard	68%	55.7% (63%)	61.5%	57.1%	62.2%	43.5%	48%	73.3%	56.4%
6	KS2 GPS - Expected Standard	72%	49%	79%	44%	82%	57%	All = 43% Ex SEND base = 58%	93%	55%
7	KS2 Reading - Expected Standard	74%	52%	75%	58%	82%	61%	All = 40% Ex SEND base = 53%	96%	62%
8	KS2 Writing – Expected Standard	69%	46%	73%	58%	76%	64%	All = 55% Ex SEND base = 73%	91%	55%
9	KS2 Mathematics - Expected Standard	71%	45%	75%	44%	74%	59%	All = 43% Ex SEND base = 58%	98%	64%
10	KS2 RWM Combined - Expected Standard	59%	33%	65%	40%	62%	49%	All = 32% Ex SEND base = 45%	91%	45%

Going concern

After making appropriate enquiries, the Board of Trustees has a reasonable expectation that the academy has adequate resources to continue in operational existence for the foreseeable future. For this reason they continue 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 accounting policies.

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TRUSTEES' REPORT (CONTINUED)
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Strategic report (continued)

Promoting the success of the company

The Trust Board, in line with their duties under s172 of the Companies Act 2006, act in a way they consider, in good faith, would be most likely to promote the success of the Trust for the benefit of its members, its pupils, its staff and the wider community and in doing so have regard to a range of matters when making decisions. Key decisions and matters that are of strategic importance to the Trust are appropriately informed by s172 factors.

The Trust Board makes decisions with a long-term view in mind and with the highest standards of conduct. Where possible, decisions are discussed with the affected groups and therefore fully understood and supported when taken. Reports are regularly made to the Board from the Chief Executive Officer about the Trust and the strategy and key performance decisions which are made. Regular reporting enables the Trust Board to stay in touch and make the decisions with the best interests of the Trust in mind. In addition, the Trust Board contains members from many interested areas including professional educators and the local business community so that their views are constantly considered when long term decisions are made.

The Trust Board are aware of the impact their decisions may have on the wider community and hold our reputation to the highest standards, ensuring that the Trust is compliant with laws and regulations whilst delivering the best service education to our pupils and students. We engage with the DfE, the ESFA and the Regional Director throughout the year and keep up to date with government regulations ensuring that any changes are acted on swiftly. In addition, we have regular internal audits to ensure that the controls operating with the Trust are operating effectively. The Trust Board is updated on legal and regulatory requirements and any control deficiencies on a regular basis and takes these into accounts when considering future actions.

Financial review

Most of the Trust's income is obtained from the Department for Education (DfE) via the Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA) in the form of recurrent grants, the use of which is restricted to particular purposes. The grants received from the DfE/ESFA during the year ended 31 August 2022 and the associated expenditure are shown as restricted funds in the Statement of Financial Activities.

The Trust also receives grants for fixed assets from the DfE/ESFA. In accordance with The Charities Statement of Recommended Practice, 'Accounting and Reporting by Charities' (FRS 102), such grants are shown in the Statement of Financial Activities as restricted income in the fixed asset fund. The restricted fixed asset fund balance is reduced by annual depreciation charges over the expected useful life of the assets concerned.

In addition, the schools within the Trust receive Early Years funding from the Local Authority based on numbers of pupils at key census times. This is received termly in arrears. A similar grant is received in respect of funding for two-year-old children, again based on pupil numbers. Although each school receive SEN funding via the ESFA, top-up funding is provided by the Local Authority for children where it has been assessed that their need is such that it warrants one to one support from a teaching assistant.

The Trust were successful with 2 major funding bids during 2021/22:

- A successful application was made to the DfE's Trust Capacity Fund (TCaF). The fund helps Trusts to develop their capacity and take on underperforming schools, particularly in education investment areas. A claim of £205,923.10 was submitted which has allowed the Trust to invest and improve safeguarding, compliance, procurement, marketing, school improvement capacity, SEND support, estates condition surveys, financial systems, specialist legal HR advice and staff capacity.
- Capital income was also secured to fund a major electrical rewiring scheme at West View Primary School. The funding will contribute to 70% of the overall cost of the works. Funding of £257,826.45 has been awarded towards a scheme that is estimated to cost £368,376.12. The scheme will see the replacement of electrical components and infrastructure to replace defective and life expired installations. This includes the fire safety systems, emergency lighting, defective and outdated distribution boards and associated wiring and the replacement of defective and non-compliant lighting. The completed scheme will improve safety in school and protect our staff and pupils from harm and our assets from the risk of fire.

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TRUSTEES' REPORT (CONTINUED)
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Strategic report (continued)

Financial review (Continued)

During the year ended 31 August 2022, total expenditure of £20,294,000 exceeded recurrent grant funding from DfE/ESFA together with other incoming resources. The excess of expenditure over income for the year (before transfers and actuarial gains and excluding fixed asset funds) was £3,243,000.

All of the expenditure shown in the Statement of Financial Activities is in furtherance of the Trust's objectives. The in-year surplus, excluding the pension reserve and restricted fixed asset funds, was £1,291,000.

At 31 August 2022 the net book value of fixed assets was £28,788,000 and movements in tangible fixed assets are shown in note 14 to the Financial Statements. The assets were used exclusively for providing education and the associated support services to the pupils of the Trust.

The provisions of Financial Reporting Standard (FRS 102) have been applied in full in respect of the LGPS pension scheme resulting in a deficit of £398,000 recognised on the Balance Sheet.

The Trust held fund balances at 31 August 2022 of £31,513,000 comprising £30,246,000 of restricted funds, including £398,000 deficit on the pension reserves, and £1,267,000 of unrestricted funds. The total of restricted general funds, excluding pension reserves, plus unrestricted funds as at 31 August 2022 was £2,601,000.

Reserves policy

The Trust holds restricted and unrestricted funds (the attached financial statements detail these funds). Unrestricted funds are held to ensure that the objectives and strategic plan of the Trust can be delivered efficiently and effectively. The level of reserves is reviewed by the Trustees regularly throughout the year. The minimum level of reserves for the ongoing needs of an academy is reviewed by the Trustees on an annual basis.

Ad Astra Academy Trust expects all schools within the Trust to hold contingency reserves from their annual funding or other income to cover unforeseen items of expenditure that have not been budgeted for or to cover the cost of transitional arrangements arising from operational changes such as a one-off staffing re-structure. All schools within the Trust are expected to hold a financial reserve to the value of 5.5% of their annual GAG. If schools already hold 5.5% of their current GAG value, they are required to maintain this reserve and annually reassess this in line with their annual GAG statement to ensure they continue to meet this reserves policy. Where schools do not currently hold 5.5% of their GAG in reserves, and it is apparent that meeting this reserves policy within one financial year is unrealistic and would have a negative effect on the operation of the schools, they are afforded some flexibility to help support them to reach this target. In these circumstances, schools will be expected to reach a reserve level of 5.5% of their GAG within five years of their conversion or transfer into the Trust. Trustees will consider and, where appropriate, make allowances for exceptional circumstances where meeting this reserves policy will have a serious and detrimental effect on the school and its performance outcomes.

Schools will be required to annually assess their current reserve against this target (taking into consideration any changes to the GAG each year) calculate the differential and then factor this requirement into their annual budget planning process until they have reached the 5.5% requirement of this policy. As an example, if a school currently holds 4% of the value of their GAG in reserves they will be required to increase this by 1.5% to reach the 5.5% within five years. Some schools might be able to reach this within year two and in this scenario after year two they will only be required to maintain this in line with any GAG value changes. However, some schools may only be able to increase this by (subject to major fluctuations in the GAG) the value equivalent to 0.3% each year until they reach the expected level of reserve.

In order to ensure robust plans are in place to secure this level of reserve, Trustees will not grant final approval to budgets that do not take into consideration the requirements of this policy. Monitoring the level of reserves will also be a key performance indicator for the Trust going forward. Schools who are struggling to meet their reserve target will be offered more intensive support from the Trust Finance Manager.

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In some circumstances a school may be required to use some of their reserves for the very reason that this policy is in place, such as the need to meet the cost of an unforeseen item of expenditure or to meet a statutory obligation that cannot be realistically covered within the planned budget. In this scenario schools will be required to revise their plans to meet this reserves policy taking into consideration the need to replace the reserves they have used. However, the Trust will ensure that in these circumstances no school is affected to the detriment of its performance or effective operation and the Trustees have the right to use the reserves of other schools to support in such circumstances. In cases such as this, more intensive financial planning support would be provided by the Trust to help determine the most appropriate way of reaching the requirement of this policy. Trustees will be required to approve recovery plans of this nature.

This review encompasses the nature of income and expenditure streams, the need to match income with commitments and the nature of reserves. The Trustees therefore consider it prudent to hold unrestricted reserves in the general fund in the form of free reserves (total funds less the amount held in fixed assets and restricted funds).

The Trust's current level of free reserves is in surplus by £1,267,000. The Trustees continue to consider additional activities related to the Trust's objectives to which the excess reserves may be applied including:

- Development of the Trust estate to meet the needs of the children.
- Targeted support for specific school improvement needs that are additional to normal, on-going commitments.
- Effectively and efficiently manage any changes to Trust staffing structures.
- Building capacity within the Trust to facilitate future growth.
- Provide temporary resilience against immediate and significant cost pressures that cannot be met from existing budgets and are unavoidable e.g. energy price rises. Reserves will only be used to afford the Trust and the schools time to readjust their expenditure profile in line with income streams and are not to be used to fund recurring costs.

Investment policy

The Trust can invest surplus funds through money market accounts and during the period have invested up to £400,000 in a higher-interest Lloyds bank 32-day notice account. Interest rates are reviewed prior to each investment. This policy maximises investment return whilst minimising risks to the principal sum. The aim of the Trust is to spend the public monies with which we are entrusted for the direct education benefit of students as soon as is prudent. The Trust does not consider the investment of surplus funds as a primary activity, rather it is the result of good fund management to be used as and when circumstances allow.

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TRUSTEES' REPORT (CONTINUED)
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Principal risks and uncertainties

The principal risks and uncertainties are centred on changes in the level of funding from the DfE/ESFA. In addition, the Trust is a member of the Local Government Pension Scheme (LGPS), which results in the recognition of a significant deficit on the Trust Balance Sheet.

As normal, the Trustees have assessed the major risks, to which the Trust is exposed, in particular those relating specifically to teaching provision, facilities and other operational areas of the Trust and its finances. The Trustees have implemented a number of systems to assess risks that the school faces, especially in the operational areas (e.g. in relation to staffing, health and safety, pupil behaviour and school visits) and in relation to the control of finance. Where significant financial risk still remains, they have ensured they have adequate insurance cover. The Trust has an effective system of internal financial controls and this is explained in more detail in the Governance Statement.

The Trust has fully implemented the requirements of the Safer Recruitment procedures and all relevant staff have received training in this area in addition to training in Safeguarding.

The Trust is subject to a number of risks and uncertainties in common with other academies. The Trust has in place procedures to identify and mitigate financial risks.

Fundraising

The schools within Ad Astra Academy Trust do normally engage in fundraising activities throughout the year for a variety of reasons. These include:

- Raising money for established national charities such as Children in Need and Comic Relief as well as smaller, local charities in the community. In these circumstances, schools simply act as an agent, with the amount raised going directly to the charity in question.
- Raising money for equipment and resources for the school, often in conjunction with parent associations and support groups.
- Requests for donations to support the costs of educational visits.

The impact of the COVID pandemic and the current cost of living crisis has meant that levels of fundraising have been limited during the period, due to the fact that parents may not have the income to support fundraising initiatives. The schools appreciate the negative impact that the current cost of living crisis has had (and continues to have), on levels of parental income and do not wish to place any additional financial strain on families.

The schools within the Trust do not engage with professional fundraisers to act on their behalf, and do not employ fundraising tactics that could be deemed to be unreasonably intrusive or persistent. It is always made clear and is written in the Charging and Remissions Policy, that any requests for donations are made entirely on a voluntary basis and that no child will suffer any detriment should parents or carers fail to make a donation. Fundraising activities are often advertised via letters home, school social media pages, newsletters and text messages. During the period there have been no formal complaints received by the Trust in relation to its fundraising activities or that of its schools.

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TRUSTEES' REPORT (CONTINUED)
FOR THE PERIOD ENDED 31 AUGUST 2022

Streamlined energy and carbon reporting

UK Greenhouse gas emissions and energy use data for the period 1 September 2021 to 31 August 2022

	1 September 2021 to 31 August 2022	1 September 2020 to 31 August 2021
Energy consumption used to calculate emissions (kWh)	2,685,334	2,936,217
Energy consumption breakdown (kWh):		
Gas	1,943,807	2,264,416
Electricity	734,747	672,501
Transport fuel	6,780	1,518
Scope 1 emissions (in tonnes of CO2 equivalent):		
Gas consumption	354.82	416.36
Owned transport	0.67	0.30
Total scope 1	355.49	416.66
Scope 2 emissions (in tonnes of CO2 equivalent):		
Purchased electricity	142.45	156.79
Scope 3 emissions (in tonnes of CO2 equivalent):		
Business travel in employee-owned or rental vehicles	1.62	1.48
Total gross emissions (in tonnes of CO2 equivalent):	499.56	574.93
 Intensity ratio	 0.146689	 0.193304

Quantification and Reporting Methodology

- We have followed the 2019 HM Government Environmental Reporting Guidelines. We have also used the GHG Reporting Protocol – Corporate Standard and have used the 2020 UK Government's Conversion Factors for Company Reporting.

Intensity measurement

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

Measures taken to improve energy efficiency

The pandemic has afforded the opportunity to increase virtual working and virtual meetings and as a result the need for staff to travel to venues across the Trust has decreased significantly. This has therefore reduced the carbon emissions associated with car travel. Other initiatives include,

- Installation of some LED lighting in West View Primary School
- Rewire at Ayresome Primary School in progress (Electrical infrastructure, distribution and LED lighting) – approx. 50% complete as at 31 August 2022.
- Surrender of minibus from Ayresome Primary School.
- New Water Heater at Crooksbarrow (Replacement with a more efficient model).
- Roof Refurbishment at West Park Primary School, incorporating increased insulation to the structure.

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Plans for future periods

The Trustees continue to hold the CEO to account for the Trust strategic plan which identifies future Trust growth and development as a priority moving forward. The approval of sponsorship status in July 2015 has given the Trustees the ability to allow schools who require additional support in order to achieve a good or outstanding OfSTED grade to join the Trust. This has opened up the availability of market share substantially which will provide increased opportunities for growth. Taking this into consideration, the broad strategic objectives of the Trust are:

- To deliver on the key priorities and projects identified in the Strategic Business Plan that was agreed by Trustees during the period, including to continue with Trust growth over the next year. With initial interest expressed from schools already, we expect this to be achieved during 2022/23.
- To further strengthen the central Trust team of staff to provide additional skills and expertise to critical areas of the business, particularly in the areas of HR, safeguarding and procurement. This will also enhance to the reputation of Ad Astra Academy Trust to prospective schools.
- To develop a Trust Estates Strategy that sets out our approach to the development and maintenance of the estate in line with the expected confirmation of formulaic School Capital Allocation funding.
- To further promote the 'we are one' identity and ensure all stakeholders subscribe to this and identify with shared Trust values.
- To ensure that the school improvement framework is embedded across the Trust and all schools are committed to the delivery of a shared educational vision that is underpinned by best practice from across the sector.
- To review and evaluate the Trust people strategy that is in place to ensure Ad Astra attracts the best talent into the organisation.
- The Trust has a strong safeguarding culture that prioritises the safety, welfare and happiness of children. The Trust intends to build on the external partnership with Safeguarding Alliance to further strengthen and evaluate the safeguarding culture across the Trust to be able to demonstrate a robust approach to this.

Funds held as custodian on behalf of others


During the period, Ad Astra Academy Trust has not held any funds as a custodian Trustee on behalf of others.

Disclosure of information to auditors

Insofar as the Trustees are aware:

- there is no relevant audit information of which the charitable company's auditors are unaware, and
- that 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 auditors are aware of that information.

The Trustees' Report was approved by order of the Board of Trustees, as the company directors, on 9 December 2022 and signed on its behalf by:



C J Simmons
Chair

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GOVERNANCE STATEMENT

Scope of responsibility

As Trustees, we acknowledge we have overall responsibility for ensuring that Ad Astra 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 Board of Trustees has delegated the day-to-day responsibility to the CEO, 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 Ad Astra Academy Trust and the Secretary of State for Education. They are also responsible for reporting to the Board of Trustees any material weaknesses or breakdowns in internal control.

Governance

The information on governance included here supplements that described in the Trustees' Report and in the Statement of Trustees' Responsibilities. The Board of Trustees has formally met 4 times during the period. While the Trust only had 4 full Board meetings, we also held five Resources Committees during the period, at which finance was a recurring agenda item and a focus for these meetings. This is covered in our Scheme of Delegation.

Attendance during the period at meetings of the Board of Trustees was as follows:

Trustee	Meetings attended	Out of a possible
C J Simmons, Chair of Trustees	4	4
R Priestman, Vice Chair of Trustees	4	4
A A Brown OBE, Chief Executive Officer and Accounting Officer	4	4
G Brown	4	4
R C Broad	2	4
Father G Buttery (resigned 16 November 2021)	1	1
J Maddison	3	4
M Tilling	3	4
A Wilson	4	4

The governance structure has seen some turbulence during the period, with one resignation (due to personal commitments). However, the Trustees have been proactive in reviewing the Trust Board composition and establishing the required skillset for replacement Trustees. This resulted in one appointment during the period, which brought superb skills and experience in the areas of educational leadership.

The Trust continues to work collaboratively to establish a board which now has a range of skills and expertise in areas such as finance, IT, leadership, business, governance, education and social care to ensure an effective Trust that clearly understands its responsibilities and accountabilities.

The Trustees currently operate two layers of governance at board level. All Trustees consider each area of Trust operations as a collective body aided by the two Trust committees; Resources and Challenge.

During the period, face to face meetings resumed however there was also the option to meet virtually. This hybrid arrangement was very effective in making meetings accessible and resulted in Trustees being able to attend meetings more conveniently. The central team and Berry Education continued to provide suggested agendas and worked with the Chair of the Trust Board and CEO, and the respective Chairs and Headteachers of schools as appropriate, to ensure the annual governance requirements were met. Where possible papers were sent in good time and always in advance of the meeting to allow sufficient reading time and thus make meetings

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GOVERNANCE STATEMENT (CONTINUED)

Governance (continued)

more effective and efficient. Supporting papers and reports have been refined over time often in a consistent format (especially at Trust Board level and Headteacher's Reports to the Local Academy Committee), and this assists those involved with governance in giving the appropriate information to be able to offer effective challenge and support. All meetings were minuted by the Trust or Berry Education and appropriate records kept.

In terms of conflicts of interest, we manage these by ensuring annual declarations are made with Trustees and those involved in local governance, and this is a standard agenda item on all Full Board, Trust committees and Local Academy Committee meetings. This can be evidenced in agendas and minutes of these meetings

Resources and Compliance Committee

Attendance during the period at meetings was as follows:

Trustee	Meetings attended	Out of a possible
C J Simmons	5	5
R Priestman	5	5
A A Brown OBE	5	5
G Brown	4	5
A Wilson	3	5
J Maddison	3	5
R Broad	1	1
M Tilling	0	1

Challenge Committee

The Challenge Committee remit is to monitor in more detail areas relating to school improvement, standards and safeguarding and report back to the Trust Board.

C J Simmons	1	2
A A Brown OBE	2	2
M Tilling (Chair)	2	2
R Broad	2	2

Review of value for money

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

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

- Schools within Ad Astra Academy Trust continue to deliver strong educational and pastoral outcomes despite significant social pressures, difficulties with recruitment in some areas and an expectation of normality in terms of the educational landscape. Despite some schools being socially diverse they have embraced the value of togetherness; Collaboration at senior and middle leadership as well at classroom teacher level continues to be the strength of Ad Astra, bringing significant benefits in terms of moderation and sharing good practice. Peer review opportunities have also resumed and this has been very effective in moderating school performance and practice.
- The Trust maintains a consistent approach to assessment and data management as well as the presentation of key principles and school documentation such as the school development plan and self-

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GOVERNANCE STATEMENT (CONTINUED)

Review of value for money (continued)

evaluation form has been invaluable in bringing the schools together as one. Professional dialogue and debate allow internal and external stakeholders to effectively analyse key performance indicators and performance. In turn this ensures that performance is at the heart of every layer of the Trust from Trustees to operational staff delivering the business.

- Centralisation of business support functions continues to allow the leadership teams within each school to focus on educational priorities and outcomes rather than being distracted by finance, governance, estates, IT, HR and policy development. This has been further supported by the professional partnership with Berry Education for governance support. While the Headteachers within each school remain very involved in these aspects: the focus has changed from operational involvement to being briefed from senior business support staff. The impact of the central Trust team has been acknowledged in previous OfSTED inspections that have taken place.
- Previous COVID restrictions required all staff to embrace more virtual working practices, which although were not planned for, they were accepted and supported. This resulted in a more resource efficient way of conducting formal and informal communication and meetings, which has also had the effect of a significant reduction in travelling time. The latter has further contributed to time efficiencies, but also a reduction in mileage costs and an improvement in the environmental impact that car travel has. Overall, staff have reported a continuation in the ability to achieve more in terms of workload. The Trust has also seen an increase in attendance at virtual meetings due to the more efficient nature of delivery.
- Financial processing efficiencies have also been achieved by the central finance team during the period, who have embedded electronic methods in transactional finance. This has resulted in effective remote working without compromising the integrity of the financial procedures and internal controls in place. These have proved to be more efficient in terms of time savings and physical resources.
- Ad Astra is a founding member of the Allied group, which is a collaborative alliance of Tees Valley based Multi Academy Trusts. This network seeks to provide a supportive mechanism for Chief Executive Officers to share best practice and learn from each other.
- The benefits from the external managed service IT contract continues to be effective, with a wide area of expertise within the team and the ability to deploy this where necessary. Trying to achieve a similar level of coverage would be very expensive for the Trust to do internally and so this represents significant value for money.
- Along similar lines, the benefits from the external professional partnership with Berry Education became apparent during the summer term, with their expertise and knowledge, not only supporting the operational aspects of governance and therefore providing capacity, but also in their ability to scrutinise governance policy and practice and identify ways in which Ad Astra can continually improve.

Income Generation

The Trust continues to seek opportunities to maximise income into the Trust. Particularly in schools where social deprivation factors are high, there has been a significant amount of work undertaken to ensure that families that are entitled to free school meals actually apply for them so that the school can ensure that the correct level of funding is received. This is especially important not only for pupil premium funding but also for other funding factors that rely on free school meal data in their calculation. Following the introduction of the universal free school meal scheme for reception and key stage one children, some families have been unaware of the financial impact that not applying for free school meals can have on their child's school. By ensuring that correct data is recorded has meant that the schools can feel confident they are receiving the correct level of funding for their need.

In addition to these larger income generation opportunities, the following smaller income streams were received into the Trust during the period:

- £28,070 was received from SHINE which is an educational charity that works with teachers, schools, and other organisations, helping disadvantaged children in the North of England to fulfil their true potential. The grant has funded release time for a teacher in each of our schools, course fees, reporting software and classroom resources.

AD ASTRA ACADEMY TRUST
(A Company Limited by Guarantee)

GOVERNANCE STATEMENT (CONTINUED)

Review of value for money (continued)

- Crooksbarrow Primary School were also successful in a bid for funding to support Phonics initiatives from Westgarth Primary School's English Hub. The school received £6,000 throughout the year and spent this on phonics training, books and resources. West View also had a successful bid and received £1,547.
- The Trust received £6,000 funding as an incentive payment for taking on apprentices aged between 16 and 18. The Trust are committed to raising the number of apprenticeship posts on their structure.
- Several schools in the Trust were successful in receiving financial grants in recognition of their work supporting university students undertaking teacher training. West View received £2,000 from Durham University and Brougham Primary School received £1,250. Rosebrook Primary received £792 from the SCITT programme and Ayresome received £2,782.
- West View Primary School also received income streams from the delivery of sporting activities. They received £3,750 as their Extended Schools Manager undertook the role of School Sports Coordinator.
- Ayresome Primary School were also able to receive support for the delivery of their breakfast club having received £1,370 from Greggs. Brougham also received £1,935 worth of funding and West View received £2,562.50.
- Rosebrook generated £14,031 linked to the secondment of a senior staff member to the Local Authority whereas Sunnyside seen income come in totaling £13,754 for the secondment of specialist staff who were able to support children in Middlesbrough.

A number of schools were able to generate additional income whilst hiring out their halls and other facilities to groups within their local communities. Ayresome received £450 for hall hire lettings, West Park received £1,200 for hiring their hall to a local boy scout group as well as letting their Multi-Use Games Area for sports sessions. West View generated £7,177.55 for hiring out their sports hall and multi-use games area to local football and rugby clubs, Sunnyside received £540 for hall lettings to a local Brownies group and Rosebrook received £2,780 for hiring their hall to local church groups.

The purpose of the system of internal control

The system of internal control is designed to manage risk to a reasonable level rather than to eliminate all risk of failure to achieve policies, aims and objectives. It can, therefore, only provide reasonable and not absolute assurance of effectiveness. The system of internal control is based on an on-going process designed to identify and prioritise the risks to the achievement of Trust policies, aims and objectives, to evaluate the likelihood of those risks being realised and the impact should they be realised, and to manage them efficiently, effectively and economically. The system of internal control has been in place in Ad Astra Academy Trust for the period 1 September 2021 to 31 August 2022 and up to the date of approval of the annual report and financial statements.

Capacity to handle risk

The Board of Trustees has reviewed the key risks to which the Trust is exposed together with the operating, financial and compliance controls that have been implemented to mitigate those risks. The Board of Trustees is of the view that there is a formal ongoing process for identifying, evaluating and managing the Trust's significant risks that has been in place for the period 1 September 2021 to 31 August 2022 and up to the date of approval of the annual report and financial statements. This process is regularly reviewed by the board of Trustees.

The risk and control framework

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

- comprehensive budgeting and monitoring systems with an annual budget and periodic financial reports which are reviewed and agreed by the Board of Trustees
- regular reviews by the 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

AD ASTRA ACADEMY TRUST
(A Company Limited by Guarantee)

GOVERNANCE STATEMENT (CONTINUED)

The risk and control framework (continued)

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

The Board of Trustees has decided to buy-in an internal audit service from Davies Tracey (Chartered Accountants and Business Advisers).

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

- Testing of payroll systems
- Testing of purchase and procurement systems
- Testing of income systems
- Testing of control account/bank reconciliations
- Testing of business risk

On a periodic basis, the reviewer reports to the Board of Trustees through the Resources and Compliance Committee committee on the operation of the systems of control and on the discharge of the Board of Trustees financial responsibilities and annually prepares a short annual summary report to the committee outlining the areas reviewed, key findings, recommendations and conclusions to help the committee consider actions and assess year on year progress.

The internal auditors have delivered their schedule of work as planned and no material control issues have arisen as a result of their work.

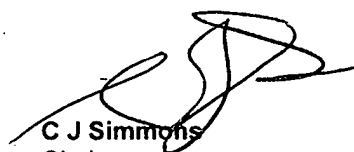
Review of effectiveness

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

- The work of the internal auditor:
- The work of the external auditor:
- The work of the executive managers within the Trust who have responsibility for the development and maintenance of the internal control framework.

The Accounting Officer has been advised of the implications of the result of their review of the system of internal control by the Resources and Compliance Committee 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 Board of Trustees on 9 December 2022 and signed on their behalf by:


C J Simmons
Chair


A A Brown OBE
Accounting Officer

AD ASTRA ACADEMY TRUST
(A Company Limited by Guarantee)

STATEMENT ON REGULARITY, PROPRIETY AND COMPLIANCE

As Accounting Officer of Ad Astra Academy Trust I have considered my responsibility to notify the Trust Board of Trustees and the Education & Skills Funding Agency (ESFA) of material irregularity, impropriety and non-compliance with terms and conditions of all funding received by the Trust, under the funding agreement in place between the Trust and the Secretary of State for Education. As part of my consideration I have had due regard to the requirements of the Academy Trust Handbook 2021.

I confirm that I and the Board of Trustees are able to identify any material irregular or improper use of all funds by the Trust, or material non-compliance with the terms and conditions of funding under the Trust's funding agreement and the Academy Trust Handbook 2021.

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.



A A Brown OBE
Accounting Officer
Date: 9 December 2022

AD ASTRA ACADEMY TRUST
(A Company Limited by Guarantee)

STATEMENT OF TRUSTEES' RESPONSIBILITIES
FOR THE PERIOD ENDED 31 AUGUST 2022

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 period. 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 2021 to 2022;
- 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:


C J Simmons
Chair
Date: 9 December 2022

AD ASTRA ACADEMY TRUST
(A Company Limited by Guarantee)

**INDEPENDENT AUDITORS' REPORT ON THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS TO THE MEMBERS OF AD
ASTRA ACADEMY TRUST**

Opinion

We have audited the financial statements of Ad Astra Academy Trust (the 'Trust') for the period ended 31 August 2022 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 2021 to 2022 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 Trust's affairs as at 31 August 2022 and of its incoming resources and application of resources, including its income and expenditure for the period then ended;
- have been properly prepared in accordance with United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice; and
- have been prepared in accordance with the requirements of the Companies Act 2006, the Charities SORP 2019 and the Academies Accounts Direction 2021 to 2022 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 Trust 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

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

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

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

AD ASTRA ACADEMY TRUST
(A Company Limited by Guarantee)

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

Other information

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

We have nothing to report in this regard.

Opinion on other 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 for the financial period for which the financial statements are prepared is consistent with the financial statements.
- the Trustees' Report has 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 Trust and its environment obtained in the course of the audit, we have not identified material misstatements in the Trustees' Report.

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

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

Responsibilities of Trustees

As explained more fully in the Trustees' Responsibilities Statement, the Trustees (who are also the directors of the Trust 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 Trust's ability to continue as a going concern, disclosing, as applicable, matters related to going concern and using the going concern basis of accounting unless the Trustees either intend to liquidate the Trust or to cease operations, or have no realistic alternative but to do so.

AD ASTRA ACADEMY TRUST
(A Company Limited by Guarantee)

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

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.

Irregularities, including fraud, are instances of non-compliance with laws and regulations. We design procedures in line with our responsibilities, outlined above, to detect material misstatements in respect of irregularities, including fraud. Our audit must be alert to the risk of manipulation of the financial statements and seek to understand the incentives and opportunities for management to achieve this.

We undertake the following procedures to identify and respond to these risks of non-compliance:

- Understanding the key legal and regulatory frameworks that are applicable to the Trust. We communicated identified laws and regulations throughout the audit team and remained alert to any indications of noncompliance throughout the audit. We determined the most significant of these to be the regulations set out by the DfE/ESFA. Our audit focuses on financial matters as set out in our regularity opinion. Other key laws and regulations included safeguarding, Health & Safety, GDPR and employment law
- Enquiry of trustees and management as to policies and procedures to ensure compliance and any known instances of non-compliance
- Review of board minutes and correspondence with regulators
- Enquiry of trustees and management as to areas of the financial statements susceptible to fraud and how these risks are managed
- Challenging management on key estimates, assumptions and judgements made in the preparation of the financial statements. These key areas of uncertainty are disclosed in the accounting policies
- Identifying and testing unusual journal entries, with a particular focus on manual journal entries.

Through these procedures, we did not become aware of actual or suspected non-compliance.

We planned and performed our audit in accordance with auditing standards but owing to the inherent limitations of procedures required in these areas, there is an unavoidable risk that we may not have detected a material misstatement in the accounts. The further removed non-compliance with laws and regulations is from the events and transactions reflected in the financial statements, the less likely we would become aware of it. The risk of not detecting a material misstatement due to fraud is higher than the risk of not detecting one resulting from error, as fraud may involve concealment, collusion, forgery, misrepresentations, or override of internal controls. We are not responsible for preventing non-compliance and cannot be expected to detect non-compliance with all laws and regulations..

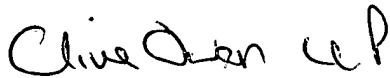
A further description of our responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements is located on the Financial Reporting Council's website at: www.frc.org.uk/auditorsresponsibilities. This description forms part of our Auditors' Report.

AD ASTRA ACADEMY TRUST
(A Company Limited by Guarantee)

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

Use of our report

This report is made solely to the trust's members, as a body, in accordance with Chapter 3 of Part 16 of the Companies Act 2006. Our audit work has been undertaken so that we might state to the Trust'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 Trust and its members, as a body, for our audit work, for this report, or for the opinions we have formed.



Kevin Shotton BA BFP FCA (Senior Statutory Auditor)

for and on behalf of

Clive Owen LLP

Chartered Accountants & Statutory Auditors

140 Coniscliffe Road

Darlington

County Durham

DL3 7RT

Date: 9/12/22

AD ASTRA ACADEMY TRUST
(A Company Limited by Guarantee)

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

In accordance with the terms of our engagement letter dated 16 September 2022 and further to the requirements of the Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA) as included in the Academies Accounts Direction 2021 to 2022, we have carried out an engagement to obtain limited assurance about whether the expenditure disbursed and income received by Ad Astra Academy Trust during the period 1 September 2021 to 31 August 2022 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 Ad Astra Academy Trust and ESFA in accordance with the terms of our engagement letter. Our work has been undertaken so that we might state to Ad Astra 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 Ad Astra Academy Trust and ESFA, for our work, for this report, or for the conclusion we have formed.

Respective responsibilities of Ad Astra Academy Trust's accounting officer and the reporting accountant

The accounting officer is responsible, under the requirements of Ad Astra Academy Trust's funding agreement with the Secretary of State for Education dated 22 December 2014 and the Academy Trust Handbook, extant from 1 September 2021, 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 2021 to 2022. We report to you whether anything has come to our attention in carrying out our work which suggests that in all material respects, expenditure disbursed and income received during the period 1 September 2021 to 31 August 2022 have not been applied to purposes intended by Parliament or that the financial transactions do not conform to the authorities which govern them.

AD ASTRA ACADEMY TRUST
(A Company Limited by Guarantee)

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

Approach

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

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

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

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

The work undertaken to draw to our conclusion includes:

- Review of governing body and committee minutes;
- Review of termly Internal Assurance reports;
- Completion of self assessment questionnaire by Accounting Officer;
- Review documentation provided to Trustees and Accounting Officer setting out responsibilities;
- Obtain formal letters of representation detailing the responsibilities of Trustees;
- Review of payroll, purchases and expenses claims on a sample basis;
- Confirmation that the lines of delegation and limits set have been adhered to;
- Evaluation of internal control procedures and reporting lines;
- Review cash payments for unusual transactions;
- Review of credit card transactions
- Review of registers of interests;
- Review related party transactions;
- Review of borrowing agreements;
- Review of land and building transactions;
- Review of potential and actual bad debts;
- Review an instance of gifts/hospitality to ensure in line with policy;
- Review whistleblowing procedures;
- Review pay policy and factors determining executive pay;
- Review of staff expenses;
- Review other income to ensure is in line with funding agreement;
- Review governance structure and number of meetings held; and
- Review whether there is a risk register in place.

AD ASTRA ACADEMY TRUST
(A Company Limited by Guarantee)

**INDEPENDENT REPORTING ACCOUNTANT'S ASSURANCE REPORT ON REGULARITY TO AD ASTRA
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 period 1 September 2021 to 31 August 2022 has not been applied to purposes intended by Parliament and the financial transactions do not conform to the authorities which govern them.



Clive Owen LLP
Reporting Accountant

140 Coniscliffe Road
Darlington
County Durham
DL3 7RT

Date: 9/12/22

AD ASTRA ACADEMY TRUST
(A Company Limited by Guarantee)

**STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES (INCORPORATING INCOME AND EXPENDITURE ACCOUNT)
FOR THE PERIOD ENDED 31 AUGUST 2022**

	Note	Unrestricted funds 2022 £000	Restricted funds 2022 £000	Restricted fixed asset funds 2022 £000	Total funds 2022 £000	Total funds 2021 £000
Income from:						
Donations and capital grants:	3					
Acquisition of existing academy		205	(2,735)	4,040	1,510	-
Other donations and capital grants		10	-	283	293	1,310
Other trading activities	5	328	-	-	328	194
Investments	6	-	-	-	-	1
Charitable activities	4	182	18,395	-	18,577	16,096
Total income		725	15,660	4,323	20,708	17,601
Expenditure on:						
Charitable activities	8	274	19,354	666	20,294	17,459
Total expenditure		274	19,354	666	20,294	17,459
Net income/ (expenditure)		451	(3,694)	3,657	414	142
Transfers between funds	19	-	(162)	162	-	-
Net movement in funds before other recognised gains/(losses)		451	(3,856)	3,819	414	142
Other recognised gains/(losses):						
Actuarial (losses)/gains on defined benefit pension schemes	27	-	15,525	-	15,525	(467)
Net movement in funds		451	11,669	3,819	15,939	(325)
Reconciliation of funds:						
Total funds brought forward		816	(10,733)	25,491	15,574	15,899
Net movement in funds		451	11,669	3,819	15,939	(325)
Total funds carried forward		1,267	936	29,310	31,513	15,574

AD ASTRA ACADEMY TRUST
(A Company Limited by Guarantee)
REGISTERED NUMBER: 09308398

BALANCE SHEET
AS AT 31 AUGUST 2022

	Note	2022 £000	2021 £000
Fixed assets			
Tangible assets	14	28,788	24,476
		<u>28,788</u>	<u>24,476</u>
Current assets			
Debtors	16	2,832	1,923
Cash at bank and in hand		1,657	1,301
		<u>4,489</u>	<u>3,224</u>
Creditors: amounts falling due within one year	17	(1,272)	(831)
Net current assets		<u>3,217</u>	<u>2,393</u>
Total assets less current liabilities		<u>32,005</u>	<u>26,869</u>
Creditors: amounts falling due after more than one year	18	(94)	(68)
Net assets excluding pension liability		<u>31,911</u>	<u>26,801</u>
Defined benefit pension scheme liability	27	(398)	(11,227)
Total net assets		<u><u>31,513</u></u>	<u><u>15,574</u></u>

AD ASTRA ACADEMY TRUST
(A Company Limited by Guarantee)
REGISTERED NUMBER: 09308398

BALANCE SHEET (CONTINUED)
AS AT 31 AUGUST 2022

	Note	2022 £000	2021 £000
Funds of the academy			
Restricted funds:			
Fixed asset funds	19	29,310	25,491
Restricted income funds	19	1,334	494
		<hr/>	<hr/>
Restricted funds excluding pension asset	19	30,644	25,985
Pension reserve	19	(398)	(11,227)
		<hr/>	<hr/>
Total restricted funds	19	30,246	14,758
Unrestricted income funds	19	1,267	816
		<hr/>	<hr/>
Total funds		<u>31,513</u>	<u>15,574</u>

The financial statements on pages 34 to 66 were approved and authorised for issue by the Trustees and are signed on their behalf, by:


C J Simmons
Chair
Date: 9 December 2022

AD ASTRA ACADEMY TRUST
(A Company Limited by Guarantee)

STATEMENT OF CASH FLOWS
FOR THE PERIOD ENDED 31 AUGUST 2022

	Note	2022 £000	2021 £000
Cash flows from operating activities			
Net cash provided by operating activities	21	216	564
Cash flows from investing activities	23	166	(143)
Cash flows from financing activities	22	(26)	(4)
Change in cash and cash equivalents in the period		356	417
Cash and cash equivalents at the beginning of the period		1,301	884
Cash and cash equivalents at the end of the period	24, 25	1,657	1,301

AD ASTRA ACADEMY TRUST
(A Company Limited by Guarantee)

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
FOR THE PERIOD ENDED 31 AUGUST 2022

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 Trust, 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 2021 to 2022 issued by ESFA, the Charities Act 2011 and the Companies Act 2006.

1.2 Fund accounting

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

Restricted fixed asset funds are resources which are to be applied to specific capital purposes imposed by 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.

1.3 Income

All income is recognised once the Trust has entitlement to the income, it is probable that the income will be received and the amount of income receivable 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 incorporating Income and Expenditure Account in the year for which it is receivable and any abatement in respect of the period is deducted from income and recognised as a liability.

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

• **Donations**

Donations are recognised on a receivable basis where receipt is probable and the amount can be reliably measured.

• **Other income**

Other income, including the hire of facilities, is recognised in the period in which it is receivable and to the extent the goods have been provided or on completion of the service.

AD ASTRA ACADEMY TRUST
(A Company Limited by Guarantee)

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
FOR THE PERIOD ENDED 31 AUGUST 2022

1. Accounting policies (continued)

1.3 Income (continued)

- **Transfer on conversion**

Where assets are received by the Trust 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 Trust. An equal amount of income is recognised as Transfer on Conversion within Donations and Capital Grant Income.

- **Transfer of existing academies into the academy**

Where assets and liabilities are received on the transfer of an existing academy into the 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 for the transfer of an existing academy into the academy within 'Income from Donations and Capital Grants' to the net assets acquired.

- **Donated fixed assets (excluding transfers on conversion or into the academy)**

Where the donated good is a fixed asset it is measured at fair value, unless it is impractical to measure this reliably, in which case the cost of the item to the donor should be used. The gain is recognised as 'Income from Donations and Capital Grants' and a corresponding amount is included in the appropriate fixed asset category and depreciated over the useful economic life in accordance with the academy's accounting policies.

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.

- **Charitable activities**

Expenditure on charitable activities are costs incurred on the Trust's educational operations, including support costs and those costs relating to the governance of the Trust appointed to charitable activities.

All expenditure is inclusive of irrecoverable VAT.

1.5 Going concern

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

AD ASTRA ACADEMY TRUST
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NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
FOR THE PERIOD ENDED 31 AUGUST 2022

1. Accounting policies (continued)

1.6 Tangible fixed assets

All assets costing more than £1,000 are capitalised and are carried at cost, net of depreciation and any provision for impairment.

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

Depreciation is provided on all tangible fixed assets 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:

Long leasehold property	- over 50 years
Long leasehold land	- over 125 years
Computer equipment	- over 3 years
Furniture and equipment	- over 5 years
Motor vehicles	- over 5 years

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

1.7 Operating leases

Rentals under operating leases are charged to the Statement of Financial Activities incorporating Income and Expenditure Account on a straight line basis over the lease term.

1.8 Interest receivable

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

1.9 Taxation

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

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

1.10 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.

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NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
FOR THE PERIOD ENDED 31 AUGUST 2022

1. Accounting policies (continued)

1.11 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.

1.12 Liabilities and provisions

Liabilities and provisions are recognised when there is an obligation at the Balance Sheet date as a result of a past event, it is probable that a transfer of economic benefit will be required in settlement, and the amount of the settlement can be estimated reliably. Liabilities are recognised at the amount that the Trust anticipates it will pay to settle the debt or the amount it has received as advanced payments for the goods or services it must provide. Provisions are measured at the best estimate of the amounts required to settle the obligation. Where the effect of the time value of money is material, the provision is based on the present value of those amounts, discounted at the pre-tax discount rate that reflects the risks specific to the liability. The unwinding of the discount is recognised within interest payable and similar charges.

1.13 Financial instruments

The Trust only holds basic financial instruments as defined in FRS 102. The financial assets and financial liabilities of the Trust and their measurement 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 16. 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 notes 17 and 17. Taxation and social security are not included in the financial instruments disclosure definition. Deferred income is not deemed to be a financial liability, as the cash settlement has already taken place and there is an obligation to deliver services rather than cash or another financial instrument.

1.14 Pensions

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

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

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

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NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
FOR THE PERIOD ENDED 31 AUGUST 2022

1. Accounting policies (continued)

1.14 Pensions (continued)

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.

2. 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 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 27, will impact the carrying amount of the pension liability. Furthermore a roll forward approach which projects results from the latest full actuarial valuation performed at 31 March 2019 has been used by the actuary in valuing the pensions liability at 31 August 2022. 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. In the current year the actuary has made assumptions to estimate the liability associated with McCloud Sargeant (McCloud) and GMP Indexation and Equalisation (GMP).

Goodwin

The case related to male spouse or civil partner of a female member is treated in the same way as a same-sex spouse or civil partner. Survivor benefits will be calculated using service from 1 April 1972, or 6 April 1978 if the marriage or civil partnership took place after the last day of pensionable service. This change will apply for deaths in respect of female members which occurred from 5 December 2005, which is the date that same-sex civil partnerships were introduced. This case was brought against the Teachers' Pension Scheme. Actuaries have estimated that the impact of Goodwin indexation to be less than 0.1% of total liabilities. Based on this estimate it would increase liabilities by £18,000 which has been assessed to be immaterial to the financial statements.

Depreciation – Depreciation is calculated so as to write off the cost of an asset, less its residual value, over the economic life of that asset. An estimate of the useful life of assets is detailed in the depreciation accounting policy. The value of depreciation charge during the year was £666,000.

Critical areas of judgment:

Land & Buildings - Land & buildings are held under a 125 year lease from Hartlepool Borough Council, Stockton Borough Council and Middlesbrough Borough Council. These assets are included on the Balance Sheet of the academy trust due to the significant risks and rewards of ownership belonging to the academy trust, the lease term being the major part of the economic life of the assets and the assets being of such a specialised nature that only the academy could use them without major modification.

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**NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
FOR THE PERIOD ENDED 31 AUGUST 2022**

3. Income from donations and capital grants

	Unrestricted funds 2022 £000	Restricted funds 2022 £000	Restricted fixed asset funds 2022 £000	Total funds 2022 £000	Total funds 2021 £000
Acquisition of existing academy	205	(2,735)	4,040	1,510	-
	<u>205</u>	<u>(2,735)</u>	<u>4,040</u>	<u>1,510</u>	<u>-</u>
Donations	10	-	-	10	213
Capital Grants	-	-	283	283	1,097
Subtotal	<u>10</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>283</u>	<u>293</u>	<u>1,310</u>
	<u>215</u>	<u>(2,735)</u>	<u>4,323</u>	<u>1,803</u>	<u>1,310</u>
Total 2021	<u>22</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>1,288</u>	<u>1,310</u>	

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NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
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4. Funding for the Trust's educational operations

	Unrestricted funds 2022 £000	Restricted funds 2022 £000	Total funds 2022 £000	Total funds 2021 £000
Academy's educational operations				
DfE/ESFA grants				
General Annual Grant (GAG)	-	13,445	13,445	11,365
Other DfE/ESFA grants				
Pupil Premium	-	1,706	1,706	1,589
PE and Sport Premium	-	142	142	135
UIFSM	-	240	240	307
Rates	-	50	50	59
Teachers' pay grant	-	22	22	155
Teachers' pension grant	-	62	62	421
Other DfE Group grants	-	413	413	13
	-	16,080	16,080	14,044
Other Government grants				
SEN	-	514	514	333
Early Years Funding	-	1,293	1,293	1,251
Local Authority grants	-	146	146	105
Other Government grants	-	-	-	83
	-	1,953	1,953	1,772
Other income from the academy's academy's educational operations	182	28	210	72
COVID-19 additional funding (DfE/ESFA)				
Catch-up Premium	-	-	-	208
Other DfE/ESFA COVID-19 funding	-	334	334	-
	-	334	334	208
	182	18,395	18,577	16,096
	182	18,395	18,577	16,096
Total 2021	72	16,024	16,096	

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**NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
FOR THE PERIOD ENDED 31 AUGUST 2022**

5. Income from other trading activities

	Unrestricted funds 2022 £000	Total funds 2022 £000	Total funds 2021 £000
Non student catering income	-	-	1
Rental and lettings income	12	12	5
Receipts from Supply Teachers Insurance claims	70	70	63
RPA Claims	33	33	4
Other income	213	213	121
	<u>328</u>	<u>328</u>	<u>194</u>
Total 2021	<u>194</u>	<u>194</u>	

6. Investment income

	Unrestricted funds 2022 £000	Total funds 2022 £000	Total funds 2021 £000
Bank interest	-	-	1
	<u>1</u>	<u>1</u>	
Total 2021	<u>1</u>	<u>1</u>	

AD ASTRA ACADEMY TRUST
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**NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
FOR THE PERIOD ENDED 31 AUGUST 2022**

7. Expenditure

	Staff Costs 2022 £000	Premises 2022 £000	Other 2022 £000	Total 2022 £000	Total 2021 £000
Trust's educational operations:					
Direct costs	14,600	-	779	15,379	13,251
Allocated support costs	1,174	1,576	2,165	4,915	4,208
	<u>15,774</u>	<u>1,576</u>	<u>2,944</u>	<u>20,294</u>	<u>17,459</u>
Total 2021	<u>13,916</u>	<u>1,419</u>	<u>2,124</u>	<u>17,459</u>	

In 2022, of the total expenditure, £274,000 (2021 - £150,000) was to unrestricted funds, £666,000 (2021 - £578,000) was to restricted fixed asset funds and £19,354,000 (2021 - £16,731,000) was to restricted funds.

There were no individual transactions exceeding £5,000 for:

- Compensation payments
- Gifts made by the trust
- Fixed asset losses
- Stock losses
- Unrecoverable debts
- Cash losses

8. Analysis of expenditure by activities

	Activities undertaken directly 2022 £000	Support costs 2022 £000	Total funds 2022 £000	Total funds 2021 £000
Trust's educational operations	<u>15,379</u>	<u>4,915</u>	<u>20,294</u>	<u>17,459</u>
Total 2021	<u>13,251</u>	<u>4,208</u>	<u>17,459</u>	

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NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
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8. Analysis of expenditure by activities (continued)

Analysis of direct costs

	Total funds 2022 £000	Total funds 2021 £000
Staff costs	14,600	12,610
Educational supplies	421	248
Staff development	7	1
Technology costs	7	90
Educational consultancy	250	180
Staff expenses	5	-
Supply insurance	71	117
Transport	18	5
	<u>15,379</u>	<u>13,251</u>

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NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
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8. Analysis of expenditure by activities (continued)

Analysis of support costs

	Total funds 2022 £000	Total funds 2021 £000
Net interest cost on pension scheme	225	158
Staff costs	1,174	1,306
Depreciation	666	578
Staff development	63	41
Technology costs	402	265
Staff expenses	6	3
Maintenance of premises	285	214
Cleaning	280	232
Other premises costs	158	101
Energy	267	155
Rent & rates	59	64
Insurance	58	57
Operating lease rentals	25	45
Catering	853	712
Legal costs - other	9	1
Security	11	7
Other costs	351	245
Governance costs	23	24
	<u>4,915</u>	<u>4,208</u>

9. Net income/(expenditure)

Net income/(expenditure) for the period includes:

	2022 £000	2021 £000
Operating lease rentals	40	45
Depreciation of tangible fixed assets	666	578
Fees paid to auditors for:		
- audit	16	14
- other services	1	4
	<u>1</u>	<u>4</u>

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**NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
FOR THE PERIOD ENDED 31 AUGUST 2022**

10. Staff

a. Staff costs

Staff costs during the period were as follows:

	2022 £000	2021 £000
Wages and salaries	10,854	9,785
Social security costs	1,051	911
Pension costs	3,651	3,083
	<u>15,556</u>	<u>13,779</u>
Supply costs	196	81
Staff restructuring costs	22	56
	<u>15,774</u>	<u>13,916</u>

Included within Operating costs of defined benefit pension schemes is a debit of £1,417,000 (2021: £1,029,000) in respect of the pension actuarial adjustment.

Staff restructuring costs comprise:

	2022 £000	2021 £000
Severance payments	22	56
	<u>22</u>	<u>56</u>

The academy trust paid 2 severance payments in the year. Both payments were in the 0 - £25,000 band.

b. Special staff severance payments

Included in staff restructuring costs are non-statutory/non-contractual severance payments totalling £8,000 (2021: £27,000). These comprised of payments to 2 individuals with payments of £4,000 each.

c. Staff numbers

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

	2022 No.	2021 No.
Teachers	148	137
Admin & Support	264	249
Management	32	31
	<u>444</u>	<u>417</u>

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**NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
FOR THE PERIOD ENDED 31 AUGUST 2022**

10. Staff (continued)

d. Higher paid staff

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

	2022 No.	2021 No.
In the band £60,001 - £70,000	6	6
In the band £70,001 - £80,000	4	4
In the band £80,001 - £90,000	1	1
	<u>11</u>	<u>11</u>

e. Key management personnel

The key management personnel of the Trust comprise the Trustees and the Senior Leadership Team as listed on page 1. The total amount of employee benefits (including employer pension contributions and employer national insurance contributions) received by key management personnel for their services to the trust was £2,346,000 (2021 £2,394,000).

11. Central services

The academy has provided the following central services to its academies during the period:

- Financial services
- IT
- HR
- Legal support services
- Educational support services
- Estates

The academy charges for these services on the following basis:

Based on flat 5.25% - 6.5% of recurring income.

The actual amounts charged during the period were as follows:

	2022 £000	2021 £000
West View Primary School	146	101
West Park Primary School	78	65
Brougham Primary School	116	78
Rosebrook Primary School	143	105
Crooksbar Primary School	72	59
Ayresome Primary School	289	206
Barnard Grove Primary School	102	76
Sunnyside Academy	43	-
Total	<u>989</u>	<u>690</u>

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**NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
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12. 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:

		2022 £000	2021 £000
A A Brown (CEO and Trustee)	Remuneration	75 - 80	70 - 75

During the period ended 31 August 2022, expenses totalling £528 were reimbursed or paid directly to 1 Trustee (2021: £Nil).

13. Trustees' and Officers' insurance

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

14. Tangible fixed assets

	Long-term leasehold property £000	Furniture and equipment £000	Computer equipment £000	Motor vehicles £000	Total £000
Cost or valuation					
At 1 September 2021	25,921	267	663	27	26,878
Additions	709	91	138	-	938
Acquisition of existing academy	4,023	11	6	-	4,040
At 31 August 2022	<u>30,653</u>	<u>369</u>	<u>807</u>	<u>27</u>	<u>31,856</u>
Depreciation					
At 1 September 2021	1,817	180	388	17	2,402
Charge for the period	464	41	155	6	666
At 31 August 2022	<u>2,281</u>	<u>221</u>	<u>543</u>	<u>23</u>	<u>3,068</u>
Net book value					
At 31 August 2022	<u><u>28,372</u></u>	<u><u>148</u></u>	<u><u>264</u></u>	<u><u>4</u></u>	<u><u>28,788</u></u>
At 31 August 2021	<u><u>24,104</u></u>	<u><u>87</u></u>	<u><u>275</u></u>	<u><u>10</u></u>	<u><u>24,476</u></u>

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**NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
FOR THE PERIOD ENDED 31 AUGUST 2022**

15. Transfer of existing academies into the academy

Sunnyside Academy

	Value reported by transferring trust £000	Fair value adjustments £000	Transfer in recognised £000
Intangible assets			
Tangible fixed assets			
Long-term leasehold property	4,023	-	4,023
Furniture and equipment	11	-	11
Computer equipment	6	-	6
Current assets			
Debtors due after one year	97	-	97
Cash at bank and in hand	563	-	563
Liabilities			
Creditors due within one year	(136)	-	(136)
Pensions			
Pensions - pension scheme liabilities	(3,091)	37	(3,054)
Net assets	<u>1,473</u>	<u>37</u>	<u>1,510</u>

16. Debtors

	2022 £000	2021 £000
Trade debtors	181	192
VAT repayable	470	80
Prepayments and accrued income	2,181	1,651
	<u>2,832</u>	<u>1,923</u>

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**NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
FOR THE PERIOD ENDED 31 AUGUST 2022**

17. Creditors: Amounts falling due within one year

	2022 £000	2021 £000
Other loans	8	8
Trade creditors	716	369
Other creditors	8	35
Accruals and deferred income	540	419
	<u>1,272</u>	<u>831</u>
	2022 £000	2021 £000
Deferred income		
Deferred income at 1 September 2021	176	147
Resources deferred during the period	207	176
Amounts released from previous periods	(176)	(147)
Deferred income at 31 August 2022	<u>207</u>	<u>176</u>

At the Balance Sheet date the Trust was holding funds of £207,000 received in advance for Rates grant, UIFSM grant relating to the following academic year and School led tutoring clawback.

18. Creditors: Amounts falling due after more than one year

	2022 £000	2021 £000
Other loans	<u>94</u>	<u>68</u>

Other loans includes CIF loans totaling £102,000 (2021: £76,000) from the ESFA. CIF loans have an annual interest rate of 2.29% repayable through GAG over a 10 year period on a monthly basis.

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

	Balance at 1 September 2021 £000	Income £000	Expenditure £000	Transfers in/out £000	Gains/ (Losses) £000	Balance at 31 August 2022 £000
Unrestricted funds						
Unrestricted income	816	725	(274)	-	-	1,267
Restricted general funds						
General Annual Grant (GAG)	494	13,764	(12,762)	(162)	-	1,334
Pupil Premium	-	1,706	(1,706)	-	-	-
Other DfE/ESFA grants	-	929	(929)	-	-	-
Covid-19 funding	-	334	(334)	-	-	-
SEN	-	514	(514)	-	-	-
Other Government grants	-	1,439	(1,439)	-	-	-
Other grants	-	28	(28)	-	-	-
Pension reserve	(11,227)	(3,054)	(1,642)	-	15,525	(398)
	(10,733)	15,660	(19,354)	(162)	15,525	936
Restricted fixed asset funds						
Legacy assets	23,064	3,586	(452)	-	-	26,198
Devolved Formula Capital	235	68	(50)	-	-	253
GAG capital expenditure	172	351	(72)	162	-	613
Academy Conversion Grant	1	-	(1)	-	-	-
Sports England	15	-	(3)	-	-	12
CIF funding	1,847	215	(24)	-	-	2,038
Awards for all	1	-	(1)	-	-	-
Sunshine Coaches/Variety club	6	-	-	-	-	6
Other restricted and donations	-	5	-	-	-	5

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

	Balance at 1 September 2021 £000	Income £000	Expenditure £000	Transfers in/out £000	Gains/ (Losses) £000	Balance at 31 August 2022 £000
Donations	2	-	(1)	-	-	1
Other DfE	148	98	(62)	-	-	184
	<u>25,491</u>	<u>4,323</u>	<u>(666)</u>	<u>162</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>29,310</u>
Total Restricted funds	<u>14,758</u>	<u>19,983</u>	<u>(20,020)</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>15,525</u>	<u>30,246</u>
Total funds	<u>15,574</u>	<u>20,708</u>	<u>(20,294)</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>15,525</u>	<u>31,513</u>

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

General Annual Grant (GAG) must be used for the normal running costs of the Trust including salaries and related costs, overheads, repairs and maintenance and insurance.

Pupil Premium is additional funding to be spent as the Trust sees fit to support deprived students.

Other DfE/ESFA grants consist of Teachers Pay and Teachers Pension grants to be used to fund increase in employer contributions rates, PE grants to be used in the provision of PE services, rates relief income, TcAF grants to fund the trusts expansion, a supplementary grant to help cover the increase in National Insurance contributions and Infant Free School Meals to be spent on catering for the pupils.

SEN income is to provide additional educational support for higher need pupils.

Other Government grants relate to funding received from Local Authorities for the provision of early years services.

Covid-19 funding has been awarded to schools to assist in the recovery education as a result of the pandemic.

Other grants relate to a SHINE grant to help support teachers and schools with educational challenges.

The pensions reserves is the liability due to the deficit on the Local Government Pension Scheme. Further details are shown in note 27.

The restricted fixed asset funds represent monies received to purchase fixed assets and fund maintenance. Depreciation is charged against each fund over the useful economic life of the associated assets.

A transfer of £162,000 has been made to Capital expenditure from GAG to reflect those items included within fixed assets which have been purchased using GAG monies:

Unrestricted funds include the income from catering with the relevant costs allocated accordingly.

Under the funding agreement with the Secretary of State, the Trust was not subject to a limit on the amount of GAG it could carry forward at 31 August 2022.

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

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19. Statement of funds (continued)

	Balance at 1 September 2020 £000	Income £000	Expenditure £000	Transfers in/out £000	Gains/ (Losses) £000	As restated balance at 31 August 2020 £000
Unrestricted funds						
Unrestricted income	677	289	(150)	-	-	816
Restricted general funds						
General Annual Grant (GAG)	49	11,365	(10,866)	(54)	-	494
Pupil Premium	-	1,589	(1,589)	-	-	-
Other Dfe/ESFA grants	19	1,090	(1,109)	-	-	-
Covid-19 catchup funding	-	208	(208)	-	-	-
SEN	-	333	(333)	-	-	-
Other Government grants	-	1,439	(1,439)	-	-	-
Pension reserve	(9,573)	-	(1,187)	-	(467)	(11,227)
	(9,505)	16,024	(16,731)	(54)	(467)	(10,733)
Restricted fixed asset funds						
Legacy Assets	23,472	-	(408)	-	-	23,064
Devolved Formula Capital	219	61	(45)	-	-	235
GAG capital expenditure	174	-	(56)	54	-	172
Academy Conversion Grant	1	-	-	-	-	1
Sports England	15	-	-	-	-	15
CIF funding	829	1,036	(18)	-	-	1,847
Awards for all	3	-	(2)	-	-	1
Other restricted and donations	9	-	(3)	-	-	6
Donations	5	-	(3)	-	-	2

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19. Statement of funds (continued)

	Balance at 1 September 2020 £000	Income £000	Expenditure £000	Transfers in/out £000	Gains/ (Losses) £000	Balance at 31 August 2021 £000
Other DfE	-	191	(43)	-	-	148
	<u>24,727</u>	<u>1,288</u>	<u>(578)</u>	<u>54</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>25,491</u>
Total Restricted funds	<u>15,222</u>	<u>17,312</u>	<u>(17,309)</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>(467)</u>	<u>14,758</u>
Total funds	<u><u>15,899</u></u>	<u><u>17,601</u></u>	<u><u>(17,459)</u></u>	<u><u>-</u></u>	<u><u>(467)</u></u>	<u><u>15,574</u></u>

Total funds analysis by academy

Fund balances at 31 August 2022 were allocated as follows:

	2022 £000	2021 £000
West View Primary School	505	406
West Park Primary School	106	97
Brougham Primary School	135	171
Rosebrook Primary School	404	325
Crooksbar Primary School	42	47
Ayresome Primary School	748	252
Barnard Grove Primary School	94	129
Sunnyside Academy	509	-
Central	58	(117)
	<u>2,601</u>	<u>1,310</u>
Total before fixed asset funds and pension reserve	2,601	1,310
Restricted fixed asset fund	29,310	25,491
Pension reserve	(398)	(11,227)
Total	<u><u>31,513</u></u>	<u><u>15,574</u></u>

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19. Statement of funds (continued)

Total cost analysis by academy

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

	Teaching and educational support staff costs £000	Other support staff costs £000	Educational supplies £000	Other costs excluding depreciation £000	Total 2022 £000	Total 2021 £000
West View Primary School	1,836	106	81	463	2,486	2,438
West Park Primary School	1,206	89	53	224	1,572	1,436
Brougham Primary School	1,455	71	60	373	1,959	1,829
Rosebrook Primary School	2,025	154	55	360	2,594	2,550
Crooksbarrow Primary School	1,058	79	40	245	1,422	1,351
Ayresome Primary School	3,045	145	66	657	3,913	3,658
Barnard Grove Primary School	1,420	136	39	251	1,846	1,652
Sunnyside Academy	893	85	21	144	1,143	-
Central	1,662	309	6	716	2,693	1,967
Academy	14,600	1,174	421	3,433	19,628	16,881

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20. Analysis of net assets between funds

Analysis of net assets between funds - current year

	Unrestricted funds 2022 £000	Restricted funds 2022 £000	Restricted fixed asset funds 2022 £000	Total funds 2022 £000
Tangible fixed assets	-	-	28,788	28,788
Current assets	1,267	2,600	622	4,489
Creditors due within one year	-	(1,172)	(100)	(1,272)
Creditors due in more than one year	-	(94)	-	(94)
Provisions for liabilities and charges	-	(398)	-	(398)
Total	1,267	936	29,310	31,513

Analysis of net assets between funds - prior year

	Unrestricted funds 2021 £000	Restricted funds 2021 £000	Restricted fixed asset funds 2021 £000	Total funds 2021 £000
Tangible fixed assets	-	-	24,476	24,476
Current assets	816	1,325	1,083	3,224
Creditors due within one year	-	(831)	-	(831)
Creditors due in more than one year	-	-	(68)	(68)
Provisions for liabilities and charges	-	(11,227)	-	(11,227)
Total	816	(10,733)	25,491	15,574

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21. Reconciliation of net income to net cash flow from operating activities

	2022 £000	2021 £000
Net income for the year (as per Statement of Financial Activities)	414	142
Adjustments for:		
Depreciation	665	578
Capital grants from DfE and other capital income	(283)	(1,097)
Interest receivable	-	(1)
Defined benefit pension scheme obligation inherited	3,054	-
Defined benefit pension scheme cost less contributions payable	1,417	1,028
Defined benefit pension scheme finance cost	225	159
Increase in debtors	(1,335)	(21)
Increase/(decrease) in creditors	623	(33)
Donated assets	(4,564)	(191)
Net cash provided by operating activities	216	564

22. Cash flows from financing activities

	2022 £000	2021 £000
Repayments of borrowing	(26)	(4)
Net cash used in financing activities	(26)	(4)

23. Cash flows from investing activities

	2022 £000	2021 £000
Dividends, interest and rents from investments	-	1
Purchase of tangible fixed assets	(392)	(306)
Capital grants from DfE Group	558	162
Net cash provided by/(used in) investing activities	166	(143)

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**NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
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24. Analysis of cash and cash equivalents

	2022 £000	2021 £000
Cash in hand and at bank	1,256	901
Notice deposits (less than 3 months)	401	400
Total cash and cash equivalents	<u>1,657</u>	<u>1,301</u>

25. Analysis of changes in net debt

	At 1 September 2021 £000	Cash flows £000	At 31 August 2022 £000
Cash at bank and in hand	1,301	356	1,657
Debt due within 1 year	(8)	-	(8)
Debt due after 1 year	(68)	(26)	(94)
	<u>1,225</u>	<u>330</u>	<u>1,555</u>

26. Capital commitments

	2022 £000	2021 £000
Contracted for but not provided in these financial statements		
Acquisition of tangible fixed assets	<u>233</u>	<u>-</u>

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27. 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 Middlesbrough Borough Council. Both are multi-employer defined benefit schemes.

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

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

Teachers' Pension Scheme

The Teachers' Pension Scheme (TPS) is a statutory, contributory, defined benefit scheme, governed by the Teachers' Pension Scheme Regulations 2014. Membership is automatic for full-time teachers in academies. All teachers have the option to opt-out of the TPS following enrolment.

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

Valuation of the Teachers' Pension Scheme

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

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

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

The employer's pension costs paid to TPS in the period amounted to £1,569,000 (2021 - £1,443,000).

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.

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27. Pension commitments (continued)

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 period ended 31 August 2022 was £886,000 (2021 - £807,000), of which employer's contributions totalled £665,000 (2021 - £607,000) and employees' contributions totalled £ 221,000 (2021 - £200,000). The agreed contribution rates for future years are 17.5% for employers and 5.5 - 12.5% for employees.

As described in note 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 period. 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.

Principal actuarial assumptions

	2022 %	2021 %
Rate of increase in salaries	4.05	3.60
Rate of increase for pensions in payment/inflation	3.05	2.60
Discount rate for scheme liabilities	4.25	1.70
Inflation assumption (CPI)	3.05	2.60
Commutation of pensions to lump sums	80.00	80.00

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

	2022 Years	2021 Years
Retiring today		
Males	21.7	21.9
Females	23.5	23.6
Retiring in 20 years		
Males	22.9	23.3
Females	25.3	25.4

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27. Pension commitments (continued)

Sensitivity analysis

	2022 £000	2021 £000
Discount rate +0.1%	(512)	(707)
Discount rate -0.1%	512	730
Mortality assumption - 1 year increase	(717)	(895)
Mortality assumption - 1 year decrease	717	895
CPI rate +0.1%	444	589
CPI rate -0.1%	(444)	(565)

Share of scheme assets

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

	At 31 August 2022 £000	At 31 August 2021 £000
Equities	12,196	9,753
Property	3,157	-
Cash and other liquid assets	2,455	1,024
Other	-	654
Total market value of assets	17,808	11,431

The actual return on scheme assets was £819,000 (2021 - £2,104,000).

The amounts recognised in the Statement of Financial Activities are as follows:

	2022 £000	2021 £000
Current service cost	(2,082)	(1,636)
Interest income	241	168
Interest cost	(466)	(326)
Total amount recognised in the Statement of Financial Activities	(2,307)	(1,794)

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

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

	2022 £000	2021 £000
Opening defined benefit obligation	23,558	19,086
Transferred in on existing academies joining the trust	6,662	-
Current service cost	2,082	1,636
Interest cost	466	326
Employee contributions	221	200
Actuarial (gains)/losses	(14,947)	2,403
Benefits paid	(106)	(93)
Closing defined benefit obligation	<u>17,936</u>	<u>23,558</u>

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

	2022 £000	2021 £000
Opening fair value of scheme assets	12,331	9,351
Restatement	-	162
Transferred in on existing academies joining the trust	3,608	-
Interest income	241	168
Actuarial gains	578	1,936
Employer contributions	665	607
Employee contributions	221	200
Benefits paid	(106)	(93)
Closing fair value of scheme assets	<u>17,538</u>	<u>12,331</u>

28. Operating lease commitments

At 31 August 2022 the academy had commitments to make future minimum lease payments under non-cancellable operating leases as follows:

	2022 £000	2021 £000
Amounts payable:		
Within 1 year	<u>-</u>	<u>15</u>

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NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
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29. Related party transactions

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

Expenditure related party transactions

West View Project Community Interest Company - a charity in which C Simmons (a Trustee of the Trust) has an involvement:

- The Trust purchased services totalling £6,000 (2021: £6,000) from West View Project Community Interest Company. There were no amounts outstanding at 31 August 2022 (2021: £Nil).
- The Trust made the purchases at arms' length.
- In entering into the transactions the Trust has complied with the requirements of the Academy Trust Handbook 2021.
- The element above £2,500 has been provided 'at no more than cost' and West View Project Community Interest Company has provided a statement of assurance confirming this.

Davies Tracey Limited - a company in which R Priestman (a Trustee of the Trust) has a position of influence:

- The Trust purchased internal audit services from Davies Tracey Limited totalling £8,000 (2021: £9,000). There were no amounts outstanding at 31 August 2022 (2021: £Nil).
- The Trust made the purchases at arms' length.
- In entering into the transactions the Trust has complied with the requirements of the Academy Trust Handbook 2021.
- The nature of the services provided are considered exempt to the ESFA.

Education Mutual Limited a company in which A A Brown OBE (a Trustee of the Trust) is a Non Executive Director:

- The Trust purchased staff absence insurance from Education Mutual Limited totalling £nil (2021: £47,000). At 31 August 2022 £nil (2021: £46,000) was due to Education Mutual Limited.
- The Trust made the purchases at arms' length.
- In entering into the transactions the Trust has complied with the requirements of the Academy Trust Handbook 2021.
- The element above £2,500 has been provided 'at no more than cost' and Education Mutual Limited has provided a statement of assurance confirming this.

Bondgate IT Services Ltd - a company in which G Brown (a Trustee of the Trust) is a Director:

- The Trust purchased IT services from Bondgate IT Services Ltd totalling £nil (2021: £2,000). There were no amounts outstanding at 31 August 2021.
- The Trust made the purchases at arms' length.
- In entering into the transactions the Trust has complied with the requirements of the Academy Trust Handbook 2021.

The Trust entered into the above transactions at arm's length following competitive tendering exercises where necessary in accordance with its financial regulations. C Simmons, R Priestman, A A Brown OBE and G Brown neither participated in nor influenced the tendering processes for their respective related parties.