Registration number: 11907285

Romero Catholic Academy Trust

(A company limited by guarantee)

Annual Report and Financial Statements

for the Year Ended 31 August 2021

Beever and Struthers
The Beehive
Lions Drive
Shadsworth Business Park
Blackburn
Lancashire
BB1 2QS

Romero Catholic Academy Trust

Contents

Romero Catholic Academy Trust

Reference and Administrative Details

Members	Bishop John Arnold Mrs Mary Hunter Canon Michael Cooke Canon Anthony McBride Mr Simon Smith
Directors	Mrs A M Ager Mr J F Corrigan Mr D M Fairclough Mr G F Greenhalgh Mr P S Gunn Mr J P Hickey Mrs H E Sullivan Mrs R C Owen (appointed 22 January 2021)
Chief Executive Officer	Mr D Callaghan (Accounting Officer)
Senior Management Team	Miss E Fleming, Chief Financial Officer Ms C Jenkinson, HR Manager
Principal and Registered Office	St John The Baptist RC Primary School Thames Avenue Burnley England BB10 2PZ
Company Registration Number	11907285
Auditors	Beever and Struthers The Beehive Lions Drive Shadsworth Business Park Blackburn Lancashire BB1 2QS
Bankers	Lloyds TSB 7 Manchester Road Burnley Lancashire BB11 1HT

Reference and Administrative Details (continued)

Solicitors	Browne Jackson 14th Floor No. 1 Spinningfields 1 Hardman Square Manchester M3 3EB

Romero Catholic Academy Trust

Director's Report for the Year Ended 31 August 2021

The Directors present their annual report together with the financial statements and auditors' report of Romero Catholic Academy Trust (The "Charitable Company") for the year ended 31 August 2021. The annual report serves the purposes of both a Directors' report, and a Trustees' report under company law. The Catholic Academy Trust (CAT) operates academies for pupils aged 3-16, serving the catchment area in within the Diocese of Salford of Lancashire, Blackburn with Darwen and Calderdale. There are currently no schools within Blackburn with Darwen converted to the Trust. The numbers on roll are 2,501 pupils as reported at the 7th October 2021. The schools' combined capacity is 2,627.

Structure, governance and management

Constitution

The trust is a company limited by guarantee and is an exempt charity. The charitable company's memorandum and articles of association are the primary governing documents of the academies. The Directors of Romero Catholic Academy Trust are also the Trustees of the charitable company for the purpose of company law. The charitable company operates as Romero Academy Trust. The company registration number is 11907285.

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

Members' liability

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

Directors' indemnities

Professional Indemnity Insurance is in place to protect Members, Directors and Officers from claims arising from negligent acts, errors or omissions occurring on Trust business. Note 11 provides further details in relation to the insurance policy.

Method of recruitment and appointment or election of Directors

The members of the Trust are responsible for the appointment of the Directors. The recruitment of Directors is mainly dependent on the skill gaps that the members identify and upon the candidate's expertise, experience and skills. The number of Directors shall be a minimum of three but shall not be subject to any maximum, as referenced in the Articles of Association and are appointed for a term of four years.

Policies and procedures adopted for the induction and training of Directors

Directors are appointed on the skills they bring to the board to maintain a robust overview and governance throughout the Trust. Prior to conversion, the Directors agreed the Trust's vision and ethos, committee structure and organisation and agreed the scheme of delegation. Directors receive information relating to the Trust, including policies and procedures and receive an induction pack on the roles and responsibilities of being a Directors. Directors are subject to enhanced DBS checking.

Directors received the following training throughout the year ended 31st August 2021:

- Ofsted Framework and the role of the Directors within inspection
- Strategic Safeguarding for School Trusts
- Safeguarding & Prevent
- Building the concept of a MAT dividend

Appropriate skill gap analysis is undertaken annually which is then used to form a training programme for the 2021-22 academic year.

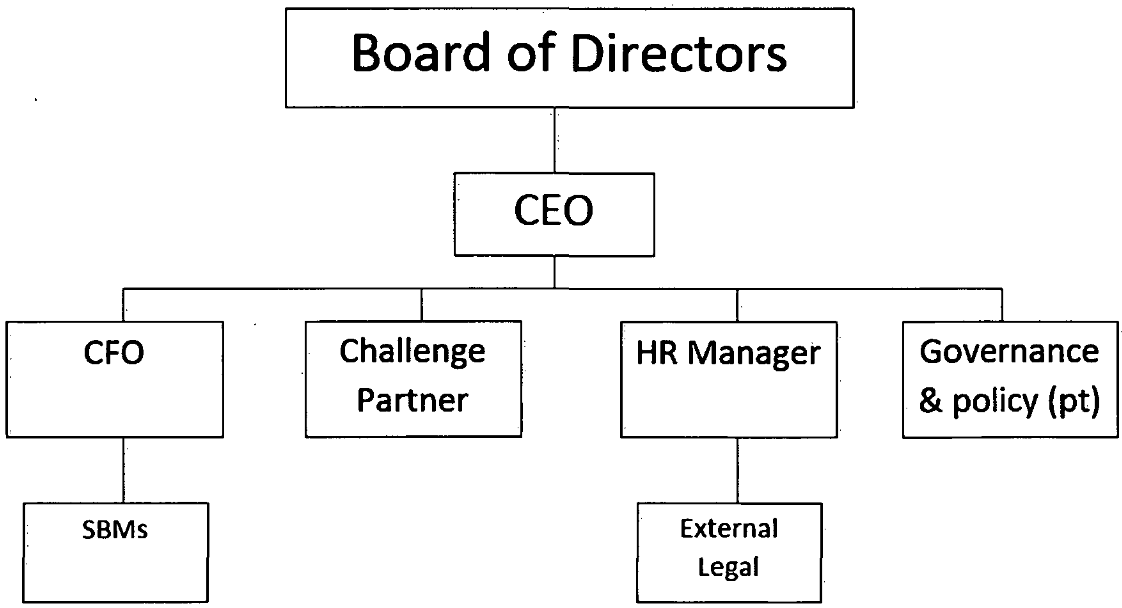
Organisational structure

The organisational structure is set out in the Memorandum and Articles of Romero Catholic Academy Trust. The aim of the structure is to devolve responsibility and encourage involvement in decision making at all levels. Directors have overall responsibility and ultimate decision making at all levels. The Directors also have overall responsibility for strategic direction and growth of the Trust, adopting an annual plan and budget, monitoring the Trust and academies by the use of financial management and other performance information; making staff appointments to the key leadership posts and approving the Annual Report and financial statements. They are also responsible for all matters relating to finance and personnel and for setting the Trust's general policies.

The Directors are responsible for ensuring the Local Governing Boards (LGB) fulfil their statutory obligations in a manner which will allow the Trust to fulfil its aims, ensuring procedures are in place to ensure: regularity, propriety and value for money, setting general policies, budget planning and monitoring and major decision making about the direction of the trust, capital expenditure and senior staff appointments. The CEO is the Accounting Officer and is supported by the school improvement team and Executive Central Team. The Central Team is responsible for implementing the policies laid down by the Directors and reporting back to them. The Directors delegate day to day operation of the academies to the Headteachers in each school who are supported by school leadership.

The Directors have clear terms of reference and have a sub-committee for Finance, Audit and Resources that meet quarterly. In addition, a Nomination and a Remuneration committee was instated in the 20/21 financial year, that meets annually. The Directors have Local Governing Bodies (LGB) in each Academy. The LGBs also have clear terms of reference and work from the Trust's Scheme of Delegation. Each Committee and LGB will meet at least on a termly basis. Reports from the sub-committee(s) and LGBs will be available to the Directors.

Organisational Structure:



Roles and responsibilities of Members, Directors, Local Governing Boards and Chief Executive Officer of the Catholic Academy Trust. Headteachers of the schools are clearly defined within the Scheme of Delegation.

Director Board

Mrs A Ager
Mr J Corrigan
Mr D Fairclough
Mr G Greenhalgh
Mr P Gunn
Mr J Hickey
Mrs H Sullivan
Ms R Owen (appointed on 22nd January 2021)

Finance, Audit & Resources Committee

Mrs A Ager
Mr G Greenhalgh
Mr P Gunn
Mr J Hickey

Arrangements for setting pay and remuneration of key management personnel

The Directors met as a Renumeration Committee to set the pay for the Chief Executive Officer, and members of the Executive Central Team and headteachers. The Remuneration Committee will receive a report which will also review all other pay increases in a report provided by the Chief Executive Officer annually.

Principal Risks and Uncertainties

The directors have assessed the major risks, to which the Trust is exposed, in particular those relating specifically to teaching provision of facilities and other operational areas of the Trust, and its finances. The directors have implemented a number of systems to assess risks that the school faces, especially in the operational areas and in relation to the control of finance. Where significant financial risk still remains, they have ensured they have ensured additional support and monitoring mitigate against the risks.

The Trust has fully implemented the requirements of the Safe Recruitment procedures and all staff have received training in this area in addition to training on Child Protection.

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 within the risk register.

Trade union facility time

The Trade Union (Facility Time Publication Requirements) Regulations 2017 came into force in April 2017, which put in place provisions in the Trade Union Act 2016 requiring relevant public-sector employers to publish specified information related to facility time provided to trade union officials.

In-line with the regulations, Romero Catholic Academy Trust is required to publish the following information relating to trade union officials and facility time (figures cover the period 1st September 2020 to 31st August 2021).

Relevant union officials

Number of employees who were relevant union officials during the relevant period	Full-time equivalent employee number
1	-

Percentage of time spent on facility time

Percentage of time	Number of employees
100%	1

Percentage of pay bill spent on facility time

	2021
Provide the total cost of facility time	57,206
Provide the total pay bill	57,206
Provide the percentage of the total pay bill spent on facility time, calculated as: (total cost of facility time ÷ total pay bill) x 100	100

Related Parties and other connected charities and organisations

The Articles of Association for Romero Catholic Academy Trust express an alignment with the Diocese of Salford practices: 'To co-operate and work together to provide a framework for education which is in accordance with the teachings, doctrines, discipline and norms of the Catholic Church and with any guidelines and policies of the Salford Diocesan Department for Education.'

The Trust works closely with the Diocesan Education Office and all Catholic schools within the Diocese, through the Diocesan Primary Partnership and the Diocesan Secondary Heads group.

Engagement with employees (including disabled persons)

During the 2020/2021 period The Trust has engaged with its employees via CEO email communication and each academy's Headteacher. The Trust communicates key decisions and matters of importance after each Board meeting at Headteacher and School Business Manager forums, which allows for employee updates to be provided at each academy's regular leadership team meetings. Communication from employees back to the Trust has occurred via the completion of employee engagement surveys. HR is exploring the detail further with employees on a one-to-one basis with a view to analysing the findings and considering key improvement initiatives. Moving forward, the Trust will explore more innovative ways of communicating with employees, including an intranet platform.

The Trust has an established framework in place for consultation and discussion via a Trade Union Recognition Agreement. The Trust also pays facilities time to recognise the importance of trade unions in the employer-employee relationship. In the Summer Term a Wellbeing Policy was rolled out across all academies within the Trust and although this Policy is intended to be nothing but supportive, comments from the union representatives were sought prior to rollout. Going forward there will be termly meetings with the Trust CEO, HR Manager and Union representatives to consult on policy development and employee relations issues.

Headteacher Performance Management is dealt with by the CEO and objectives are layered to reflect the key priorities at both Academy and Trust level. Headteachers organise the performance management arrangements for all employees within each Academy to ensure performance of employees is linked to key priorities and support the Trust's overall vision and strategic priorities.

The Trust has an Equalities Statement, accessible via the Website (Equalities-statement.pdf (romerocat.org) which deals with its responsibilities under the Equality Act 2010 and to meet the Public Sector Equality Duty. This sets out the Trust's commitment to prohibit unfair treatment and achieve equal opportunities in the classroom, the workplace and in wider society, and to embed equality considerations in day-to-day school practice to tackle discrimination and inequality. The Trust's Equalities Statement confirms that as an employer 'the Trust must not discriminate against a potential employee in respect of whether to offer a job or the terms on which a position is offered and must not discriminate against an existing employee in respect of the benefits, facilities and services offered to employees, including training opportunities, promotion or dismissal'.

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

The overall vision of the Romero Catholic Academy Trust is wider than the provision of education to our pupils. The Trust and our schools recognise that we are part of a community of stakeholders and our vision reflects this ethos:

'Our schools within the trust will work in partnership with each other to provide deep levels of support to staff and to expand the opportunities for our pupils. We work with families and parishes to promote strong, positive relationships. Every school in the Trust is on a journey of continual improvement, aspiring to be more, not have more.'

Directors and governors have a crucial role to play in connecting their school with the wider community of business and other professional people in order to enhance the education and career aspirations of pupils. The Board encourages each secondary school to have a nominated individual who takes a strategic interest in careers education and guidance and encourages employer engagement. Each of the school local governing bodies are further developing their links with parents and the wider community.

Objectives and activities

Objects and aims

The Romero Catholic Academy Trust exists to secure 3-16 Catholic Education in the Diocese of Salford.

Within the Trust, our academies are a family of Catholic schools, inspired by Jesus to love, learn and achieve.

Within Romero Catholic Academy Trust learning will take place in communities inspired by the Gospel, where Christ's commandment to 'love one another as I have loved you' creates an ethos which is expressed in positive relationships within and beyond our schools. All our schools promote the kindness, dignity, self-esteem and full development of each person who is made in God's image and uniquely loved by God.

Our schools are living communities of faith, service, prayer and worship. Our schools are inclusive; we have a culture of love where people of diverse identities are recognised, welcomed, respected and cherished. We seek to make a difference to all groups of children, especially the most vulnerable in our society. Our schools within the trust will work in partnership with each other to provide deep levels of support to staff and to expand the opportunities for our pupils. Each of the school local governing bodies are further developing their links with parents and the wider community.

We work with families and parishes to promote strong, positive relationships. Every school in the Trust is on a journey of continual improvement, aspiring to be more, not have more.

Romero Catholic Academy Trust Curriculum Intent

The Trust has a curriculum that provides all pupils, regardless of their aptitude, interest or background, the knowledge, skills and character development to feel success in learning and ambition for their future. Each school's curriculum will be bespoke and distinctive to the needs of their pupils and communities but share common aims

Curriculum Aims:

1. Develop young people with active and creative minds, engendering a sense of compassion and understanding of others and the courage to act on their beliefs, enabling them to make a lasting contribution to their local communities.
2. Ensures that religious education is a priority in all schools
3. Responds to the health and social needs of pupils
4. Ensure the holistic development of a pupil's character to instil confidence, personal skills and the drive to fulfil their dreams and potential in any social context.
5. Provide a challenging and inspiring academic core curriculum for all pupils to study to ensure no one is disadvantaged or restricted in their future education opportunities or career prospects.
6. Facilitate higher order thinking of pupils using cognitive resources linked to fundamental concepts (core knowledge) that have been located in their long-term memory so that pupils know and remember more.
7. Integrate learning experiences which facilitate the rapid closure of gaps in both academic progress and personal development
8. Embrace a cross-phase approach to curriculum design to ensure continuity in provision through the primary and secondary phases, leading to a shared understanding of our pedagogies in each phase and clear links in the progression of learning fundamental concepts.
9. Offer meaningful academic and vocational learning pathways from KS4 onwards.
10. Grow pupil's love of learning and an appreciation of the beauty of using new ideas and skills to explain and shape our world.

Three-year Strategic Plan

The Trust is committed to delivering the above benefits, whilst at the same time retaining the identities and best aspects of all six schools. Each school has kept its own name, headteacher and local governing board, and will continue to focus on delivering quality teaching within their local community.

Objectives, strategies and activities

The Trust has set out the main objectives it wants to pursue in the Trust 3-year Strategic Aims document. The plan sets out the Trust's vision, values, outcomes and priorities for the period 2020-2023 as follows:

Strategic Aim 1: Mission and Ethos
Through our Catholic faith, promote the academic, spiritual, emotional and social growth of the individual child and young person

Objectives
1.1 To ensure strong links between school and parish
1.2 To ensure all academies are well prepared for the Diocesan Section 48 Inspection
1.3 To enable schools to participate in the wider life of the Trust and the Diocese
1.4 To provide opportunities for all pupils and staff to deepen and explore their faith
1.5 To ensure that Religious Education is a high priority core subject in schools
1.6 To ensure Catholic social teaching is embedded in the curriculum and the life of the school including our responsibilities for the environment and care for our common home.

Strategies Used
• Establish a network of Religious Education subject leads across the Trust's schools with additional support from the diocesan Religious Education leads
• Headteacher within the Trust has been fully trained as a Section 48 inspector (inspections have been suspended until September 2022).
• Develop the use of social media and online presentations to maintain links with the liturgical calendar of the Church during the pandemic

Strategic Aim 2: Teaching, Learning and Assessment
To ensure that all our academies provide the very best teaching in order to promote and provide high quality learning for all our children and young people and ensuring that there is support in place for teachers to achieve this. We aim to develop 'life-long learners' who have a thirst for knowledge as a result of high quality teaching and assessment.

Objectives
2.1 To implement a CPD programme that ensures that all our staff have the right skills to raise standards further, deliver good teaching and learning and disseminate good practice to ensure rapid improvement
2.2 To secure high quality teaching and learning
2.3 To ensure every academy has a relevant, rich and broad curriculum
2.4 To ensure that all vulnerable groups make at least good progress
2.5 To use assessment proportionately to inform and progress children's learning.

Strategies Used

• Establish subject networks across the Trust's schools
• Headteacher appraisal focused on ensuring the full curriculum is delivered despite school closure as a result of the pandemic
• On line resources developed and teachers trained in the expectations of on-line learning
• Curriculum reviews focus on the structure, sequencing and assessment within the curriculum

Strategic Aim 3: Academy Improvement

To establish a self-sustaining, system-led, collaborative approach to improvement that enables rapid improvement where required

Objectives

3.1 To establish a self-sustaining, system-led collaborative approach to improvement that enables rapid improvement when required
3.2 To develop school-to-school support for leadership
3.3 To build effective links to outstanding providers outside of the Trust to support continuing improvement
3.4 To ensure all schools operate effective quality assurance and self-evaluation
3.5 To ensure that all schools have effective development planning leading to improvement
3.6 To enhance the Trust's ability to develop the next generation of school leaders in both phases
3.7 To ensure all schools are well prepared for Ofsted inspection

Strategies Used

• Common reporting systems have been adopted across the Trust's schools to enable comparison of performance and identify areas foe development
• Trust staff have been fully trained as Ofsted inspectors
• Peer review of self-evaluation and school improvement priorities is supported by external quality assurance
• Trust visits to other Multi academy trusts enable challenge on other approaches to school improvement and future proofing our systems.

Public benefit

The Trust's aims and achievements are set out within this report and have been undertaken to further the charitable purposes for the public benefit, including the provision of state funded education. The Directors have complied with the duty under section 4 of the Charities Act 2011, to have due regard to the public benefit guidance published by the Charity Commission for England and Wales. The Directors have considered this guidance in deciding what activities the Trust should undertake and consider its aims are demonstrable for the public benefit. Individual schools within the Trust contribute directly to their own community through initiatives such as the letting out of premises to community groups and working within their local parishes to develop community involvement in each academy and the church.

Strategic Report

Achievements and performance
This year the Trust has prioritised:

The full reopening of the school within a safe environment and that the broad balanced curriculum is delivered following the school closures as a result of the Covis-19 pandemic. To achieve this schools ensured that:

•Effective risk assessment is in place, regularly reviewed and implemented
•The Catholic life of the school is maintained through collective acts of worship, observation of the liturgical year and charitable work within the restrictions
•Pupils who are absent through Covid-19 related absence receive their education entitlement including through on-line learning when required
•Child protection and safeguarding remains a priority, including the mental health and wellbeing of pupils.
•Pastoral support for pupils at home is reviewed and new approaches implemented where appropriate
•Staff wellbeing is regularly reviewed and recorded to ensure a duty of care

Immediate action is taken to identify where children have gaps in their learning, as result of the school closure, and planned intervention takes place to address these gaps. To achieve this schools ensured that:

•The school improvement plan clearly identifies actions, time scales and cost for intervention.
•There is a clear plan and audit trail of the use of catch up funding for governors and trust leaders to review each term.
•Pupils with SEND and Disadvantaged pupils' progress is tracked and additional intervention is put in place when required
•Data is collected to monitor length and frequency of pupil absence due to COVID-19 allowing for further targeted intervention.
•Engagement and communication with parents are maintained so that they are aware of the school's intervention and can more effectively support their child's learning.
•To be able to confidently report to governors and trust leaders on the quality of teaching and learning across the school.

Strategic Report

Within these crisis priorities, the strategic aims have remained a focus, albeit with clear limitations, and we have sort to retain and embed progress made in previous years including:

• Establish the central school improvement and support offer.
• All Trust staff and leaders prioritising increasing their understanding of how children learn and the effectiveness of their subject pedagogy.
• Establish a collaborative response to priority areas for school improvement.
• Developing provision for a 'continuum of professional development' and wellbeing for all Trust staff
• Developing a Trust-wide school improvement framework commensurate with EEF model
• Standardise self-evaluation and Headteachers' report to LGBs to enable effective comparisons and quality assurance
• Agree headteacher appraisal objectives that are in synergy with the Trust's priorities and aims
• Implement a robust training programme for school business managers to ensure compliance with the Academies financial handbook/Academies Handbook

Achievements and Performance: Key Performance Indicators (2020-21)

Phonics screening, Key Stage 2 SATs and GCSE and vocational examinations were cancelled in 2021 due to COVID 19. Previous data would be before the schools converted to the Romero Catholic Academy Trust. Therefore, the schools' self-evaluation (SEF) are used as a 'proxy' for attainment, progress and standards. The schools' previous data is available through the DfE https://www.compare-schoolperformance.service.gov.uk/find-a-school-in-england.

School Self Evaluation

St Augustine's RC Primary

	Inadequate	Requires Improvement			Good			Outstanding		
		Emerging	Secure	Strong	Emerging	Secure	Strong	Emerging	Secure	Strong
[redacted]						○				
Quality of Education						◎	●			
Behaviour & Attitudes								○	○	
Personal Development						○			●	
[redacted]						○				

○ Previous Judgment (January 2018) ● Current Judgment (November 2021)

All Saints RC High School

	Inadequate	Requires Improvement			Good			Outstanding		
		Emerging	Secure	Strong	Emerging	Secure	Strong	Emerging	Secure	Strong
[redacted]					●					
Quality of Education				○	●					
Behaviour & Attitudes							●			
Personal Development							○ ●			
[redacted]					●					

○	previous judgement (1/10/20)
●	current judgement (1/9/21)

- Previously judged good by Ofsted in January 2016.

Strategic Report

Blessed Trinity RC College

	Inadequate	Requires Improvement			Good			Outstanding		
		Emerging	Secure	Strong	Emerging	Secure	Strong	Emerging	Secure	Strong
						○				
Quality of Education					○ ●					
Behaviour & Attitudes						○ ●				
Personal Development						○ ●				
					○					

○ previous judgement –(October 2020)

● current judgement – (November 2021)

St John the Baptist RC Primary

	Inadequate	Requires Improvement			Good			Outstanding		
		Emerging	Secure	Strong	Emerging	Secure	Strong	Emerging	Secure	Strong
					○					
Quality of Education						●				
Behaviour & Attitudes					○		●			
Personal Development					○		●			
					○					

○ previous judgement –(Ofsted 30.01. 2018)

● current judgement – (October 2021)

St Joseph's RC Primary

	Inadequate	Requires Improvement			Good			Outstanding		
		Emerging	Secure	Strong	Emerging	Secure	Strong	Emerging	Secure	Strong
				○						
Quality of Education				●						
Behaviour & Attitudes						○ ●				
Personal Development						○ ●				
				○						

○ previous judgement – January 2019 (old framework)

● current judgement – November 2021 (new framework)

Romero Catholic Academy Trust

Director's Report for the Year Ended 31 August 2021 (continued)

Strategic Report

St Mary's RC Primary

	Inadequate	Requires Improvement			Good			Outstanding		
		Emerging	Secure	Strong	Emerging	Secure	Strong	Emerging	Secure	Strong
[illegible]					● ○					
Quality of Education				○	●					
Wider strategies Behaviour & Attitudes					● ○					
Wider strategies Personal Development					●					
[illegible]					● ○					
[illegible]					● ○					

○ previous judgement –July 2020

● current judgement – September 2021

Ofsted

Ofsted suspended routine inspections until September 2021. No schools received monitoring visits as part of the Covid-19 monitoring of provision.

Going concern

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

Promoting the success of the academy

The Board of Directors seek to embed a culture within the Trust of the highest standards of conduct that matches our strategic objectives and in doing so delivers benefits to all our stakeholders including our members, employees and the local communities and families that we serve.

Decisions taken by the Board of Directors will consider any impact over the longer term with reference to each of these stakeholder groups and the need to act fairly and with integrity at all times. As an example this will extend to ensuring we act as a caring employer and maintain effective working relationships with key suppliers who work with the Trust. We will also evaluate the impact of our operations on the environment and seek to lead by example in reducing our carbon footprint. By acting in this way we will ensure the success of Romero Catholic Academy Trust is promoted throughout our communities who will also then share in our success.

Strategic Report

Financial review

During the year Romero Catholic Academy Trust has received income of £16,253,398 (2020: £27,308,218).

Comprising of the following types of funding for all schools within the Romero Catholic Academy Trust;

- GAG funding
- DFC Annual allocation
- Primary PE and Sport Premium
- Teacher Pay Grant
- Teachers' Pension Contribution
- High Needs Funding
- LAC Funding
- Pupil Premium Funding
- Free School Meal Supplementary Grant
- Universal Infant Free school meals

Over the year Romero Catholic Academy Trust expended £17,277,028 (2020: £9,458,950), resulting in net deficit of £1,023,630 (2020: net income of £17,849,269) leading to reserves carried forward of £14,630,639 (2020: £16,625,269). Of this a deficit of £6,922,092 (2020: £4,541,323) which related to restricted funds for the academies which is being carried forward to be utilised in future years. £1,239,601 (2020: £924,685) of unrestricted funds are to be used within the Academies Charitable objectives. The Trust also has a restricted fixed assets fund of £20,313,130 (2020 £20,241,907) which is being carried forward and will be spent in line with the Capital Grant programme and offset future depreciation charges.

During the financial year the Trust has been affected by the COVID-19 pandemic, extra funding was provided by the ESFA which was not originally budgeted for and extra expenses were incurred, particularly in relation to supply teaching costs. All the schools within the Trust were not adversely affected from a financial perspective as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic due to the extra funding provided. However, the lasting effect of the pandemic leaves the financial position going forward with a level of uncertainty around staffing expenditure in particular, especially as there is no certainty around any further funding to assist schools with further un budgeted costs should an academy Trust hold more than 4% of funding as reserves.

During the year the Accounting Officer has been working with the Central Team, the business managers and the Trust's external auditors to implement efficient and quality financial management systems.

These systems are continuously under review and will be implemented at each school as they open. The Trust's internal auditors were appointed during the year and will continue working with the trust going forward.

The Trust occupies land, including buildings, which are owned by its Members; the Diocese of Salford. The Members are the providers of the schools on the same basis as when they were maintained schools. The continuing permission of the Members is pursuant to, and subject to, the Members' charitable objectives and is part of the Catholic Church's contribution since 1847 to provide state funded education in partnership with the state. Having therefore considered the basis of which the Trust is occupying the land and buildings the Directors have concluded that the value of 5 of the Trust schools land and buildings will not be recognised on the Trust's balance sheet.

Strategic Report

Reserves policy

The amount of reserves held in the Financial Review noted above. The level of reserves held at each school at 31st August 2021 is considered to be sufficient and in-line with the Trust Reserves Policy. The Trust needs to hold reserves to protect its activities by providing a financial comfort zone against an unpredictable environment and to make sufficient provision for future cash flow requirements and capital procurement. Further reasons are listed below:

• Contingency fund to deal with minor adjustments to operational expenditure from some budget headings;
• A planned accumulation of funds to pay for some major construction work or project;
• Expenditure held over to the following year to withstand variations in the level of funding to the Trust to balance out variations in funding levels; and
• Potential redundancy payments to staff.

In order to achieve this sustainability moving forward, the Trust has implemented within its policy that restricted reserves are only available once the CAT has met its commitments and other planned expenditure and is in accordance with the limitations outlined in the original funding.

As noted above, the restricted general reserves carried forward are a surplus of £223,908 (2020: £181,677). This is after accounting for the pension deficit reserve of £7,146,000 (2020: £4,723,000). Excluding the pension deficit reserve and designated funds, the total restricted and unrestricted general funds are £1,463,509 (2020: £1,106,362) as at 31st August 2021. Reserves held in excess of the target reserves will be reviewed by the CAT on a regular basis and an appropriate range of options will be considered which might include releasing the funds into revenue budget in furtherance of the CAT's objectives, assigning funds to appropriate designated reserves as may be determined by the CAT; or investing the funds to generate further income to allow expansion of the CAT's work.

The Board of Directors ensure that the Reserves Policy is in accordance with the requirements laid down in the Academies Financial Handbook by the ESFA. The Department for Education expects the Trust to use their allocated funding for the full benefit of current pupils. If Trusts have surplus, they must have a clear plan for how it will be used to benefit their pupils. It is the policy of the Trust to have reserves which can be used for future education purposes in line with the development plans.

Under accounting standard FRS102, it is necessary to charge projected deficits on the Local Government Pension Scheme, which is provided for support staff, to the restricted fund. This resulted in the pension funds showing a deficit of £7,146,000 at 31st August 2021. It should be noted that this does not present a liquidity problem for the Trust and that we aim to carry out a review of contributions to the pension scheme in order to see a reduction in the pension deficit in future periods.

Investment policy

All investments are agreed by the Directors, which have regard to the Charity Commission guidance in relation to charity investment policy. The Trust does not currently hold any investments other than cash, which is held for its normal operations. The Directors have adopted a low-risk strategy to its cash holdings. Surplus cash is held in an instant access account to ensure that there is always sufficient cash to meet short and medium-term requirements.

In the longer term, as reserves build up, the Trust will seek to maximise its return by investing surplus cash in time deposits with banks approved by the Directors.

Strategic Report

Principal risks and uncertainties

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

An in depth risk assessment is undertaken as part of the Trust's School Improvement Framework. This work is overseen by the Directors in line with the Trust's Risk Management Policy.

Other principal financial risks are centred on:
•Overspending of the Trust budget
•Errors in the accounts caused by inadequately skilled or experienced staff
•Cash flow shortage
•Budget risks including deficit budgets
•Reconciliations not completed on time and balances inaccurate
•Identifying related party transactions
•Failure to ensure security of the financial systems
•LGPS deficit

Directors have implemented a number of controls to ensure the financial risks are able to be identified and mitigated, these include:

•Robust reviews of the budget held at Director level, presenting challenge and accountability to those involved in the budget setting process.
•Budgets are reviewed on a half-yearly basis.
•Management accounts are prepared and reviewed monthly.
•Training for School Business Managers is provided by the CFO on a termly basis and further qualifications are encouraged.
•Financial procedures and internal controls have been developed and challenged by internal audit.
•Review of the contributions to the LGPS to be carried out to aim to reduce the pension deficit.
•Cash flow forecasts form part of the monthly management accounts pack.
•Monthly budget/management accounts schedules add clarity to the month end procedures.

The Trust has fully implemented the requirements of the Safe Recruitment procedures and a number of staff have received training in this area in addition all staff have had training on Child Protection.

Strategic Report

Fundraising

The Trust has nominated a senior leader who is responsible for ensuring that charitable giving by pupils, staff and families is appropriate and only allows fundraising activities if:

• The charity is registered with the UK's Charity Commission.
• The charity and the cause demonstrate no political, religious or cultural discrimination.
• The Charity's values are consistent with fundamental British values of democracy, rule of law, individual liberty and mutual respect, and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs.
• There is no compulsion for pupils, staff and families to participate in any fundraising activities.
• If the monies raised are to be split across a number of charities the basis of this split must be notified in advance and during the fundraising activity.
• Pupils and staff organising fundraising are adequately inducted on the appropriate procedures.
• Learning is not disrupted by fundraising.
• All charitable giving is entered on to the Charitable Giving Record and is reviewed and approved by the nominated senior leader.
• Evidence is sought to ensure charitable funds have been appropriately spent.

Streamlined Energy and Carbon Reporting

As the trust has not consumed more than 40,000 kWh of energy in this reporting period, it qualifies as a low energy user under these regulations and is not required to report on its emissions, energy consumption or energy efficiency activities.

Strategic Report

Plans for future periods

Headteachers are engaging with the strategic plan to ensure that it reflects schools' priorities and actions. However, the effects of the Covid-19 pandemic have resulted in emergency priorities. The focus for headteachers has been to safely reopen schools whilst offering a full broad and balanced curriculum. This involves:

• Effective risk assessment is in place, regularly reviewed and implemented.
• The Catholic life of the school is maintained through collective acts of worship, observation of the liturgical year and charitable work.
• Pupils who are absent through Covid-19 related absence receive their education entitlement including through online learning when required.
• Child protection and safeguarding remains a priority, including the mental health and wellbeing of pupils.
• Pastoral support for pupils at home is reviewed and new approaches implemented when required.
• Staff wellbeing is regularly reviewed and recorded to ensure a duty of care.
• Subject leadership to be developed to take into account online learning, monitoring of engagement and effectiveness of delivery for isolation and class closures.
• Monitoring of curriculum to ensure broad and balanced curriculum is being consistently and effectively delivered across school.

Also, heads are focusing on the gaps in learning of pupils who have had their time in school reduced, as result of Covid-19 and particularly the disadvantaged. This involves:

• The school improvement plan clearly identifies actions, time scales and cost for intervention.
• There is a clear plan and audit trail of the use of catch up funding for governors and trust leaders to review each term.
• Disadvantaged pupils' progress is tracked and additional intervention is put in place when required
• Data is collected to monitor length and frequency of pupil absence due to COVID-19 allowing for further targeted intervention.
• Engagement and communication with parents is maintained so that they are aware of the school's intervention and can more effectively support their child's learning.
• Curriculum and assessment developed across school to ensure full coverage of skills based curriculum, delivering effective sequences of learning and building on children's experiences, knowledge and understanding

The three key aims for the 2021-22 academic year are outlined below:

• Ensure the Trust's schools mitigate against the risks and loss of learning as a result of the Covid19 pandemic – The schools become examples of best practice in terms of remote learning and catch up provision.
• Sustain improving trends in schools' provision and outcomes –All aspects of our schools' provision are at least good
• Grow the number of schools in the Trust to enable even more effective collaboration. – our aim is to increase the Trust by 3 schools in 2021/22

Funds held as Custodian Director on behalf of others
Romero Catholic Academy Trust holds no funds on behalf of others.

Auditor
Insofar as the Directors are aware:

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

The director's report , incorporating a Strategic Report, was approved by order of the members of the Governing Body on 22 December 2021 and signed on its behalf by:

AM Ager

....
Mrs A M Ager
Director

Romero Catholic Academy Trust

Governance Statement

Statement on governance and internal control

Scope of responsibility

As directors we acknowledge we have overall responsibility for ensuring that Romero Catholic 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 directors, we have reviewed and taken account of the guidance in DfE's Governance Handbook and competency framework for governance.

The Board of Directors has delegated the day-to-day responsibility to Mr D Callaghan (Accounting Officer), as Accounting Officer, for ensuring financial controls conform with the requirements of both propriety and good financial management and in accordance with the requirements and responsibilities assigned to it in the funding agreement between Romero Catholic Academy Trust and the Secretary of State for Education. They are also responsible for reporting to the Governing Body any material weaknesses or breakdowns in internal control.

Governance

The information on governance included here supplements that described in the Director's Report and in the Statement of Director's Responsibilities. The Members have formally met 4 times during the year. Attendance during the year at meetings of the Members was as follows:

Member	Meetings attended	Out of a possible
Bishop John Arnold	4	4
Canon Michael Cooke	4	4
Canon Anthony McBride	3	4
Mr Simon Smith	4	4

Governance reviews

The Board of Directors have formally met 6 times during the year on the following dates: 22 September 2020, 11 November 2020, 26 January 2021, 16 March 2021, 11 May 2021, 6 July 2021.

The directors undertook self-review of their effectiveness using the framework provided by the Confederation of School Trusts under the headings of: Strategic Leadership, Accountability, People, Structures, Compliance and Self -evaluation. As a result of the self-review, the directors have identified key areas for their development.

During the year the composition of the board remained the same with the addition of Rachel Owen as a Director, bringing legal expertise and experience of the charitable sector.

Director	Meetings attended	Out of a possible
Mrs A M Ager	6	6
Mr P S Gunn	5	6
Mr G F Greenhalgh	6	6
Mrs H E Sullivan	4	6
Mrs R C Owen (appointed 22 January 2021)	4	4
Mr J P Hickey	6	6
Mr D M Fairclough	6	6
Mr J F Corrigan	4	6

Where Directors have tendered apologies during the period this has been due to work commitments.

The Finance, Audit and Resources Committee is a sub committee of the main Trust Board. Its purpose is to Its purpose is to assist the decision making of the Board, by enabling more detailed consideration to be given to the best means of the Board of Directors' responsibility to ensure regulatory compliance, financial probity and manage risk. The appointment of internal auditors was a decision made by the Committee. Subsequently, Cofie Ltd were appointed as the Trust's Internal Auditors.

Attendance at meetings in the year (13th October, 17th November, 15th December, 2nd February, 30th March, 25th May and 20th July) was as follows: -
Attendance at meetings during the year was as follows:

Director	Meetings attended	Out of a possible
Mrs A M Ager	7	7
Mr G F Greenhalgh	7	7
Mr P S Gunn	6	7
Mr J P Hickey	5	7

Review of value for money

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

The Accounting Officer 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 directors where value for money can be improved, including the use of benchmarking data where appropriate. The Accounting Officer for the academy trust has delivered improved value for money during the year by:

• Improving educational standards
• Refining the education model to be applied across some Trust schools aimed at maximising pupil performance
• Developing a Quality Assurance framework so that it is focused on areas for development. This is to ensured that resources are carefully targeted on addressing underperformance and maximising improvement
• Developing high quality Continuing Professional Development (CPD) to school business managers, Robust governance and oversight of Catholic Academy Trust finances
• The Trust is developing clear guidance through a financial management handbook but recognises that it has not yet been embedded within the trust's financial processes
• The Trust currently benefits from the provision of suitably qualified finance staff and the CFO holds regular meetings with all schools within the Trust
• The Accounting Officer and CFO meet on a weekly basis and review management accounts on a monthly basis.
• Disruption due to COVID and managing growth of the Trust in a remote working manner had resulted in the Trust experiencing delays in appointing Internal Auditors during the 2019/2020 financial year. However, Cofie Ltd have been commissioned as the Internal Auditors for the Trust from 1st September 2020. The Trust has implemented a programme of works for the Internal Auditor and reports highlighted the practices in place at the schools as well as risk recommendations. Any recommendations from the internal audit reports will be actioned at both the school and Trust level with a considerable amount of this work already being undertaken.
• Better Purchasing
• The Trust ensures a continual focus on best value for money and clearly understands the importance of the efficient and effective use of its resources. The schools promote fair competition through quotations and tenders, in accordance with its financial regulations, to ensure that goods and services are secured in the most economic and effective way.
• Where possible, the Trust has secured single supplier contracts, through competitive tender, for areas where a single supplier is appropriate for our schools i.e. insurance, payroll, internal audit, financial management systems.
• Budget holders review and sign off every purchase order request and regularly challenge these for efficiency and effectiveness.
• Maximising income generation
• The Trust is mindful of the need to generate additional funds to maximise income generation. It was the Trust's intention to review this with all schools however with COVID restrictions it has become impossible to utilise Trust premises to generate additional funds.
• Reviewing controls and managing risks
• Critical Incident and Business Continuity Plans and Risk policy has been adopted by the Trust and at school level. Directors approve and monitor the above at their meetings.
• The Headteachers and Business Managers review budget monitoring reports, considering expenditure against each budget cost centre monthly and address any significant variances against budget. Once complete, the monthly budget monitoring reports are submitted to the Board of Directors, Executive Central Team and Local Governing Bodies.
• The Board of Directors review and approves and scheme of delegation annually. Full segregation of duties is maintained within each department.

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 ongoing process designed to identify and prioritise the risks to the achievement of academy trust policies, aims and objectives, to evaluate the likelihood of those risks being realised and the impact should they be realised, and to manage them efficiently, effectively and economically. The system of internal control has been in place in Romero Catholic Academy Trust for the year ended 31 August 2021 and up to the date of approval of the annual report and financial statements. The Trust has identified a number of deficiencies during the year. The Trust has re-evaluated its internal controls and processes and has invested adequate resources to facilitate the remedy of the identified deficiencies.

Capacity to Handle Risk

The Board of Directors have reviewed the key risks to which the Academy Trust is exposed together with the operating, financial and compliance controls that have been implemented to mitigate those risks. The Board of Directors is of the view that there is a formal ongoing process for identifying, evaluating and managing the academy trust's significant risks that has been in place for the year ended 31 August 2021 and up to the date of approval of the annual report and financial statements. This process is regularly reviewed by the Governing Body.

The Risk and Control Framework

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

- comprehensive budgeting and monitoring systems with an annual budget and periodic financial reports which are reviewed and agreed by the Board of Directors;
- regular reviews by the Finance, Audit and Resources Committee of reports which indicate financial performance against the forecasts and of major purchase plans, capital works and expenditure programmes;
- setting targets to measure financial and other performance;
- clearly defined purchasing (asset purchase or capital investment) guidelines;
- identification and management of risks;
- delegation of authority by using the Scheme of Delegation; and
- identification, tracking and management of risks The Board of Directors has considered the need for a specific internal audit function and has decided to appoint Cofie Ltd as their internal auditors from 1st September 2020.

The Internal Auditor's role includes giving advice on financial matters and performing a range of checks on the Academy Trust's financial systems. The role will focus upon the following areas: -

• Finance Procedures Manual
• Financial Management Reports
• Payroll
• Purchases
• Bank Reconciliation
• Capital Contracts
• Control Accounts

Reviews are underway in the 2021/22 financial year to assist in identifying other areas in which the Trust are able to implement an improved control environment.

In particular the checks carried out in the current period included:
• Review of all bank accounts and petty cash;
• Review of the current financial manual;
• Review of procurement procedures;
• Review of benchmarking and ICFP and their impact;
• Review of management accounts; review of Director meetings;
• Review of directors and related party transactions;
• Review of Schemes of Delegation and Terms of Reference;
• Review of the Trust Business Continuity Plan;
• Review of year end procedures and plans;
• Review of the purchasing systems;
• Payroll review;
• Review of income streams.

On a termly basis the reports to the Board of Directors, through the audit and risk committee on the operation of the systems of control and on the discharge of the board of directors' financial responsibilities and annually prepares an 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.

Review of Effectiveness
As Accounting Officer, Mr D Callaghan (Accounting Officer) has responsibility for reviewing the effectiveness of the system of internal control. During the year in question the review has been informed by:

- the work of the internal auditor
- the work of the external auditor;
- the financial management and governance self-assessment process or the school resource management self-assesment tool;
- the work of the executive managers within the academy trust who have responsibility for the development and maintenance of the internal control framework.

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

Romero Catholic Academy Trust

Governance Statement (continued)

Approved by order of the members of the Trust Board on 22 December 2021 and signed on its behalf by:

....
Mrs A M Ager
Director

....
Mr D Callaghan (Accounting Officer)
Chief Executive Officer

Romero Catholic Academy Trust

Statement on Regularity, Propriety and Compliance

As Accounting Officer of Romero Catholic Academy Trust I have considered my responsibility to notify the academy trust Governing Body and the Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA) of material irregularity, impropriety and non-compliance with terms and conditions of all funding received by the academy trust, under the funding agreement in place between the academy trust and the Secretary of State for Education. As part of my consideration I have had due regard to the requirements of the Academies Financial Handbook 2020.

I confirm that I and the academy trust Governing Body are able to identify any material irregular or improper use of funds by the academy trust, or material non-compliance with the terms and conditions of funding under the academy trust's funding agreement and the Academies Financial Handbook 2020.

I confirm that the following instances of material irregularity, impropriety or funding non-compliance discovered to date have been notified to the Governing Body and the ESFA. If any instances are identified after the date of this statement, these will be notified to the Governing Body and ESFA

Accuracy of the financial records – Whilst a financial policies and control handbook has been prepared by the Trust this was not completed and embedded within the Trust's financial processes, this led to a number of control processes not being completed as would be expected, including:

- The inclusion of all relevant bank accounts within the Trust's finance system
- The reconciliation of balance sheet control accounts including the bank accounts
- Inconsistency in postings between the schools
- The accuracy of the Fixed asset register
- No depreciation posted in the management accounts
- Reconciliation of interschool balances within the finance system
- Accruals and prepayments were not calculated on a monthly basis
- Consistency of postings within the finance system between schools
- Allocation of payments within the supplier ledger

All of the above items have been addressed in the preparation of the Statutory Financial Statements and processes adopted and improvements are being made post year end, however these issues led to inaccuracies in the management accounts.

As Accounting Officer I am very confident that the above instances of material irregularity, impropriety or funding non-compliance will be addressed across the Trust within the 2021/2022 financial year.

....
Mr D Callaghan (Accounting Officer)
Accounting officer

22 December 2021

Romero Catholic Academy Trust

Statement of Director's Responsibilities

The Directors (who are also the directors of the charitable company for the purposes of company law) are responsible for preparing the Director's 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 Directors to prepare financial statements for each financial year. Under company law the Directors 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 Directors are required to:

- select suitable accounting policies and apply them consistently;
- observe the methods and principles in the Charities SORP 2019 and the Academies Accounts Direction 2020 to 2021;
- 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; and
- prepare the financial statements on the going concern basis unless it is inappropriate to presume that the charitable company will continue in business.

The Directors 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 Directors 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 Directors 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 on 22 December 2021 and signed on its behalf by:

AM Ager

....

Mrs A M Ager
Director

Independent Auditor's Report on the Financial Statements to the Members of Romero Catholic Academy Trust

Opinion

We have audited the financial statements of Romero Catholic Academy Trust "the academy trust" for the year ended 31 August 2021, which comprise the Statement of Financial Activities incorporating Income and Expenditure Account, Balance Sheet, Statement of Cash Flows, and Notes to the Financial Statements, including a summary of significant accounting policies. The financial reporting framework that has been applied in their preparation is applicable law and United Kingdom Accounting Standards, including FRS 102 "The Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland" (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice) and the Academies Accounts Direction 2020 to 2021 issued by the Education and Skills Funding Agency.

In our opinion the financial statements:

- give a true and fair view of the state of the Academy's affairs as at 31 August 2021 and of its incoming resources and application of resources, including income and expenditure, for the year then ended;
- have been properly prepared in accordance with United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice; and
- have been prepared in accordance with the requirements of the Companies Act 2006 and the Academies Accounts Direction 2020 to 2021 issued by the Education and Skills Funding Agency.

Basis for opinion

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

Conclusions relating to going concern

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

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

Other information

The Directors (who are also the directors of the academy trust for the purposes of company law) are responsible for the other information. The other information comprises the information included in the annual report, other than the financial statements and our auditor's report thereon. Our opinion on the financial statements does not cover the other information and, except to the extent otherwise explicitly stated in our report, we do not express any form of assurance conclusion thereon.

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

Independent Auditor's Report on the Financial Statements to the Members of Romero Catholic Academy Trust (continued)

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 Director's Report (incorporating the Strategic Report) for the financial year for which the financial statements are prepared is consistent with the financial statements; and
- the Strategic 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 company and its environment obtained in the course of the audit, we have not identified material misstatements in the Strategic Report.

We have nothing to report in respect of the following matters where 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 Directors remuneration specified by law are not made; or
- we have not received all the information and explanations we require for our audit.

Responsibilities of Directors

As explained more fully in the Statement of Director's Responsibilities set out on page 28, the Directors 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 Directors 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 Directors are responsible for assessing the Academy's ability to continue as a going concern, disclosing, as applicable, matters related to going concern and using the going concern basis of accounting unless the Directors either intend to liquidate the Academy or to cease operations, or have no realistic alternative but to do so.

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

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

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

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

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

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

Our approach to identifying and assessing the risks of material misstatement in respect of irregularities, including fraud and non-compliance with laws and regulations, was as follows:

• the engagement partner ensured that the engagement team collectively had the appropriate competence, capabilities and skills to identify or recognise non-compliance with applicable laws and regulations.

• we identified the laws and regulations applicable to the academy through discussions with directors and other management, and from our knowledge and experience of the academy sector.

• we focused on specific laws and regulations which we considered may have a direct material effect on the financial statements or the operations of the academy, including the Companies Act 2006, the Charities Act 2011, and the Academies Accounts Direction 2020 to 2021 and Academies Financial Handbook 2020, both issued by the Education and Skills Funding Agency.

• we assessed the extent of compliance with the laws and regulations identified above through making enquiries of management and inspecting legal correspondence.

• identified laws and regulations were communicated within the audit team regularly and the team remained alert to instances of non-compliance throughout the audit.

• We assessed the susceptibility of the academy's financial statements to material misstatement, including obtaining an understanding of how fraud might occur, by:

• making enquiries of management as to where they considered there was susceptibility to fraud, their knowledge of actual, suspected and alleged fraud.

• considering the internal controls in place to mitigate risks of fraud and non-compliance with laws and regulations.

Independent Auditor's Report on the Financial Statements to the Members of Romero Catholic Academy Trust (continued)

To address the risk of fraud through management bias and override of controls, we:

• performed analytical procedures on material balances for which robust, substantive analytical procedures have been undertaken to identify any unusual or unexpected relationships.

• tested journal entries to identify unusual transactions.

• investigated the rationale behind significant or unusual transactions.

There are inherent limitations in our audit procedures described above. The more removed that laws and regulations are from financial transactions, the less likely it is that we would become aware of non-compliance. Auditing standards also limit the audit procedures required to identify non-compliance with laws and regulations to enquiry of the directors and other management and the inspection of regulatory and legal correspondence, if any.

Material misstatements that arise due to fraud can be harder to detect than those that arise from error as they may involve deliberate concealment or collusion.

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

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

Beever and Struthers

....
Mark Bradley BA FCA (Senior Statutory Auditor)
For and on behalf of Beever and Struthers, Statutory Auditor

The Beehive
Lions Drive
Shadsworth Business Park
Blackburn
Lancashire
BB1 2QS

22 December 2021

Romero Catholic Academy Trust

Independent Reporting Accountant's Report on Regularity to Romero Catholic Academy Trust and the Education and Skills Funding Agency

In accordance with the terms of our engagement letter dated 4 November 2020 and further to the requirements of the Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA) as included in the Academies Accounts Direction 2020 to 2021, we have carried out an engagement to obtain limited assurance about whether the expenditure disbursed and income received by Romero Catholic Academy Trust during the period 1 September 2020 to 31 August 2021 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 Romero Catholic Academy Trust and the ESFA in accordance with the terms of our engagement letter. Our work has been undertaken so that we may state to Romero Catholic Academy Trust and the ESFA those matters we are required to state in a report and for no other purpose. To the fullest extent permitted by law, we do not accept or assume responsibility to anyone other than Romero Catholic Academy Trust and the ESFA, for our work, for this report, or for the conclusion we have formed.

Respective responsibilities of the Governing Body's accounting officer and the reporting accountant

The Accounting Officer is responsible, under the requirements of the Governing Body's funding agreement with the Secretary of State for Education dated 23 October 2019 and the Academies Financial Handbook extant from 1 September 2020, 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 2020 to 2021. We report to you whether anything has come to our attention in carrying out our work which suggests that in all material respects, expenditure disbursed and income received during the year from 1 September 2020 to 31 August 2021 have not been applied to purposes intended by Parliament or that the financial transactions do not conform to the authorities which govern them.

Approach

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

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

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

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

The work undertaken to draw to our conclusion includes:

- Review and testing of financial systems of internal control
- Sample testing of transactions
- Discussions with management

Conclusion

In the course of our work, except for the matters listed below nothing has come to our attention which suggests that in all material respects the expenditure disbursed and income received during the year from 1 September 2020 to 31 August 2021 has not been applied to purposes intended by Parliament and the financial transactions do not conform to the authorities which govern them.

Independent Reporting Accountant's Report on Regularity to Romero Catholic Academy Trust and the Education and Skills Funding Agency (continued)

- Accuracy of the financial records - Section 2.6 & 2.7 of the Academies Financial Handbook 2020 requires the design and implementation of sound internal controls to ensure discipline in financial management.

- Whilst a financial handbook has been prepared for the Trust this was not completed and embedded within the Trust's financial processes, this led to a number of control processes not being completed as would be expected, as noted in the Accounting Officers' Statement on Regularity, Propriety and Compliance on page 29. These issues led to inaccuracies in the management accounts during the year.

Beever and Struthers

....

Mark Bradley BA FCA
For and on behalf of Beever and Struthers, Chartered Accountants

The Beehive
Lions Drive
Shadsworth Business Park
Blackburn
Lancashire
BB1 2QS

22 December 2021

Romero Catholic Academy Trust

Statement of Financial Activities for the Year Ended 31 August 2021
(including Income and Expenditure Account)

	Note	Unrestricted Funds £	Restricted General Funds £	Restricted Fixed Asset Funds £	2020/21 Total £
Income and endowments from:					
Voluntary income					
Donations and capital grants	2	21,278	-	374,730	396,008
Transfer from local authority on conversion	26	59,702	(580,000)	-	(520,298)
Charitable activities:					
Funding for the Academy trust's educational operations	3	62,188	15,894,351	-	15,956,539
Other trading activities	4	181,725	239,188	-	420,913
Investments	5	236	-	-	236
Total		325,129	15,553,539	374,730	16,253,398
Expenditure on:					
Charitable activities:					
Academy trust educational operations	7	10,213	16,963,308	303,507	17,277,028
Net income/(expenditure)		314,916	(1,409,769)	71,223	(1,023,630)
Other recognised gains and losses					
Actuarial gains on defined benefit pension schemes	24	-	(971,000)	-	(971,000)
Net movement in funds/(deficit)		314,916	(2,380,769)	71,223	(1,994,630)
Reconciliation of funds					
Total funds/(deficit) brought forward at 1 September 2020		924,685	(4,541,323)	20,241,907	16,625,269
Total funds/(deficit) carried forward at 31 August 2021		1,239,601	(6,922,092)	20,313,130	14,630,639

Romero Catholic Academy Trust

Statement of Financial Activities for the Year Ended 31 August 2020 (including Income and Expenditure Account)

	Note	Unrestricted Funds £	Restricted General Funds £	Restricted Fixed Asset Funds £	2019/20 Total £
Income and endowments from:					
Voluntary income					
Donations and capital grants	2	-	4,807	514,459	519,266
Transfer from local authority on conversion		923,717	(3,171,000)	19,935,605	17,688,322
Charitable activities:					
Funding for the Academy trust's educational operations	3	-	9,099,663	-	9,099,663
Other trading activities	4	276	-	-	276
Investments	5	692	-	-	692
Total		924,685	5,933,470	20,450,064	27,308,219
Expenditure on:					
Charitable activities:					
Academy trust educational operations	7	-	9,250,793	208,157	9,458,950
Net income/(expenditure)		924,685	(3,317,323)	20,241,907	17,849,269
Other recognised gains and losses					
Actuarial gains on defined benefit pension schemes	24	-	(1,224,000)	-	(1,224,000)
Net movement in funds/(deficit)		924,685	(4,541,323)	20,241,907	16,625,269
Reconciliation of funds					
Total funds/(deficit) carried forward at 31 August 2020		924,685	(4,541,323)	20,241,907	16,625,269

Romero Catholic Academy Trust

(Registration number: 11907285)
Balance Sheet as at 31 August 2021

	Note	2021 £	2020 £
Fixed assets			
Tangible assets	12	20,099,722	19,831,472
Current assets			
Debtors	13	1,033,347	659,459
Cash at bank and in hand		1,859,290	1,750,311
		2,892,637	2,409,770
Liabilities			
Creditors: Amounts falling due within one year	14	(1,215,720)	(892,973)
Net current assets		1,676,917	1,516,797
Total assets less current liabilities		21,776,639	21,348,269
Net assets excluding pension liability		21,776,639	21,348,269
Defined benefit pension scheme liability	24	(7,146,000)	(4,723,000)
Total net assets including pension liability		14,630,639	16,625,269
Funds of the Academy:			
Restricted funds			
Restricted general fund		223,908	181,677
Restricted fixed asset fund		20,313,130	20,241,907
Restricted pension fund		(7,146,000)	(4,723,000)
		13,391,038	15,700,584
Unrestricted funds			
Unrestricted general fund		1,239,601	924,685
Total funds		14,630,639	16,625,269

The financial statements on pages 35 to 60 were approved by the Directors, and authorised for issue on 22 December 2021 and signed on their behalf by:

AM Ager

....

Mrs A M Ager
Director

Romero Catholic Academy Trust

Statement of Cash Flows for the Year Ended 31 August 2021

	Note	2021 £	2020 £
Cash flows from operating activities			
Net cash provided by operating activities	19	599,749	1,804,551
Cash flows from investing activities	20	(490,770)	(54,240)
Change in cash and cash equivalents in the year		108,979	1,750,311
Cash and cash equivalents at 1 September		1,750,311	-
Cash and cash equivalents at 31 August	21	1,859,290	1,750,311

1 Accounting policies

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

Prior year figures for comparison cover the period from 27 March 2019 to 31 August 2020.

Basis of preparation

The financial statements of the academy trust, which is a public benefit entity under FRS 102, have been prepared under the historical cost convention in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard Applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102), the Accounting and Reporting by Charities: Statement of Recommended Practice applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102) (Charities SORP (FRS 102)), the Academies Accounts Direction 2020 to 2021 issued by ESFA, the Charities Act 2011 and the Companies Act 2006.

Romero Catholic Academy Trust meets the definition of a public benefit entity under FRS 102.

Going concern

The directors assess whether the use of going concern is appropriate i.e. whether there are any material uncertainties related to events or conditions that may cast significant doubt on the ability of the company to continue as a going concern. The directors 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 academy trust has adequate resources to continue in operational existence for the foreseeable future and there are no material uncertainties about the academy trust's ability to continue as a going concern, thus they continue to adopt the going concern basis of accounting in preparing the financial statements.

Income

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

Grants

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

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

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

1 Accounting policies (continued)

Sponsorship income

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

Donations

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

Other income

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

Donated goods, facilities and services

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

Transfer on conversion

Where assets and liabilities are received by the academy 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 academy trust. An equal amount of income is recognised as transfer on conversion within Donations and capital grant income to the net assets received.

Expenditure

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

Expenditure on raising funds

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

Charitable activities

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

All resources expended are inclusive of irrecoverable VAT.

1 Accounting policies (continued)

Tangible fixed assets
Assets costing £1,000 (IT equipment £500) or more are capitalised as tangible fixed assets and are carried at cost, net of depreciation and any provision for impairment.

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

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

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

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

Asset class	**Depreciation method and rate**
Leasehold Land and Buildings	125 years
Plant and Machinery	7 years
Fixtures, Fittings and Equipment	7 years
ICT Equipment	3 years
Motor Vehicles	7 years

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

Provisions

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

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

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

1 Accounting policies (continued)

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

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

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

Taxation

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

Accordingly, the academy trust is potentially exempt from taxation in respect of income or capital gains received within categories covered by Chapter 3 Part 11 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.

Pension benefits

Retirement benefits to employees of the Academy Trust are provided by the Teachers' Pension Scheme ('TPS') and the Local Government Pension Scheme ('LGPS'). These are defined benefit schemes. The TPS is an unfunded scheme and contributions are calculated so as to spread the cost of pensions over employees' working lives with the Academy Trust in such a way that the pension cost is a substantially level percentage of current and future pensionable payroll. The contributions are determined by the Government Actuary on the basis of quadrennial valuations using a prospective unit credit method. As stated in the notes to the financial statements, the TPS is a multi-employer scheme and there is insufficient information available to use defined benefit accounting. The TPS is therefore treated as a defined contribution scheme for accounting purposes and the contributions recognised in the period to which they relate.

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

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

1 Accounting policies (continued)

Fund accounting

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

Restricted fixed asset funds are resources which are to be applied to specific capital purposes imposed by the Education and Skills Funding Agency/Department for Education/sponsor/other funders where the asset acquired or created is held for a specific purpose.

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

Critical accounting estimates and areas of judgement

Critical accounting estimates and assumptions

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

The present value of the Local Government Pension Scheme defined benefit liability depends on a number of factors that are determined on an actuarial basis using a variety of assumptions. The assumptions used in determining the net cost (income) for pensions include the discount rate. Any changes in these assumptions, which are disclosed in note 24, 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 2021. 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.

2 Donations and capital grants

	Unrestricted funds £	Restricted funds £	Restricted fixed asset funds £	2020/21 Total £	2019/20 Total £
Other voluntary income					
Capital grants	-	-	374,730	374,730	514,459
Other donations	21,278	-	-	21,278	4,807
Transfer from Local Authority	59,702	(580,000)	-	(520,298)	-
	80,980	(580,000)	374,730	(124,290)	519,266

3 Funding for the Academy Trust's educational operations

	Unrestricted funds £	Restricted funds £	2020/21 Total £	2019/20 Total £
DfE/ESFA revenue grants				
General Annual Grant	-	12,790,954	12,790,954	7,205,604
Pupil Premium	-	1,030,863	1,030,863	626,820
Other DfE Group Grants	-	221,532	221,532	892,654
Teachers Pay and Pension grants	-	612,524	612,524	-
	-	14,655,873	14,655,873	8,725,078
Other government grants				
Local Authority Grants	-	481,306	481,306	149,088
Exceptional government funding				
Coronavirus Funding	-	509,984	509,984	-
Non-government grants and other income				
Other Income from the Academy Trust's Educational Operations	62,188	247,188	309,376	225,497
Total grants	62,188	15,894,351	15,956,539	9,099,663

4 Other trading activities

	Unrestricted funds £	Restricted funds £	2020/21 Total £	2019/20 Total £
Hire of facilities	15,500	-	15,500	276
Income from other charitable activities	166,225	239,188	405,413	-
	181,725	239,188	420,913	276

5 Investment income

	Unrestricted funds £	2020/21 Total £	2019/20 Total £
Bank Interest	236	236	692

6 Expenditure

		Non Pay Expenditure			
	Staff costs £	Premises £	Other costs £	2020/21 Total £	2019/20 Total £
Academy's educational operations					
Direct costs	11,274,246	303,507	936,856	12,514,609	6,767,998
Allocated support costs	2,880,382	834,641	1,047,396	4,762,419	2,690,952
	14,154,628	1,138,148	1,984,252	17,277,028	9,458,950

6 Expenditure (continued)

Net income/(expenditure) for the year includes:

	2020/21 £	2019/20 £
Operating lease rentals	18,465	9,083
Depreciation	303,507	208,157
Fees payable to auditor - audit	18,900	18,900
- other audit services	20,088	6,640

7 Charitable activities

	2020/21 £	2019/20 £
Direct costs - educational operations	12,514,609	6,767,998
Support costs - educational operations	4,762,419	2,690,952
	17,277,028	9,458,950

	Educational operations £	2020/21 Total £	2019/20 Total £
Analysis of support costs			
Support staff costs	2,880,382	2,880,382	1,464,000
Technology costs	39,808	39,808	20,526
Premises costs	834,641	834,641	429,629
Other support costs	1,005,510	1,005,510	775,942
Governance costs	2,078	2,078	855
Total support costs	4,762,419	4,762,419	2,690,952

8 Staff

Staff costs

	2020/21 £	2019/20 £
Staff costs during the year were:		
Wages and salaries	9,977,567	5,506,937
Social security costs	1,028,753	504,636
Operating costs of defined benefit pension schemes	2,049,698	1,468,817
	13,056,018	7,480,390
Supply staff costs	283,799	94,807
Staff restructuring costs	23,843	-
	13,363,660	7,575,197

	2020/21 £	2019/20 £
Staff restructuring costs comprise:		
Redundancy payments	10,803	-
Severance payments	13,040	-
	23,843	-

Staff numbers

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

	2020/21 No	2019/20 No
Charitable Activities		
Teachers	145	139
Administration and support	186	170
Management	26	27
	357	336

Higher paid staff

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

	2021 No	2020 No
£60,001 - £70,000	8	6
£70,001 - £80,000	2	2
£100,001 - £110,000	-	1
£110,001 - £120,000	1	-

8 Staff (continued)

Key management personnel

The key management personnel of the academy trust comprise the directors and the senior management team as listed on page 1. The total amount of employee benefits (including employer pension contributions and employer national insurance contributions) received by key management personnel for their services to the academy trust was £992,245 (2020: £537,251).

9 Central services

The academy trust has provided the following central services to its academies during the year:
- Financial Services
- Human Resources
- Facilities & Estates
- Governance
- Business Support

The academy trust charges for these services based on a percentage ranging from 1.5% - 1.75% of their GAG income.

The actual amounts charged during the year were as follows:

	2021/20 £	2020/19 £
All Saints' Roman Catholic High School, a Voluntary Academy	40,788	22,840
Blessed Trinity Roman Catholic College, a Voluntary Academy	101,246	49,518
St Mary's Roman Catholic Primary School, a Voluntary Academy	15,659	7,448
St Augustine of Canterbury RC Primary School, a Voluntary Academy	15,687	7,097
St Joseph's Roman Catholic Voluntary Academy	9,917	11,852
St John the Baptist RC Primary School, a Voluntary Academy	16,886	9,370
	200,183	108,125

10 Related party transactions - directors' remuneration and expenses

No directors have been paid remuneration or has received other benefits from an employment with the Academy Trust.

Other related party transactions involving the directors are set out in note 25.

11 Directors' and officers' insurance

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

12 Tangible fixed assets

	Leasehold land and buildings £	Furniture and equipment £	Plant and Machinery £	Computer equipment £	Motor vehicles £	Total £
Cost						
At 1 September 2020	19,613,144	217,677	57,858	138,317	12,633	20,039,629
Additions	40,587	34,875	405,241	91,053	-	571,756
At 31 August 2021	19,653,731	252,552	463,099	229,370	12,633	20,611,385
Depreciation						
At 1 September 2020	78,453	38,112	30,376	57,005	4,211	208,157
Charge for the year	156,905	43,630	7,295	86,537	9,139	303,506
At 31 August 2021	235,358	81,742	37,671	143,542	13,350	511,663
Net book value						
At 31 August 2021	19,418,373	170,810	425,428	85,828	(717)	20,099,722
At 31 August 2020	19,534,691	179,565	27,482	81,312	8,422	19,831,472

13 Debtors

	2021 £	2020 £
Trade debtors	18,688	15,535
VAT recoverable	85,363	49,491
Other debtors	676,791	403,161
Prepayments	252,505	191,272
	1,033,347	659,459

14 Creditors: amounts falling due within one year

	2021 £	2020 £
Trade creditors	228,811	380,508
Other taxation and social security	198,278	202,957
Other creditors	7,889	86,548
Accruals	281,073	59,676
Deferred income	284,567	-
Pension scheme creditor	215,102	163,284
	1,215,720	892,973

	2021 £
Deferred income	
Resources deferred in the period	284,567

At the balance sheet date the academy trust was holding funds received in advance in relation to Rates Relief for 2021/22, money received in advance for additional children over the PAN of the school and SSP Income.

15 Funds

	Balance at 1 September 2020 £	Incoming resources £	Resources expended £	Gains, losses and transfers £	Balance at 31 August 2021 £
Restricted general funds					
General Annual Grant (GAG)	162,966	12,790,954	(12,730,012)	-	223,908
Other DfE/EFA Grants	-	716,016	(716,016)	-	-
Other Government Grants	18,711	481,306	(500,017)	-	-
Other Income	-	501,876	(501,876)	-	-
Pupil Premium	-	1,030,863	(1,030,863)	-	-
Teachers Pay and Pension grants	-	612,524	(612,524)	-	-
	181,677	16,133,539	(16,091,308)	-	223,908
Restricted fixed asset funds					
Capital Grants	514,459	374,730	(8,889)	-	880,300
Transferred on Conversion	19,727,448	-	(294,618)	-	19,432,830
	20,241,907	374,730	(303,507)	-	20,313,130
Restricted pension funds					
Pension Reserve	(4,723,000)	(580,000)	(872,000)	(971,000)	(7,146,000)
Total restricted funds	15,700,584	15,928,269	(17,266,815)	(971,000)	13,391,038
Unrestricted funds					
Unrestricted general funds	924,685	325,129	(10,213)	-	1,239,601
Total funds	16,625,269	16,253,398	(17,277,028)	(971,000)	14,630,639

15 Funds (continued)

	Incoming resources £	Resources expended £	Gains, losses and transfers £	Balance at 31 August 2020 £
Restricted general funds				
General Annual Grant (GAG)	7,652,123	(7,489,157)	-	162,966
Other Government Grants	540,527	(521,816)	-	18,711
Pupil Premium	626,820	(626,820)	-	-
Teachers Pay and Pension grants	285,000	(285,000)	-	-
	9,104,470	(8,922,793)	-	181,677
Restricted fixed asset funds				
Capital Grants	514,459	-	-	514,459
Transferred on Conversion	19,935,605	(208,157)	-	19,727,448
	20,450,064	(208,157)	-	20,241,907
Restricted pension funds				
Pension Reserve	(3,171,000)	(328,000)	(1,224,000)	(4,723,000)
Total restricted funds	26,383,534	(9,458,950)	(1,224,000)	15,700,584
Unrestricted funds				
Unrestricted general funds	924,685	-	-	924,685
Total funds	27,308,219	(9,458,950)	(1,224,000)	16,625,269

Analysis of academies by fund balance

Fund balances at 31 August 2021 were allocated as follows:

	2021 £	2020 £
All Saints' Roman Catholic High School, a Voluntary Academy	101,939	63,478
Blessed Trinity Roman Catholic College, a Voluntary Academy	515,379	482,430
St Mary's Roman Catholic Primary School, a Voluntary Academy	470,003	363,569
St Augustine of Canterbury RC Primary School, a Voluntary Academy	70,199	55,631
St Joseph's Roman Catholic Voluntary Academy	283,978	259,764
St John the Baptist RC Primary School, a Voluntary Academy	388,342	197,456
Central services	(366,331)	(315,966)
Total before fixed assets and pension reserve	1,463,509	1,106,362
Fixed Asset Fund	20,313,130	20,241,907
Pension Reserve	(7,146,000)	(4,723,000)
Total	14,630,639	16,625,269

15 Funds (continued)

Analysis of academies by cost

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

	Teaching and Educational Support Staff Costs £	Other Support Staff Costs £	Educational Supplies £	Other Costs (excluding Depreciation) £	Total 2021 £	Total 2020 £
All Saints' Roman Catholic High School, a Voluntary Academy	2,302,931	358,666	216,857	371,917	3,250,371	1,770,801
Blessed Trinity Roman Catholic College, a Voluntary Academy	6,072,620	961,041	489,575	723,133	8,246,369	3,837,121
St Mary's Roman Catholic Primary School, a Voluntary Academy	799,400	103,400	73,620	164,951	1,141,371	838,476
St Augustine of Canterbury RC Primary School, a Voluntary Academy	750,538	160,781	34,635	182,783	1,128,737	658,756
St John the Baptist RC Primary School, a Voluntary Academy	912,305	113,062	87,365	128,319	1,241,051	963,436
St Joseph's Roman Catholic Voluntary Academy	557,767	132,954	52,644	98,945	842,310	712,413
Central services	-	154,032	1,538	95,743	251,313	469,790
Academy Trust	11,395,561	1,983,936	956,234	1,765,791	16,101,522	9,250,793

16 Analysis of net assets between funds

Fund balances at 31 August 2021 are represented by:

	Unrestricted funds £	Restricted general funds £	Restricted fixed asset funds £	Total funds £
Tangible fixed assets	-	-	20,099,722	20,099,722
Current assets	1,239,601	1,359,056	293,980	2,892,637
Current liabilities	-	(1,135,150)	(80,570)	(1,215,720)
Pension scheme liability	-	(7,146,000)	-	(7,146,000)
Total net assets	1,239,601	(6,922,094)	20,313,132	14,630,639

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

	Unrestricted funds £	Restricted general funds £	Restricted fixed asset funds £	Total funds £
Tangible fixed assets	-	-	19,831,472	19,831,472
Current assets	924,685	1,074,650	410,435	2,409,770
Current liabilities	-	(892,973)	-	(892,973)
Pension scheme liability	-	(4,723,000)	-	(4,723,000)
Total net assets	924,685	(4,541,323)	20,241,907	16,625,269

17 Capital commitments

	2021 £	2020 £
Contracted for, but not provided in the financial statements	341,646	452,253

18 Commitments under operating leases

Operating leases

At 31 August 2021 the total of the academy trust's future minimum lease payments under non-cancellable operating leases was:

18 Commitments under operating leases (continued)

	2021 £	2020 £
Amounts due within one year	18,379	9,083
Amounts due between one and five years	13,512	4,668
	31,891	13,751

19 Reconciliation of net (expenditure)/income to net cash inflow/(outflow) from operating activities

	2020/21 £	2019/20 £
Net (expenditure)/income	(1,023,630)	17,849,269
Depreciation	303,506	208,157
Capital grants from DfE and other capital income	(374,730)	(514,459)
Interest receivable	(236)	(692)
Defined benefit pension scheme obligation inherited	580,000	3,171,000
Defined benefit pension scheme cost less contributions payable	781,000	296,000
Defined benefit pension scheme finance cost	91,000	32,000
Increase in debtors	(79,908)	(194,092)
Increase in creditors	322,747	892,973
Fixed assets transferred on conversion	-	(19,935,605)
Net cash provided by Operating Activities	599,749	1,804,551

20 Cash flows from investing activities

	2020/21 £	2019/20 £
Dividends, interest and rents from investments	236	692
Purchase of tangible fixed assets	(571,756)	(104,024)
Capital grants from DfE Group	-	49,092
Capital funding received from sponsors and others	80,750	-
Net cash used in investing activities	(490,770)	(54,240)

21 Analysis of cash and cash equivalents

	2021 £	2020 £
Cash at bank and in hand	1,859,290	1,750,311
Total cash and cash equivalents	1,859,290	1,750,311

22 Analysis of changes in net debt

	At 1 September 2020 £	Cash flows £	At 31 August 2021 £
Cash	1,750,311	108,979	1,859,290
Total	1,750,311	108,979	1,859,290

23 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.

24 Pension and similar obligations

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

Contributions amounting to £215,102 (2020: £163,284) were payable to the schemes at 31 August 2021 and are included within creditors.

Teachers' Pension Scheme

The Teachers' Pension Scheme (TPS) is a statutory, contributory, defined benefit scheme, governed by the Teachers' Pension Scheme Regulations 2014. Membership is automatic for 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 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.

24 Pension and similar obligations (continued)

Valuation of the Teachers' Pension Scheme

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

The key elements of the valuation and subsequent consultation are:

- employer contribution rates set at 23.68% of pensionable pay (including a 0.08% administration levy)
- total scheme liabilities (pensions currently in payment and the estimated cost of future benefits) for service to the effective date of £218,100 million, and notional assets (estimated future contributions together with the notional investments held at the valuation date) of £196,100 million giving a notional past service deficit of £22,000 million
- the SCAPE rate, set by HMT, is used to determine the notional investment return. The current SCAPE rate is 2.4% above the rate of CPI. Assumed real rate of return is 2.4% in excess of prices and 2% in excess of earnings. The rate of real earnings. 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 £1,552,653 (2020: £859,817).
A copy of the valuation report and supporting documentation is on the Teachers' Pensions website.

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

Local government pension scheme

The LGPS is a funded defined-benefit scheme, with the assets held in separate trustee-administered funds. The total contribution made for the year ended 31 August 2021 was £671,000 (2020 - £370,000), of which employer's contributions totalled £500,000 (2020 - £281,000) and employees' contributions totalled £171,000 (2020 - £89,000). The agreed contribution rates for future years are 23.7 per cent for employers and 5.5 per cent for employees.

Parliament has agreed, at the request of the Secretary of State for Education, to a guarantee that, in the event of an academy trust 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

	2021 %	2020 %
Rate of increase in salaries	4.10	3.80
Rate of increase for pensions in payment/inflation	2.80	2.30
Discount rate for scheme liabilities	1.70	1.80
Inflation assumptions (CPI)	2.70	0.00

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

24 Pension and similar obligations (continued)

	2021	2020
Retiring today		
Males retiring today	22.90	22.30
Females retiring today	24.75	25.00
Retiring in 20 years		
Males retiring in 20 years	22.50	23.80
Females retiring in 20 years	25.45	26.80

Sensitivity analysis

	2021 £	2020 £
Discount rate +0.1%	-400,000.00	-286,000.00
Discount rate -0.1%	409,000.00	293,000.00
Mortality assumption – 1 year increase	429,000.00	339,000.00
Mortality assumption – 1 year decrease	-415,000.00	-330,000.00
CPI rate +0.1%	402,000.00	294,000.00
CPI rate -0.1%	-393,000.00	-287,000.00

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

	2021 £	2020 £
Equities	5,110,000	3,349,000
Corporate bonds	507,000	507,000
Government bonds	57,000	-
Property	926,000	999,000
Cash and other liquid assets	205,000	132,000
Other	2,895,000	2,358,000
Total market value of assets	9,700,000	7,345,000

The actual return on scheme assets was £1,202,000 (2020 - £67,000).

24 Pension and similar obligations (continued)

Amounts recognised in the statement of financial activities

	2020/21 £	2019/20 £
Current service cost	1,264,000	287,000
Interest income	(147,000)	-
Interest cost	238,000	32,000
Admin expenses	17,000	9,000
Total amount recognized in the SOFA	1,372,000	328,000

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

	2020/21 £	2019/20 £
At start of period	12,068,000	-
Conversion of academy trusts	1,100,000	10,088,000
Current service cost	1,265,000	568,000
Interest cost	238,000	108,000
Employee contributions	171,000	89,000
Actuarial (gain)/loss	2,026,000	1,215,000
Benefits paid	(22,000)	-
At 31 August	16,846,000	12,068,000

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

	2020/21 £	2019/20 £
At start of period	7,345,000	-
Conversion of academy trusts	520,000	6,917,000
Interest income	147,000	76,000
Actuarial gain/(loss)	1,055,000	(9,000)
Employer contributions	500,000	281,000
Employee contributions	171,000	89,000
Benefits paid	(22,000)	(9,000)
Effect of non-routine settlements	(16,000)	-
At 31 August	9,700,000	7,345,000

25 Related party transactions

There were no related party transactions in the year, other than certain directors' remuneration and expenses already disclosed in note 10.

26 Conversion to an academy trust

	Value reported by transferring academy trust £	Transfer in recognised £
Budget surplus on LA funds - St John's	45,343	45,343
Budget surplus on LA funds - All Saints	14,359	14,359
	59,702	59,702
LGPS		
Pensions – pension scheme assets	520,000	520,000
Pensions – pension scheme liabilities	(1,100,000)	(1,100,000)
	(580,000)	(580,000)
Net liabilities	(520,298)	(520,298)