

THE LEARNING TOGETHER TRUST

(A COMPANY LIMITED BY GUARANTEE)

ANNUAL REPORT AND CONSOLIDATED FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2023



**THE LEARNING TOGETHER TRUST
(A COMPANY LIMITED BY GUARANTEE)**

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**THE LEARNING TOGETHER TRUST
(A COMPANY LIMITED BY GUARANTEE)**

REFERENCES AND ADMINISTRATIVE DETAILS

Members	Rt Rev'd Philip North Rev'd Canon Andrew Holliday Mr Stephen Whittaker (resigned 31/08/2023) Mr Stuart Harrison Rev'd Dawn Harrison
Trustees	Rev'd Canon Andrew Holliday (Chairman) Mrs Carol Aspinall Miss Jillian Hyde Dr Adewale Oyeyele Mr Andrew Stokes Mr Paul Witkiewicz Dr Sheila Fisher (appointed 8 December 2022) Mrs Madeleine Digby (appointed 8 February 2023)
Senior Management Team	Mr Stuart Colothan (Executive Headteacher and Accounting Officer) Mrs Jennifer Woodcock (Executive Headteacher) Mrs Rose Crompton (Finance Director) Mrs Julia Burger (Headteacher) Mrs. Leanne Morgan-Hillam (Head of School Improvement) Mr. Michael Rigby (Head of System Leadership)
Registered Number	08561302 (England and Wales)
Registered Office	The Learning Together Trust Rectory Lane Wigan WN6 0XB
Independent auditor	MHA Moore and Smalley Richard House 9 Winckley Square Preston PR1 3HP

Academies operated	Location	Headteacher
St Wilfrid's CE Primary School	Wigan	Mr Stuart Colothan
Canon Sharples CE Primary School and Nursery	Wigan	Mrs Jennifer Woodcock
St David Haigh and Aspull CE Primary School	Wigan	Mrs Jennifer Woodcock
Adlington St Paul's CE Primary School	Chorley	Mrs Julia Burger

THE LEARNING TOGETHER TRUST (A COMPANY LIMITED BY GUARANTEE)

TRUSTEES' REPORT

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2023

The trustees present their annual report together with the audited financial statements of the charitable company for the period 1 September 2022 to 31 August 2023. The annual report serves the purposes of both a trustees' report, and a directors' report and strategic report under company law.

The Academy Trust operates four academies for pupils aged 3 to 11, serving a catchment area in the North West. It has pupil capacity of 1295 and had a roll of 1,108 in the School Census in October 2022.

Structure, governance and management

Constitution

The original academy was incorporated on 7th June 2013 as a company limited by guarantee with no share capital, registration number: 08561302. The company commenced operation as an academy on 1st July 2013, following the conversion of St Wilfrid's Church of England Primary School. On 14th April 2015 the academy became a Multi Academy Trust trading as The Learning Together Trust. Canon Sharples CE Primary School and Nursery joined the trust on the 1st July 2015, St. David Haigh and Aspull CE Primary School joined the Trust on 1st November 2018 and Adlington St. Paul's Church of England Primary School joined on 1st January 2019. The charitable company's Memorandum and Articles of Association are the primary governing documents of the academy. The initial members of the charitable company were nominated by the governing body of St. Wilfrid's Church of England Primary School. The MAT trustees were nominated by the Dioceses of Blackburn and Liverpool. The Articles of Association require the members of the charitable company to be responsible for the statutory and constitutional affairs of the charitable company and the management of the academy.

The trustees of The Learning Together Trust are also the directors of the charitable company for the purposes of company law. The charitable company is known as The Learning Together Trust.

Details of the trustees who served throughout the year except as noted are included in the reference and administrative details on page 1.

Members' liability

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

Trustees' indemnities

In accordance with normal commercial practice, the academy has purchased professional indemnity, and directors' and officers' insurance to protect the trustees and officers from claims arising from negligence, errors or omissions occurring whilst on academy business. The insurance provides indemnities of up to £20,000,000 in any one claim.

Method of Recruitment and Appointment or Election of Trustees

Trust board members, who are the directors of the charitable company for the purposes of company law, are nominated by either, The Diocese of Blackburn or the Diocese of Liverpool and hold office for four years.

The Executive Headteachers of The Learning Together Trust act as CEO and are the executive reporting officers to the Trustees.

Policies and Procedures adopted for the induction and training of Trustees

Trustees are appointed based on the skills that they will bring to the board of Trustees or based on a proposal to the board of Trustees by representative groups. On appointment, Trustees receive information relating to the trust and receive an induction pack on the role and responsibilities of trustees.

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TRUSTEES' REPORT (CONTINUED)

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2023

The training and induction provided for new Trustees will depend on their existing experience. All new Trustees are given information about The Learning Together Trust and the academies within it, and are encouraged to visit the individual academies and meet with staff and children. All relevant Trustees are provided with copies of policies, procedures, minutes, accounts, budgets, plans and other documents that they will need to undertake their role as Trustees.

Organisational Structure

Trustees are responsible for the strategic management of the academies; setting strategic direction, annual budgets, senior staff appointments, policy changes etc. Collectively, they make decisions on annual spending and set the budget for the year in liaison with the Executive Headteachers, Headteachers and Senior Leaders. They also offer expertise in curricular subjects, project management and capital bids. Trustees are responsible for the recruitment of staff; in particular, the appointment of the Executive Headteacher and Finance and Operations Director.

Trustees are supported in their work by Local Governing Boards at each school. The Trust has committees which comprise: St. Wilfrid's LGB, Canon Sharples and St. David's LGB, St. Paul's LGB, Performance & Standards and Finance & Audit.

The Executive Headteachers are responsible for the strategic leadership of the Trust and Trust academies, with one undertaking the role of Accounting Officer. The daily management and organisation of each academy is led by the individual Executive Headteacher / Headteacher. They are supported by the senior leaders in each academy. The Finance and Operations Director has responsibility for finance, capital funding and academy administration. The Head of School Improvement is responsible for standards of teaching and learning, leading professional development and facilitating collaborative groups across the Trust. The Head of System Leadership is responsible for supporting leadership capacity, leading on directed projects and supporting with school improvement across the Trust.

Each academy's leadership team develop policies for Board approval. The Trustees are responsible for approving shared policy, including the vision, mission statement, aims and values of the Trust. Trust leaders provide information about the standards, curriculum, pupil outcomes and attendance for Trustee information and monitoring purposes. This is verified by external inspection and monitoring reports.

Through performance management, Trust leaders challenge the senior leadership team and hold them to account regarding priorities for improvement set out in the Trust Strategic and School Development Plans, and individual school strategic and development plans. The School Development Plan is derived from a rigorous process of monitoring and evaluation and the school's self-evaluation.

The Board of Trustees meet twice each term to receive reports and manage its strategic objectives. The working committees also meet on a termly basis. Training is in place for the Executive Staff and the Board of Trustees.

St. Wilfrid's Trading Company (08561316) is a subsidiary of the organisation, which owns 100 per cent of the share capital. The primary function of the company is the provision of childcare to children attending St. Wilfrid's Church of England Primary Academy.

Arrangements for setting Pay and Remuneration of Key Management Personnel

All pay and remuneration of the Trust and Academy's key management personnel is in line with the current National School Teachers Pay and Conditions Document and Wigan Council (Schools) Pay Policy.

Trade Union Facility Time

Under the provisions of the Trade Union (Facility Time Publication Requirements) Regulations 2017, where an academy trust has more than 49 full time equivalent employees throughout any 7 months within the reporting period, the following information is given:

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TRUSTEES' REPORT (CONTINUED)

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2023

Relevant union officials

Number of employees who were relevant union officials during the relevant period	Full-Time equivalent employee number
0	0

Percentage of time spent on facility time

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

Percentage of pay bill spent on facility time

Total cost of facility time	0
Total pay bill	£3,978,000
Total pay bill spent on facility time	0%

Paid trade union activities

Time spent on paid trade union activities as a percentage of total paid facility time hours	0
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Related Parties and other Connected Charities and Organisations

St. Wilfrid's Church of England Primary Academy is the sponsor of Canon Sharples Church of England Primary School and Nursery and Adlington St. Paul's Church of England Primary School, providing school to school support to improve educational outcomes.

The Trust works closely with the Dioceses of Liverpool and Blackburn, parents and carers, our Foundation Parishes and Wigan LA / Lancashire LA to further the principal activities of the Trust.

The Trust works closely with many school networks to further the principal activities of the Academies.

St Wilfrid's Trading Company is a trading subsidiary 100% owned by The Learning Together Trust as defined by the relevant Charities SORP. The Members, Directors, Trustees, senior staff and their families are regarded as related parties in accordance with the definitions in the Charities SORP.

Objectives and Activities

Objects and Aims

The principal objective and aim of the charitable company is the operation of St Wilfrid's Church of England Primary Academy, Canon Sharples CE Primary and Nursery School, St. David Haigh and Aspull CE Primary School and Adlington St Paul's Church of England Primary School to provide education for pupils between the ages of 3-11 years.

THE LEARNING TOGETHER TRUST (A COMPANY LIMITED BY GUARANTEE)

TRUSTEES' REPORT (CONTINUED)

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2023

Objectives, Strategies and Activities

The schools provide an education for pupils who are preferentially drawn from the area in which the schools are situated, in line with the published admission policies. The Learning Together Trust was set up on 14th April 2015 to advance, for the public benefit, education in the Standish and Whelley areas of Wigan. St. Wilfrid's Church of England Primary Academy and Canon Sharples CE Primary School and Nursery offer a broad and balanced primary curriculum. Subsequently, St. David Haigh and Aspull CE Primary School and Adlington St. Paul's Church of England Primary School have joined the Trust. Each Academy's ethos and distinctiveness are firmly rooted in the Church of England.

Our objective has been to maintain the traditional ethos, values, standards and achievements of each school, whilst continuing to work to fulfil the school's medium and longer-term development plans. The success of each academy is measured against pupil outcomes, monitoring and evaluation, and external validation.

Our Trust Vision:

'With God, all things are possible.' Matthew 19:26

1. Our children will be Resilient, Respectful, Responsible, Reflective and Ready to thrive and succeed in life
2. Our schools will be Resourced with the 'best' staff
3. Our Trust will have a Reputation for Excellence:
 - School of choice
 - Employer of choice
 - Trust of choice

Our Trust Mission Statement:

'Learning Together...to achieve success for all God's children.'

With Christ at the centre of all that we do, we will create a culture of collaboration and excellence and take our Trust on a journey of growth and success.

Our Trust Aims:

'I can do things you cannot, You can do things I cannot, Together we can do great things.'
Mother Teresa

1. To inspire children through the highest quality education, underpinned by Trust Values and Christian Distinctiveness.
2. To recruit excellence through reputation and collaboration.
3. To retain quality and 'Manage Talent' through enthusing, enabling and empowering.
4. To provide all schools with the pastoral care, support network, resources and developmental challenge to add value.

Our Trust Values:

Our Christian Values, which are rooted in scripture, are at the heart of our Schools and our Trust. They help us to live out the Church of England Christian Vision of 'Life in all its Fullness'.

Trust: 'The Lord is your strength and shield. Trust Him.' Psalm 28:7

Love: 'Let all that you do be done in Love.' 1 Corinthians 16:14

Hope: 'Always put your Hope in God.' Psalm 42:5

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TRUSTEES' REPORT (CONTINUED)

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2023

Promoting the Trust's Success and Public Benefit

The Trustees have carefully considered the Charity Commission's guidance on public benefit. The key public benefit delivered by the Learning Together Trust is the maintenance and development of the high-quality education provided by the academies, to the children of Wigan and Lancashire.

In doing this, The Learning Together Trust not only offers a high-quality education, but aims to develop the whole child. A wide-range of extra-curricular activities, enrichment opportunities and unique experiences are provided to children in all Trust Academies.

The Learning Together Trust is continually looking to expand to reach as many children as possible to improve their quality of life. In July 2023, the North West Advisory Board approved for the Learning Together Trust to sponsor Hesketh-with-Beaconsall All Saints Church of England Primary School. The proposed date of conversion is 1st February 2024.

Strategic decisions are based on the long-term objective of growth for the Trust, maximising the number of children whose life chances can be improved.

Strategic report

The academic year 2022 to 2023, was extremely successful for the Learning Together Trust, where children thrived, staff flourished and our schools' successes were recognised through external validation, including three Ofsted inspections.

The Trust schools enjoyed close links with their respective church school communities and Dioceses. Staff and children from each school have supported a range of local and global charities. Trust and School leaders continued to prioritise wellbeing for all.

Trust and School leaders have implemented the **3Es**, including offering a broad range of **extra-curricular** clubs, enjoying success in local, regional and national sporting competitions, enhancing our curriculum through **enrichment** (visits, visitors and residentials) and providing our children with a menu of Trust **experiences** to develop cultural capital.

St. Wilfrid's Church of England Primary Academy is part of Blackburn Diocese. The school's Christian Vision is 'I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me.' Philippians 4:13. The Christian Values of Courage, Fair, Forgive, Hope, Joy, Kind, Peace, Trust and Love underpin all aspects of school life at St. Wilfrid's.

St. Wilfrid's was judged 'Outstanding in all areas' by Ofsted in January 2022, with no areas for improvement identified. Ofsted stated, '*Leaders are never complacent. Despite the many notable strengths of the school, leaders continually look to further improve on the already exceptional offer to pupils.*'

In November 2022, St. Wilfrid's Senior Leadership Team was named 'North West Leadership Team of the Year' at the Educate Awards held at Liverpool Cathedral. This prestigious event celebrates the excellence of schools and colleges in Merseyside, Cheshire, Lancashire and Greater Manchester, including approximately 3,000 educational settings.

School leaders have developed a broad and balanced 'Literacy-Rich' Curriculum that meets the needs of the children in the Church Community. Ofsted stated, '*Leaders' extremely high ambitions for every pupil are reflected in the excellent curriculum that children in the early years, and pupils in Year 1 to Year 6, enjoy. Much thought has gone into shaping a curriculum that meets pupils' needs and interests. The careful construction of the curriculum means that pupils continually build on their learning until they secure a deep body of knowledge across all subjects.*'

The curriculum is designed to motivate, inspire, engage and challenge children, through deepening knowledge and developing skills. This is further enhanced by the recently developed three Es: Enrichment (inspirational visitors, educational visitors and events), Extra-Curricular (committees, clubs and competitions) and Experiences (experiences to develop cultural capital).

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TRUSTEES' REPORT (CONTINUED)

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2023

St. Wilfrid's continues to maintain and further improve its academic standards, with children achieving exceptionally well and making excellent progress at each stage of their education. Outcomes at the end of each key stage are outstanding, with children performing significantly above National in all areas.

Canon Sharples Church of England Primary School and Nursery is part of Liverpool Diocese. The school's Christian Vision is 'Trust God. Love Always. Aim High' and Christian Values of Fellowship, Friendship, Respect, Peace, Trust and Love underpin all aspects of life at Canon Sharples.

Following inspection in July 2023, Ofsted found that Canon Sharples remains a 'Good' school. Ofsted stated, *'Leaders are ambitious for pupils' learning and behaviour.'*

Canon Sharples has fully embraced the 'Thrive Approach', and following a robust application and assessment process of the Thrive Approach during 2022, the school was very proud to receive the Thrive Ambassador School Excellence Awards in the following areas of their practice: Environment, Reparative, Real-time learning, Relationship and Leadership. This has culminated in the accreditation of the 'Thrive School of Excellence' Award.

In 2023, Canon Sharples gained the 'Wellbeing Award' for schools, recognising the outstanding work done to promote mental health and wellbeing within its school community. Ofsted stated, *'They (children) appreciate the support that staff provide for them. This includes the 'Thrive Hive', where pupils can go to discuss their worries or concerns with a trusted adult.'*

Canon Sharples C.E. Primary School and Nursery delivers the four-stage approach of the Cornerstone Curriculum, which engages, develops, innovates and expresses children's knowledge, skills and understanding of the wider curriculum. During 2022, the Nursery at Canon Sharples was recognised by Cornerstones for their outstanding use of the curriculum, which followed passions and celebrated diversity. The school was delighted to be accredited with the 'Cornerstones Curriculum Award'. Ofsted stated, *'Leaders have ensured that pupils receive a broad and balanced curriculum.'*

Canon Sharples continues to improve its academic standards, with outcomes at the end of Key Stage 2 broadly in line with National averages and on an upward trajectory.

St. David Haigh and Aspull CofE Primary School is part of Liverpool Diocese. The school's Christian Vision is 'Stand firm in the faith; be courageous, be strong.' 1 Corinthians 16:13. The Christian Values of Friendship, Wisdom, Trust, Hope and Endurance underpin all aspects of school life at St. David's.

Following inspection in January 2023, Ofsted found that St. David's remains a 'Good' school. Ofsted stated, *'Leaders, Governors and Staff are highly ambitious for every pupil'* and *'Pupils said that everyone is made to feel welcome at this school.'*

St. David's provides a broad and balanced curriculum to meet the needs of all children. Ofsted stated, *'With the support of the Trust, leaders have designed an ambitious curriculum, which is ordered logically.'*

Through collaboration and continuous professional development, staff and children continue to flourish at St. David's.

Adlington St. Paul's Church of England Primary School is part of Blackburn Diocese. The school's Christian Vision is 'Whatever you do, work at it with all your heart.' Colossians 3:23. The Christian Values of Trust, Respect, Service, Generosity, Perseverance, Truthfulness, Thankfulness, Forgiveness, Justice, Friendship, Courage and Compassion.

The school has been on a journey of rapid improvement since joining Learning Together Trust. Following inspection in March 2023, Ofsted found that St. Paul's is now a 'Good' school. Ofsted stated, *'Leaders and those responsible for governance have completely reversed the fortunes of this school'* and *'Leaders, including those at trust level have created a supportive environment for staff to thrive.'*

In November 2021, St. Paul's was judged 'Good' following a SIAMS inspection. The report stated that, *'St. Paul's has undertaken a brave journey of transformation. The Learning Together Trust, through its vision and leadership, has made a significant impact upon raising standards at St. Paul's. It secures Christian leadership that promotes love, trust and hope.'*

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FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2023

St. Paul's have developed a high-quality curriculum that meets needs of all children. Ofsted found that, 'Leaders have overhauled the curriculum. They have introduced a new and well-designed curriculum that clearly identifies what pupils will learn in each subject from the early years through to Year 6.'

St. Paul's continues to go from strength to strength, with staff flourishing and children thriving.

Achievement 2022 - 2023

EYFS – GLD (Good Level of Development: 3 Prime Areas of Communication and Language, Physical Development and Personal, Social and Emotional Development + Specific Learning Goals of Literacy and Maths)

St. Wilfrid's	Canon Sharples	St. David's	St. Paul's	Consolidated	National 2023
58/75 77%	29/48 60%	11/13 85%	18/24 75%	116/160 73%	67%

Year 1 Phonics (WA)

St. Wilfrid's	Canon Sharples	St. David's	St. Paul's	Consolidated	National 2023
79/87 91%	31/44 71%	15/18 83%	16/19 84%	141/168 84%	79%

Year 2 Phonics Cumulative (WA)

St. Wilfrid's	Canon Sharples	St. David's	St. Paul's	Consolidated	National 2023
77/78 99%	32/40 80%	8/8 100%	23/25 92%	140/151 93%	88%

End of KS1

	Att.	St. Wilfrid's	Canon Sharples	St. David's	St. Paul's	Consolidated	National 2023
Reading	Expected	68/78 87%	23/42 55%	6/9 67%	20/25 80%	117/154 76%	68%
Writing	Expected	61/78 78%	22/42 52%	5/9 56%	18/25 72%	106/154 69%	60%
Maths	Expected	68/78 87%	24/42 57%	6/9 67%	21/25 84%	119/154 77%	71%
RWM	Expected	61/78 78%	21/42 50%	5/9 56%	18/25 72%	105/154 68%	56%
Reading	GD	28/78 36%	7/42 17%	2/9 22%	5/25 20%	42/154 27%	18%
Writing	GD	20/78 26%	5/42 12%	0/9 0%	4/25 16%	29/154 19%	8%
Maths	GD	28/78 36%	10/42 24%	1/9 11%	7/25 28%	46/154 30%	16%
RWM	GD	18/78 23%	5/42 12%	0/9 0%	2/25 8%	25/154 16%	6%

*GD Greater Depth

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TRUSTEES' REPORT (CONTINUED)

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2023

End of KS2

	Att.	St. Wilfrid's	Canon Sharples	St. David's	St. Paul's	Consolidated	National 2023
Reading	Expected	64/76 84%	30/43 70%	8/12 67%	18/24 75%	120/155 77%	73%
Writing	Expected	69/76 91%	30/43 70%	8/12 67%	17/24 71%	124/155 80%	71%
Maths	Expected	72/76 95%	28/43 65%	5/12 42%	22/24 92%	127/155 82%	73%
RWM	Expected	61/76 80%	25/43 58%	5/12 42%	15/24 63%	106/155 68%	59%
EGPS	Expected	72/76 95%	28/43 65%	8/12 67%	20/24 83%	128/155 83%	72%
Reading	HS	27/76 36%	3/43 7%	3/12 25%	5/24 21%	38/155 25%	29%
Writing	GD	32/76 42%	7/43 16%	4/12 33%	7/24 29%	50/155 32%	13%
Maths	HS	38/76 50%	6/43 14%	4/12 33%	8/24 33%	56/155 36%	24%
RWM	HS	16/76 21%	1/43 2%	3/12 25%	4/24 17%	24/155 15%	8%
EGPS	HS	52/76 68%	6/43 14%	3/12 25%	6/24 25%	67/155 43%	30%

*HS Higher Standard based on a scaled score of 110

End of KS2 Scaled Scores

	Attainment	St. Wilfrid's	Canon Sharples	St. David's	St. Paul's	Consolidated	National 2023
Reading	Scaled Score	107	103	106	103	105	105
Maths	Scaled Score	109	101	101	107	105	104
EGPS	Scaled Score	112	102	104	104	106	105

Key Performance Indicators: Strategic Plan 2021-24

1) School Improvement and Outcomes:

- At the end of each statutory reporting point, consolidated data is above National in Reading, Writing and Maths.
- Ofsted and SIAMS judgements have been maintained or improved: St. David Haigh and Aspull CofE Primary School (Ofsted Good, January 2023), Adlington St. Paul's Church of England Primary School (Ofsted Good, March 2023) and Canon Sharples Church of England Primary School and Nursery (Ofsted Good, July 2023).

2) People Strategy:

- Head of School Improvement, Mrs. L. Morgan-Hillam undertaken and completed National Professional Qualification in Leading Teacher Development.
- Deputy Headteacher, Mr. R. Findlow, undertaken and completed National Professional Qualification in Leading Teacher Development.
- Deputy Headteacher, Mrs. K. Newman, undertaken National Professional Qualification in Headship.
- Assistant Headteacher, Mrs. E. Speakman, undertaken National Professional Qualification in Leading Behaviour and Culture.

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TRUSTEES' REPORT (CONTINUED)

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2023

3) Partnership Development:

- Learning Together Trust has established links with other Trusts nationally.
- Learning Together Trust have been commissioned to undertake school improvement work beyond our Trust.
- Learning Together Trust central team lead collaborative groups beyond our Trust.
- Executive Headteacher, Mr. S. Colothan, is on a Strategic Board at Edge Hill University.

4) Trust Leadership and Governance:

- Learning Together Trust School Improvement Teams meet routinely and undertake pieces of work within the Trust.
- Learning Together Trust launched the year of 'Belonging and Caring' at the beginning of January 2023, through a whole Trust Conference, with a focus on improving wellbeing and managing workload.
- Following an external Governance Review, Learning Together Trust has co-opted two Directors, based on skillset and expertise.

5) Business Development and Finance:

- Number of pupils on roll, including Nursery, have increased.
- The Trust has set a balanced budget for 2023 – 2024, without reliance on prior year surplus.
- Reserves held ensure that the Trust is in a strong financial position.
- Trust has been successful in securing one Condition Improvement Fund bid for 2022 – 2023.
- Robust independent internal scrutiny has assured the Trust Board of strong financial compliance.

Going concern

After making appropriate enquiries, the Board of Trustees has a reasonable expectation that the Academy Trust has adequate resources to continue in operational existence for the foreseeable future. Trustees are confident that budgets and forecasts adequately account for additional costs relating to government announced pay increases, uncertain inflation and unstable energy costs.

As such, there is no material risk to the Trust's ability to continue in operational existence for the foreseeable future and the Trust continues to adopt the going concern basis in preparing the financial statements. Further details regarding the adoption of the going concern basis can be found in the Statement of Accounting Policies.

Financial review

Most of the trusts income is obtained from the Education Skills Funding Agency (ESFA) in the form of recurrent grants to each school, some of which is restricted to purposes. The grants received from the ESFA during the year ended 31st August 2023 and the associated expenditure are shown as restricted funds in the statement of financial activities.

The Trust's financial position for the year to 31 August 2023 demonstrates total income of £7,205k (2022: £6,759k) with a deficit for the year of £303k (2022: deficit of £1,008k), excluding actuarial movements on the LGPS pension reserve). The deficit has been allocated to reserves.

The principal financial management policies adopted in the year are:

- regular financial reviews of income and expenditure versus planned budgets at Finance and Audit committee meetings; and
- consideration as to whether income streams demonstrate a robust and stable position to continue to enable the provision of resources of sufficient quality to fulfil the academy's educational obligations.

The reserves will be utilised for supporting the staffing structure and for future planned premises development.

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TRUSTEES' REPORT (CONTINUED)

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2023

Reserves policy

The Trustees review the reserve levels of each academy annually. This review encompasses the nature of income and expenditure stream, the need to match income with commitments and the nature of reserves. The Trustees have determined that the appropriate level of free reserves should be equivalent of up to 1 month of the GAG plus sufficient Trust contribution to support Condition Improvement Fund bids, approximately £416k. The reason for this is to provide sufficient working capital to cover delays between spending and receipt of grants and to provide a cushion to deal with unexpected emergencies such as urgent maintenance.

Free reserves as at 31 August 2023 were £551k (2022: £759k).

Investment policy

In a period of financial uncertainty and low interest rates, the Learning Together Trusts policy has been to maximise liquidity and minimise risk. The academy had no financial investments during the financial year ended 31 August 2023. The policy will be kept under review.

Risk management

The Trustees have identified the major risks to which the Trust is exposed and documented this in a working Risk Register. The Trustees have implemented a number of systems to mitigate risks that the academies face, especially in the operational areas and in relation to the control of finance. Where significant financial risk still remains, Trustees have ensured that they have adequate insurance cover. The academies have an effective system of internal financial controls and this is explained in more detail in the following statement:

Internal audit (Haines Watts) were appointed for the financial year 2022 – 2023 and their role included giving advice on financial matters and performing a range of checks on the Trust financial systems. The Trust confirms that this function has been fully delivered in line with ESFA's requirements and no material control issues were identified.

Financial and risk management objectives and policies

The academy trust's activities expose it primarily to cash flow risk. The Board of Trustees continually monitor cash flows to ensure The Learning Together Trust and subsequently each academy has sufficient funds available to meet commitments as they fall due. The Board of Trustees maintain sufficient cash reserves at all times.

The Board of Trustees acknowledge the defined benefit pension scheme deficit. It considers that the Trust is able to meet its known contribution commitments for the foreseeable future.

Principal risks and uncertainties

The Trustees have identified the following principal risks and uncertainties facing The Learning Together Trust:

Staff

- Losing an industrial tribunal case brought by an employee.
- Costs incurred due to a long-term absence of a member of staff
- Loss of key staff
- Being unable to recruit staff

Governance

- Trust Board lacks relevant skills or commitment.
- Directors have conflicts of interest

Admissions

- Planned admission numbers not met

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TRUSTEES' REPORT (CONTINUED)

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2023

Premises

- Prosecution following non-compliance with premises-related Health & Safety issues.
- Inadequate servicing and maintenance leads to significant future expenditure
- Accident to a pupil / member of staff / member of the public results in a claim against the school.
- Land and/or Building owners invoke their right to terminate the lease in accordance with the Church Supplemental Agreement

Financial

- Failing to prepare a coherent and manageable Revenue and Capital budget.
- Becoming financially insecure due to poor financial control, falling roll or other factors.
- Not complying with corporate and charitable statutory requirements in respect of accounting, filing of accounts, VAT and deductions of income tax.
- Not complying with changes in financial operating and funding procedures advised by Department for Education/Education Skills Funding Agency.
- Fraudulent activity due to lack of control.
- LGPS deficit impacts adversely on budgets
- Termination of Funding Agreement by the Secretary of State

Curriculum and Standards

- Failure of a school may affect the reputation of our Trust
- Decline in results and/or negative aspects of a statutory inspection

Pupil

- Safeguarding incidents within and outside school for pupils
- High numbers/ proportion of SEND pupils/ behaviour concerns where children need to be supported with high levels of staff without funding prior to EHCP or without fully costed funding in receipt of EHCP

Other

- Schools in our Trust become inward facing within the local and wider community
- Back office Central Services cannot support Trust Growth
- Management information systems failure
- Increased layers of management could increase bureaucracy
- Non GDPR compliance
- Negative publicity in media and social media.

Fundraising

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

Plans for future periods

The Learning Together Trust overarching aims for 2021 - 2024 are:

1) School Improvement and Outcomes: Advance education for all, improving outcomes for children and leading our schools on a journey to excellence.

2) People Strategy: Build sustainable workforce infrastructures enabling all to flourish, both professionally and personally.

3) Partnership Development: Engage in 'deep collaboration' and nurture mutually beneficial relationships and partnerships, both within our Trust family and beyond.

**THE LEARNING TOGETHER TRUST
(A COMPANY LIMITED BY GUARANTEE)**

TRUSTEES' REPORT (CONTINUED)

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2023

4) Trust Leadership and Governance: Build a 'Strong Trust', with highly effective leadership and 'expert' governance, enabling all schools to thrive.

5) Business Development and Finance: Conduct stringent and rigorous financial and operational leadership and achieve value for money.

Auditor

In so far as the Trustees are aware:

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

A resolution proposing that MHA Moore and Smalley be reappointed as auditor of the charitable company will be put to the Members.

The Trustees' report, incorporating a strategic report, was approved by order of the Board of Trustees, as the company directors, on 11 December 2023 and signed on its behalf by:



**Rev'd Canon A Holliday
Chairman**

THE LEARNING TOGETHER TRUST (A COMPANY LIMITED BY GUARANTEE)

GOVERNANCE STATEMENT

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2023

Scope of responsibility

As Trustees, we acknowledge we have overall responsibility for ensuring that The Learning Together 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.

The Board of Trustees has delegated the day-to-day responsibility to the Executive Headteachers, with one as named 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 The Learning Together Trust (St. Wilfrid's Church of England Primary Academy, Canon Sharples CE Primary School and Nursery, St. David Haigh and Aspull CE Primary School and Adlington St. Paul's CE Primary School) and the Secretary of State for Education. The Executive Headteachers are also responsible for reporting to the Board of Trustees for any material weaknesses or breakdowns in internal control.

Governance

The information on governance included here supplements that described in the Trustees' report and in the statement of responsibilities. The Board of Trustees has formally met six times in the period 1st September 2022 to 31st August 2023. Committees comprising of the Local Governing Board of each school, Finance and Audit Committee and Performance and Standards Committee also meet each term and receive detailed reports from the Trust Leadership Team.

Learning Together Trust Meeting Attendance 2022 - 2023

Full Board

	Meetings Attended	Out of a Possible
Mrs Carol Aspinall	6	6
Mr Stuart Colothan (EHT)	6	6
Mrs Rose Crompton (FD)	6	6
Wigan Governor Services (Clerk)	6	6
Mrs Madeleine Digby (co-opted)	2	3
Dr. Sheila Fisher (co-opted)	4	4
Rev Andrew Holliday (Chair)	6	6
Miss Jillian Hyde	5	6
Mrs Leanne Morgan Hillam (HOSI)	6	6
Dr Ade Oyeyele	2	6
Mr Michael Rigby (HOSL)	6	6
Mr Andrew Stokes	6	6
Mr Paul Witkiewicz	6	6
Mrs Jennifer Woodcock (EHT)	6	6

**THE LEARNING TOGETHER TRUST
(A COMPANY LIMITED BY GUARANTEE)**

GOVERNANCE STATEMENT (CONTINUED)

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2023

Performance and Standards Committee

	Meetings Attended	Out of a Possible
Mrs Carol Aspinall	3	3
Mr Stuart Colothan (EHT)	3	3
Wigan Governor Services (Clerk)	3	3
Dr. Sheila Fisher (co-opted)	1	2
Rev Andrew Holiday	3	3
Miss Jillian Hyde	1	3
Mrs Leanne Morgan Hillam (HOSI)	3	3
Mr Michael Rigby (HOSL)	3	3
Mrs Jennifer Woodcock (EHT)	3	3

Finance and Audit Committee

	Meetings Attended	Out of a Possible
Mr Stuart Colothan (EHT)	3	3
Mrs Rose Crompton (FD)	3	3
Wigan Governor Services (Clerk)	3	3
Mrs Madeleine Digby (co-opted)	2	2
Mrs Leanne Morgan Hillam (HOSI)	3	3
Dr Ade Oyeyele	1	3
Mr Michael Rigby (HOSL)	3	3
Mr Andrew Stokes	3	3
Mr Paul Witkiewicz (Chair)	2	3
Mrs Jennifer Woodcock (EHT)	3	3

There have been no issues arising from any financial reports submitted to the ESFA during this time.

Review of value for money

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

THE LEARNING TOGETHER TRUST (A COMPANY LIMITED BY GUARANTEE)

GOVERNANCE STATEMENT (CONTINUED)

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2023

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

Examples illustrating how the academy trust has demonstrated value for money during the year:

- Sharing of specialist provision, including staff expertise and resources.
- Collaborative working groups e.g. subject leadership, moderation etc.
- School Improvement Teams undertaking internal reviews.
- Joint conferences, staff training and development days.

Improving Educational and Wider Outcomes for Pupils

Examples of activities to improve education include:

- Sharing of specialist provision, including staff expertise and resources.
- Shared executive leadership from the Executive Headteachers, Finance Director and Head of School Improvement.
- Centrally employed staff, including admin and IT support.
- Collaboration in the advancement of IT delivering economies of scale through shared contractors.
- Joint staff training and development days.
- School to school support and collaboration.
- Support for external schools.

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 the Trust's 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 at the Learning Together Trust from 1st September 2022 to 31st August 2023, and up to the date of approval of the annual report and financial statements.

Capacity to handle risk

The Board of Trustees has reviewed the key risks to which The Learning Together Trust is exposed, together with the operating, financial and compliance controls that have been implemented to mitigate those risks. The Board of Trustees is of the view that there is a formal on-going process for identifying, evaluating and managing the Trust's significant risks that has been in place for the period 1st September 2022 to 31st August 2023 and up to the date of approval of the annual report and financial statements. This process is regularly reviewed by the Board of Trustees.

THE LEARNING TOGETHER TRUST (A COMPANY LIMITED BY GUARANTEE)

GOVERNANCE STATEMENT (CONTINUED)

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2023

The risk and control framework

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

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

The Board of Trustees has appointed Haines Watts, as internal auditors. The internal auditor's role includes giving advice on financial and other matters and performing a range of checks on the Academy Trust's financial and other systems, in particular checks carried out in the current period include:

- testing of recruitment processes
- testing of business continuity process
- testing of payroll
- testing of control account/bank reconciliations

On a termly basis, the auditor reports to the Board of Trustees, through the Finance and Audit Committee on the operation of the systems of control and on the discharge of the Board of Trustees' financial responsibilities and annually prepare a 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, the named Executive Headteacher, has responsibility for reviewing the effectiveness of the system of internal control. During the period in question the review has been informed by:

- the work of the external auditor;
- the financial management and governance self-assessment process; and
- the work of the Finance and Operations Director within the Trust who has responsibility for the development and maintenance of the internal control framework.
- the work of the internal scrutiny function.
- the correspondence from the ESFA. For example, 'minded to' letters.

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

Approved by order of the board of trustees on 11 December 2023 and signed on its behalf by:



Rev'd Canon A Holliday



Mr S Colothan

**THE LEARNING TOGETHER TRUST
(A COMPANY LIMITED BY GUARANTEE)**

**STATEMENT ON REGULARITY, PROPRIETY AND COMPLIANCE
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2023**

As accounting officer of The Learning Together Trust, I have considered my responsibility to notify the Academy Trust Board of Trustees and the Education & Skills Funding Agency (ESFA) of material irregularity, impropriety and non-compliance with terms and conditions of all funding, including for estates safety and management, 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 Academy Trust Handbook 2022, including responsibilities for estates safety and management.

I confirm that I and the Academy Trust's Board of Trustees 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 Academy Trust Handbook 2022.

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



**Mr S Colothan
Accounting Officer**

11 December 2023

**THE LEARNING TOGETHER TRUST
(A COMPANY LIMITED BY GUARANTEE)**

**STATEMENT OF TRUSTEES' RESPONSIBILITIES
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2023**

The trustees (who are also the directors of The Learning Together Trust for the purposes of company law) are responsible for preparing the Trustees' Report and the accounts in accordance with the Academies Accounts Direction 2022 to 2023 published by the Education and Skills Funding Agency, United Kingdom Accounting Standards (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice) and applicable law and regulations.

Company law requires the trustees to prepare accounts for each financial year. Under company law the trustees must not approve the accounts 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 accounts, the trustees are required to:


- select suitable accounting policies and then apply them consistently;
- observe the methods and principles in the Charities SORP 2019 and the Academies Accounts Direction 2022 to 2023;
- make judgements and accounting estimates that are reasonable and prudent;
- state whether applicable UK Accounting Standards have been followed, subject to any material departures disclosed and explained in the accounts; and
- prepare the accounts on the going concern basis unless it is inappropriate to presume that the charitable company will continue in business.

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

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

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

Approved by order of members of the board of trustees on 11 December 2023 and signed on its behalf by:



Rev'd Canon A Holliday
Chairman



Mr. S. Colothan
Chief Executive Officer and Accounting Officer

THE LEARNING TOGETHER TRUST (A COMPANY LIMITED BY GUARANTEE)

INDEPENDENT AUDITOR'S REPORT TO THE MEMBERS

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2023

Opinion

We have audited the accounts of The Learning Together Trust (the 'parent academy trust') and its subsidiary (the 'group') for the year ended 31 August 2023 which comprise the group statement of financial activities, group and parent balance sheets, the group statement of cash flows and the notes to the accounts, including significant accounting policies. The financial reporting framework that has been applied in their preparation is applicable law and United Kingdom Accounting Standards, including Financial Reporting Standard 102 'The Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland' (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice), the Charities SORP 2019 and the Academies Accounts Direction 2022 to 2023 issued by the Education and Skills Funding Agency.

In our opinion the accounts:

- give a true and fair view of the state of the group's and of the parent academy trust's affairs as at 31 August 2023 and of the group's incoming resources and application of resources, including its income and expenditure, for the year then ended;
- have been properly prepared in accordance with United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice;
- have been prepared in accordance with the requirements of the Companies Act 2006; and
- have been prepared in accordance with the Charities SORP 2019 and the Academies Accounts Direction 2022 to 2023.

Basis for opinion

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

Conclusions relating to going concern

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

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

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

Other information

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

We have nothing to report in this regard.

THE LEARNING TOGETHER TRUST (A COMPANY LIMITED BY GUARANTEE)

INDEPENDENT AUDITOR'S REPORT TO THE MEMBERS (CONTINUED)

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2023

Opinions on other matters prescribed by the Companies Act 2006

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

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

Matters on which we are required to report by exception

In the light of the knowledge and understanding of the group and the parent academy trust and its environment obtained in the course of the audit, we have not identified material misstatements in the trustees' report, including the incorporated strategic report.

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

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

Responsibilities of trustees

As explained more fully in the statement of trustees' responsibilities, the trustees are responsible for the preparation of the accounts and for being satisfied that they give a true and fair view, and for such internal control as the trustees determine is necessary to enable the preparation of accounts that are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error. In preparing the accounts, the trustees are responsible for assessing the group's and the parent academy trust's ability to continue as a going concern, disclosing, as applicable, matters related to going concern and using the going concern basis of accounting unless the trustees either intend to liquidate the group or the parent academy trust or to cease operations, or have no realistic alternative but to do so.

Auditor's responsibilities for the audit of the accounts

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

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

- Enquiries with management, including governors, about any known or suspected instances of non-compliance with laws and regulations and fraud;
- Reviewing minutes of meetings of those charged with governance;
- Reviewing internal audit reports;
- Reviewing financial statement disclosures and testing to supporting documentation to assess compliance with applicable laws and regulations;
- Reviewing the systems for recording revenue and to ensure income has been recognised in the correct period; and
- Auditing the risk of management override of controls, including through testing journal entries and other adjustments for appropriateness.

**THE LEARNING TOGETHER TRUST
(A COMPANY LIMITED BY GUARANTEE)**

INDEPENDENT AUDITOR'S REPORT TO THE MEMBERS (CONTINUED)

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2023

Because of the field in which the client operates, we identified the following areas as those most likely to have a material impact on the financial statements: Health & Safety; compliance with the Academy Trust Handbook; safeguarding and child protection; employment law; data protection and compliance with the UK Companies Act.

Owing to the inherent limitations of an audit, there is an unavoidable risk that some material misstatements in the financial statements may not be detected, even though the audit is properly planned and performed in accordance with the ISAs (UK). For instance, the further removed non-compliance is from the events and transactions reflected in the financial statements, the less likely the auditor is to become aware of it or to recognize the non-compliance.

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

Use of our report

This report is made solely to the 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.

Nicola Mason

**Nicola Mason (Senior Statutory Auditor)
For and on behalf of
MHA Moore and Smalley
Chartered Accountants
Statutory Auditor**

Richard House
Winckley Square
Preston
PR1 3HP

Date: 21/12/2023

**THE LEARNING TOGETHER TRUST
(A COMPANY LIMITED BY GUARANTEE)**

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

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2023

In accordance with the terms of our engagement letter dated 23 November 2020 and further to the requirements of the Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA) as included in the Academies Accounts Direction 2022 to 2023, we have carried out an engagement to obtain limited assurance about whether the expenditure disbursed and income received by The Learning Together Trust during the period 1 September 2022 to 31 August 2023 have been applied to the purposes identified by Parliament and the financial transactions conform to the authorities which govern them.

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

Respective responsibilities of The Learning Together Trust's accounting officer and the reporting accountant

The accounting officer is responsible, under the requirements of The Learning Together Trust's funding agreement with the Secretary of State for Education dated 24 April 2015 and the Academy Trust Handbook, extant from 1 September 2022, for ensuring that expenditure disbursed and income received is applied for the purposes intended by Parliament and the financial transactions conform to the authorities which govern them.

Our responsibilities for this engagement are established in the United Kingdom by our profession's ethical guidance, and are to obtain limited assurance and report in accordance with our engagement letter and the requirements of the Academies Accounts Direction 2022 to 2023. We report to you whether anything has come to our attention in carrying out our work which suggests that in all material respects, expenditure disbursed and income received during the period 1 September 2022 to 31 August 2023 have not been applied to purposes intended by Parliament or that the financial transactions do not conform to the authorities which govern them.

Approach

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

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

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

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 an evaluation of the control environment of the School together with enquiry, analytical review, substantive testing of transactions and consideration of governance issues.

**THE LEARNING TOGETHER TRUST
(A COMPANY LIMITED BY GUARANTEE)**

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

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2023

Conclusion

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

MHA Moore and Smalley

**Reporting Accountant
MHA Moore and Smalley
Chartered Accountants
Statutory Auditor**

Richard House
Winckley Square
Preston
PR1 3HP

Date: 21/12/2023

**THE LEARNING TOGETHER TRUST
(A COMPANY LIMITED BY GUARANTEE)**

**GROUP STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES
(INCLUDING INCOME AND EXPENDITURE ACCOUNT)**

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2023

	Note	Unrestricted funds £'000	Restricted general funds £'000	Restricted fixed asset funds £'000	Total 2023 £'000	Total 2022 £'000
Income and endowments:						
Donations and capital grants	3	6	-	243	249	104
Charitable activities:						
- Funding for educational operations	4	353	6,358	-	6,711	6,430
Other trading activities	5	245	-	-	245	225
Investment income	6	-	-	-	-	-
Total income		604	6,358	243	7,205	6,759
Expenditure:						
Charitable activities:						
- Educational operations	7	566	6,914	28	7,508	7,767
Total expenditure	8	566	6,914	28	7,508	7,767
Net income/(expenditure)		38	(556)	215	(303)	(1,008)
Transfers between funds	17	-	131	(131)	-	-
Other recognised gains and losses						
Actuarial gains/(losses) on defined benefit pension schemes	21	-	729	-	729	3,280
Net movement in funds		38	304	84	426	2,272
Reconciliation of funds						
Total funds brought forward	17	501	(299)	155	357	(1,915)
Total funds carried forward	17	539	5	239	783	357

**THE LEARNING TOGETHER TRUST
(A COMPANY LIMITED BY GUARANTEE)**

BALANCE SHEETS

AS AT 31 AUGUST 2023

		Group		Trust	
	Note	2023 £'000	2022 £'000	2023 £'000	2022 £'000
Fixed assets					
Tangible assets	12	88	101	88	101
Investments	13	-	-	-	-
Current assets					
Debtors	14	210	213	225	228
Cash at bank and in hand		712	764	592	670
		922	977	817	898
Creditors: amounts falling due within one year	15	(220)	(164)	(220)	(164)
Net current assets		702	813	597	734
Net assets excluding pension liability		790	914	685	835
Defined pension scheme liability	21	(7)	(557)	(7)	(557)
Total net assets		783	357	678	278
Funds of the academy trust:					
Restricted funds					
- Fixed asset funds		239	155	239	155
- Restricted income funds		12	258	12	258
- Pension reserve		(7)	(557)	(7)	(557)
Total restricted funds	17	244	(144)	244	(144)
Unrestricted income funds	17	539	501	434	422
Total funds		783	357	678	278

The accounts set out on pages 25 to 47 were approved by the governing body and authorised for issue on 11 December 2023 and are signed on their behalf by:



**Rev'd Canon A Holliday
Chairman**

Company Number 08561302

**THE LEARNING TOGETHER TRUST
(A COMPANY LIMITED BY GUARANTEE)**

**GROUP STATEMENT OF CASH FLOWS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2023**

	Note	2023 £'000	£'000	2022 £'000	£'000
Cash flows from operating activities					
Net cash provided by / (used in) operating activities	19		(280)		(336)
Cash flows from investing activities					
Dividends, interest and rents from investments		-		-	
Capital grants from DfE Group		243		79	
Purchase of tangible fixed assets		(15)		(48)	
			228		31
Movement in cash and cash equivalents in the reporting period					
			(52)		(305)
Cash and cash equivalents brought forward			764		1,069
Cash and cash equivalents carried forward	20		712		764

THE LEARNING TOGETHER TRUST (A COMPANY LIMITED BY GUARANTEE)

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2023

1 Accounting policies

The Learning Together Trust is a charitable company incorporated in England and Wales. The address of its principal place of business is given on page 1 and the nature of its operations are set out in the trustees' report.

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

1.1 Basis of preparation

The accounts 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 2022 to 2023 issued by ESFA, the Charities Act 2011 and the Companies Act 2006.

The accounts are prepared in sterling, which is the functional currency of the charitable company. Monetary amounts in these accounts are rounded to the nearest whole £1,000 unless otherwise indicated.

The Statement of Financial Activities (SOFA) and balance sheet consolidate the financial statements of the charity and its subsidiary undertakings. The result of the subsidiary is consolidated on a line by line basis.

No separate SOFA has been presented for the charity alone as permitted by Section 408 of the Companies Act 2006 and paragraph 397 of the SORP. The trust's surplus for the year for Companies Act purposes was £400,000 (2022: £2,227,000 surplus).

1.2 Going concern

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

1.3 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 period for which it is receivable, and any abatement in respect of the period is deducted from income and recognised as a liability.

THE LEARNING TOGETHER TRUST (A COMPANY LIMITED BY GUARANTEE)

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONTINUED)

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2023

1 Accounting policies (continued)

1.3 Income (continued)

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

Sponsorship income

Sponsorship income provided to the 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 accounts until they are sold. This income is recognised within 'Income from other trading activities'.

Donated fixed assets

Donated fixed assets are measured at fair value unless it is impractical to measure this reliably, in which case the cost of the item to the donor is used. The gain is recognised as income from donations and a corresponding amount is included in the appropriate fixed asset category and depreciated over the useful economic life in accordance with the academy trust's accounting policies.

1.4 Expenditure

Expenditure is recognised once there is a legal or constructive obligation to transfer economic benefit to a third party, it is probable that a transfer of economic benefits will be required in settlement, and the amount of the obligation can be measured reliably.

Expenditure is classified by activity. The costs of each activity are made up of the total of direct costs and shared costs, including support costs involved in undertaking each activity. Direct costs attributable to a single activity are allocated directly to that activity. Shared costs which contribute to more than one activity and support costs which are not attributable to a single activity are apportioned between those activities on a basis consistent with the use of resources. Central staff costs are allocated on the basis of time spent, and depreciation charges are allocated on the portion of the asset's use.

All resources expended are inclusive of irrecoverable VAT.

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.

THE LEARNING TOGETHER TRUST (A COMPANY LIMITED BY GUARANTEE)

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONTINUED)

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2023

1 Accounting policies (continued)

1.5 Tangible fixed assets and depreciation

Assets costing £1,000 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 that require the continued use of the asset, the related grants are credited to a restricted fixed asset fund in the statement of financial activities and carried forward in the balance sheet. Depreciation on the relevant assets is charged directly to the restricted fixed asset fund in the statement of financial activities. Where tangible fixed assets have been acquired with unrestricted funds, depreciation on such assets is charged to the unrestricted fund.

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

Land and buildings	2%
Computer equipment	20%
Fixtures, fittings and equipment	20%
Motor Vehicles	20%

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

Land and buildings occupied under license are not recognised in the accounts, any subsequent improvements made to these land and buildings are expensed on the basis that they are not considered to be under the control of the Trust. The alternative treatment where the Academy Trust's occupation for the period may therefore be recognisable as a notional donation has also not been adopted as the donated amount cannot be reliably measured.

Land at Canon Sharples CE Primary and Nursery School and Adlington St Pauls CE Primary School is leased to the Trust under a 125 year lease. The value of the land held under lease was not separately identifiable from the value of land owned by the Diocese and therefore this land is not included in the accounts.

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

1.6 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 of services it must provide.

1.7 Leasing and hire purchase commitments

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

THE LEARNING TOGETHER TRUST (A COMPANY LIMITED BY GUARANTEE)

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONTINUED)

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2023

1 Accounting policies (continued)

1.8 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.

Financial assets

Trade and other debtors are basic financial instruments and are debt instruments measured at amortised cost. Prepayments are not financial instruments.

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

Financial liabilities

Trade creditors, accruals and other creditors are financial instruments, and are measured at amortised cost. Taxation and social security are not included in the financial instruments disclosure definition.

Deferred income is not deemed to be a financial liability, as the cash settlement has already taken place and there is an obligation to deliver services rather than cash or another financial instrument.

1.9 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.

1.10 Investments

The Trust's shareholding in the wholly owned subsidiary, St Wilfrid's Trading Company Limited, is initially measured at cost and subsequently measured at cost less any impairment in the Trust balance sheet. An assessment for impairment is made at each reporting date.

1.11 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 and the assets are held separately from those of the academy trust.

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

THE LEARNING TOGETHER TRUST (A COMPANY LIMITED BY GUARANTEE)

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONTINUED)

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2023

1 Accounting policies (continued)

1.11 Pension benefits (continued)

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 net income or expenditure are the current service costs and the costs of scheme introductions, benefit changes, settlements and curtailments. They are included as part of staff costs as incurred. Net interest on the net defined benefit liability/asset is also recognised in the statement of financial activities and comprises the interest cost on the defined benefit obligation and interest income on the scheme assets, calculated by multiplying the fair value of the scheme assets at the beginning of the 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.

1.12 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 trustees.

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

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

2 Critical accounting estimates and areas of judgement

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

Critical accounting estimates and assumptions

The 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 LEARNING TOGETHER TRUST
(A COMPANY LIMITED BY GUARANTEE)**

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONTINUED)

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2023

2 Critical accounting estimates and areas of judgement (continued)

Valuation of the Local Government Pension Scheme defined benefit liability

The present value of the Local Government Pension Scheme defined benefit liability depends on a number of factors that are determined on an actuarial basis using a variety of assumptions. The assumptions used in determining the net cost or income for pensions include the discount rate. Any changes in these assumptions, which are disclosed in note 21, will impact the carrying amount of the pension liability. Furthermore a roll forward approach which projects results from the latest full actuarial valuation performed at 31 March 2019 has been used by the actuary in valuing the pensions liability at 31 August 2023. Any differences between the figures derived from the roll forward approach and a full actuarial valuation would impact on the carrying amount of the pension liability.

Critical areas of judgement

Classification and valuation of long leasehold land and buildings owned by the Church

Some of the buildings occupied by the trust, and the land on which the buildings are situated are the subject of a deed from the Church, which grants the school the use of these land and buildings until the earlier of the termination of the funding agreement or the Church giving the school two years notice to leave. The land and buildings are not included in the accounts.

Classification of finance and operating leases

At the inception of each lease, management undertake an assessment of the terms of the lease including the payments to be made over the life of the lease, the fair value of the asset subject to the lease, the length of the lease and whether the terms of the lease transfer substantially all of the risks and rewards of ownership.

Based on this assessment, management will determine whether the lease should be classified as a finance or operating lease.

3 Donations and capital grants

	Unrestricted funds £'000	Restricted funds £'000	Total 2023 £'000	Total 2022 £'000
Capital grants	-	243	243	79
Other donations	6	-	6	25
	6	243	249	104

In the prior year, the income from donations and capital grants comprised £25,000 as restricted general funds and £79,000 as restricted fixed assets funds.

**THE LEARNING TOGETHER TRUST
(A COMPANY LIMITED BY GUARANTEE)**

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONTINUED)

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2023

4 Funding for the academy trust's educational operations

	Unrestricted funds £'000	Restricted funds £'000	Total 2023 £'000	Total 2022 £'000
DfE/ESFA revenue grants				
General Annual Grant (GAG)	-	4,990	4,990	4,920
Pupil premium	-	353	353	339
UIFSM	-	147	147	128
Other DfE/ESFA grants	-	381	381	275
	-	5,871	5,871	5,662
Other government grants				
Local authority grants	-	487	487	463
	-	487	487	463
Other funds				
Other incoming resources	353	-	353	305
	353	-	353	305
Total funding	353	6,358	6,711	6,430

In the prior year, the income from funding for educational operations comprised £305,000 as unrestricted and £6,125,000 as restricted.

5 Other trading activities

	Unrestricted funds £'000	Restricted funds £'000	Total 2023 £'000	Total 2022 £'000
Hire of facilities	10	-	10	11
Trading company	235	-	235	214
	245	-	245	225

In the prior year, the income from other trading activities comprised £225,000 as unrestricted.

**THE LEARNING TOGETHER TRUST
(A COMPANY LIMITED BY GUARANTEE)**

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONTINUED)

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2023

6 Investment income

	Unrestricted funds £'000	Restricted funds £'000	Total 2023 £'000	Total 2022 £'000
Short term deposits	-	-	-	-
	-	-	-	-

In the prior year, the income from other trading activities comprised £nil as unrestricted.

7 Expenditure

	Staff costs £'000	Premises £'000	Other £'000	Total 2023 £'000	Total 2022 £'000
Academy's educational operations:					
- Direct costs	4,725	17	489	5,231	5,000
- Allocated support costs	746	728	803	2,277	2,767
	5,471	745	1,292	7,508	7,767

Net income/(expenditure) for the year includes:

	2023 £'000	2022 £'000
Fees payable to auditor for:		
- Audit of parent	13	11
- Audit of subsidiary	3	2
- Other services	8	7
Depreciation of tangible fixed assets	28	21
Net interest on defined benefit pension liability	24	58

Central services

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

- human resources;
- financial services;
- legal services;
- educational support services
- management support; and
- others as arising.

The academy trust charges for these services based on 6.0% (2022: 6.0%) of each academy's General Annual Grant funding.

The amounts charged during the period were as follows:

	2023 £'000	2022 £'000
St Wilfrid's	138	132
Canon Sharples	82	80
St David's Haigh and Aspull	32	34
Adlington St Paul's	47	49
	299	295

**THE LEARNING TOGETHER TRUST
(A COMPANY LIMITED BY GUARANTEE)**

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONTINUED)

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2023

8 Charitable activities

	Unrestricted funds £'000	Restricted funds £'000	Total 2023 £'000	Total 2022 £'000
Direct costs				
Educational operations	310	4,921	5,231	5,000
Support costs				
Educational operations	256	2,021	2,277	2,767
	566	6,942	7,508	7,767

In the prior year, the expenditure on educational operations comprised £921,000 as unrestricted funds, £6,825,000 as restricted general funds and £21,000 as restricted fixed assets funds.

	2023 £'000	2022 £'000
Analysis of support costs		
Support staff costs	746	1,015
Depreciation and amortisation	11	6
Premises costs	642	956
Other support costs	619	566
Legal costs	230	202
Governance costs	29	22
	2,277	2,767

**THE LEARNING TOGETHER TRUST
(A COMPANY LIMITED BY GUARANTEE)**

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONTINUED)

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2023

9 Staff costs

	2023	2022
	£'000	£'000
Wages and salaries	3,976	3,600
Social security costs	340	316
Pension costs	994	1,282
	<hr/>	<hr/>
	5,310	5,198
Staff restructuring costs	-	-
Supply staff costs	161	309
	<hr/>	<hr/>
	5,471	5,507
	<hr/> <hr/>	<hr/> <hr/>

Included in staff restructuring costs are non-statutory/non-contractual severance payments totalling £nil (2022: £nil).

Staff numbers

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

	2023	2022
	Number	Number
Teachers	64	61
Administration and support	94	94
Management	6	6
	<hr/>	<hr/>
	164	161
	<hr/> <hr/>	<hr/> <hr/>

Higher paid staff

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

	2023	2022
	Number	Number
£60,001 - £70,000	2	-
£70,001 - £80,000	-	1
£80,001 - £90,000	1	1
£90,001 - £100,000	1	-
	<hr/>	<hr/>
	4	2
	<hr/> <hr/>	<hr/> <hr/>

The above employees participated in the Teacher's Pension Scheme, during the year, pension contributions on behalf of these employees were £68,203 (2022: £38,818).

Key management personnel

The key management personnel of the academy trust comprise the trustees and the senior management team as listed on page 1. The total amount of employee benefits (including employer pension contributions) received by key management personnel for their services to the academy trust was £568,088 (2022: £481,918).

**THE LEARNING TOGETHER TRUST
(A COMPANY LIMITED BY GUARANTEE)**

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONTINUED)

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2023

10 Trustees' remuneration and expenses

No trustees were paid any remuneration or has received other benefits from an employment with the academy trust.

During the year, travel and subsistence expenses totalling £nil (2022: £nil) were reimbursed to trustees.

Other related party transactions involving the trustees are set out within the related parties note.

11 Trustees' and officers' insurance

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

12 Tangible fixed assets – Group and Trust

	Computer equipment £'000	Fixtures, Furniture & equipment £'000	Motor vehicles £'000	Total £'000
Cost				
At 1 September 2022	95	21	31	147
Additions	8	7	-	15
At 31 August 2023	103	28	31	162
Depreciation				
At 1 September 2022	39	5	2	46
Charged in period	17	5	6	28
At 31 August 2023	56	10	8	74
Net book value				
At 31 August 2023	47	18	23	88
At 31 August 2022	56	16	29	101

**THE LEARNING TOGETHER TRUST
(A COMPANY LIMITED BY GUARANTEE)**

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONTINUED)

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2023

13 Investments

The parent academy trust owns the entire £1 issued share capital of St Wilfrid's Trading Company Ltd (registered office: St Wilfrid's C of E Primary Academy, Rectory Lane, Standish, Wigan, WN6 0X8), with company number 08563916.

The trading subsidiary, raises funds for The Learning Together Trust by providing services relating to Clubs and Lettings. A summary of the trading results of the subsidiary for the year and it's financial position at the year end is shown below.

	2023	2022
	£'000	£'000
Turnover	236	214
Cost of sales	(15)	(21)
Administrative expenses	(116)	(114)
Gift aid donation to parent company	(79)	(34)
Profit before taxation	26	45
Taxation	-	-
Retained profit for the year	26	45
Share capital	-	-
Profit and loss reserves	105	79
Net assets	105	79

14 Debtors

	Group		Trust	
	2023	2022	2023	2022
	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
Other debtors	-	2	-	2
VAT recoverable	10	17	10	17
Amounts due from group undertakings	-	-	15	15
Prepayments and accrued income	200	194	200	194
	210	213	225	228

15 Creditors: amounts falling due within one year

	Group		Trust	
	2023	2022	2023	2022
	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
Trade creditors	-	-	-	-
Other taxation and social security	-	-	-	-
Other creditors	-	-	-	-
Accruals and deferred income	220	164	220	164
	220	164	220	164

**THE LEARNING TOGETHER TRUST
(A COMPANY LIMITED BY GUARANTEE)**

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONTINUED)

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2023

16 Deferred income

	Group		Trust	
	2023	2022	2023	2022
	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
Deferred income is included within:				
Creditors due within one year	90	76	90	76
Deferred income at 1 September 2022	76	77	76	77
Released from previous years	(76)	(77)	(76)	(77)
Amounts deferred in the year	90	76	90	76
Deferred income at 31 August 2023	90	76	90	76

At the balance sheet date the academy trust was holding grant income relating to the Universal Infant Free School Meals received from the ESFA in advance of the related expenditure.

17 Funds

	Balance at1 September 2022 £'000	Income £'000	Expenditure £'000	Gains, losses and transfers £'000	Balance at 31 August 2023 £'000
Restricted general funds					
General Annual Grant (GAG)	258	4,990	(5,367)	131	12
Pupil premium	-	353	(353)	-	-
UIFSM	-	147	(147)	-	-
Other DfE/ESFA grants	-	381	(381)	-	-
Other government grants	-	487	(487)	-	-
Other restricted funds	-	-	-	-	-
Pension reserve	(557)	-	(179)	729	(7)
	(299)	6,358	(6,914)	860	5
Restricted fixed asset funds					
DfE group capital grants	80	243	(8)	(146)	169
Capital expenditure from GAG	75	-	(20)	15	70
	155	243	(28)	(131)	239
Total restricted funds	(144)	6,601	(6,942)	729	244
Unrestricted funds					
General funds	422	368	(356)	-	434
Total funds for the Trust	278	6,969	(7,298)	729	678
Trading subsidiary	79	236	(210)	-	105
Total funds	357	7,205	(7,508)	729	783

**THE LEARNING TOGETHER TRUST
(A COMPANY LIMITED BY GUARANTEE)**

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONTINUED)

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2023

17 Funds (continued)

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

General Annual Grant must be used for the normal running expenses of the School and any amounts carried forward at the end of a financial period must be used in accordance with the terms of the Funding Agreement.

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

Other DfE/ESFA grants comprise additional funding received for the furtherance of education, which must be used in accordance with the specific terms of each grant.

Other government grants includes Local authority and Central government funding for educational purpose which includes Special Educational Needs, Nursery grants and other smaller grants for specific projects.

Other restricted funds include contributions received for school trips and non-public donations and the related expenditure.

The pension reserve represents the value of the School's share of the deficit in the Local Government Pension Scheme.

Restricted fixed asset funds include assets inherited on conversion and expenditure out of GAG and other capital grants during the period. Depreciation is charged against the fund.

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

	Balance at1 September 2021 £'000	Income £'000	Expenditure £'000	Gains, losses and transfers £'000	Balance at 31 August 2022 £'000
Restricted general funds					
General Annual Grant (GAG)	64	4,920	(5,090)	364	258
Pupil premium	-	339	(339)	-	-
UIFSM	-	128	(128)	-	-
Other DfE/ESFA grants	-	275	(275)	-	-
Other government grants	-	463	(463)	-	-
Other restricted funds	-	25	(25)	-	-
Pension reserve	(3,332)	-	(505)	3,280	(557)
	(3,268)	6,150	(6,825)	3,644	(299)
Restricted fixed asset funds					
DfE group capital grants	320	79	(7)	(312)	80
Capital expenditure from GAG	41	-	(14)	48	75
	361	79	(21)	(264)	155
Total restricted funds	(2,907)	6,229	(6,846)	3,380	(144)
Unrestricted funds					
General funds	958	316	(752)	(100)	422
Total funds for the Trust	(1,949)	6,545	(7,598)	3,280	278
Trading subsidiary	34	214	(169)	-	79
Total funds	(1,915)	6,759	(7,767)	3,280	357

**THE LEARNING TOGETHER TRUST
(A COMPANY LIMITED BY GUARANTEE)**

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONTINUED)

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2023

17 Funds (continued)

Total funds analysis by academy

	2023	2022
	£'000	£'000
Fund balances at 31 August 2023 were allocated as follows:		
St Wilfrid's	(39)	(84)
Canon Sharples	389	501
St David's Haigh and Aspull	84	162
Adlington St Paul's	101	133
Central services	(89)	(32)
St Wilfrid's Trading	105	79
	<hr/>	<hr/>
Total before fixed asset fund and pensions reserve	551	759
Restricted fixed asset fund	239	155
Pension reserve	(7)	(557)
	<hr/>	<hr/>
Total funds	783	357
	<hr/>	<hr/>

Total cost analysis by academy

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

	Teaching & educational support staff costs £'000	Other support staff costs £'000	Educational supplies £'000	Other costs excluding depreciation £'000	2023 Total £'000	2022 Total £'000
St Wilfrid's	1,989	169	193	620	2,971	3,057
Canon Sharples	1,470	93	151	365	2,079	1,883
St David's Haigh	392	53	59	205	709	771
Adlington St Paul's	665	60	66	246	1,037	1,082
Central services	209	283	4	56	552	818
St Wilfrid's Trading	-	88	16	28	132	135
	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>
	4,725	746	489	1,520	7,480	7,746
	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>

**THE LEARNING TOGETHER TRUST
(A COMPANY LIMITED BY GUARANTEE)**

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONTINUED)

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2023

18 Analysis of net assets between funds

	Unrestricted funds £'000	Restricted general funds £'000	Restricted fixed asset funds £'000	Total funds £'000
Fund balances at 31 August 2023 are represented by:				
Tangible fixed assets	-	-	88	88
Current assets	539	232	151	922
Creditors falling due within one year	-	(220)	-	(220)
Defined benefit pension liability	-	(7)	-	(7)
	539	5	239	783
Fund balances at 31 August 2022 are represented by:				
Tangible fixed assets	-	-	101	101
Current assets	501	422	54	977
Creditors falling due within one year	-	(164)	-	(164)
Defined benefit pension liability	-	(557)	-	(557)
	501	(299)	155	357

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

	2023 £'000	2022 £'000
Net expenditure for the reporting period	(303)	(1,008)
Adjusted for:		
Capital grants from DfE/ESFA and other capital income	(243)	(79)
Investment income	-	-
Defined benefit pension costs less contributions payable	155	447
Defined benefit pension net finance cost/(income)	24	58
Depreciation of tangible fixed assets	28	21
Decrease/(Increase) in debtors	3	271
(Decrease)/Increase in creditors	56	(46)
Net cash (used in) / provided by operating activities	(280)	(336)

20 Analysis of changes in net funds

	At 1 September 2022 £'000	Cashflows £'000	Other non- cash changes £'000	At 31 August 2023 £'000
Cash at bank and in hand	764	(52)	-	712
	764	(52)	-	712

THE LEARNING TOGETHER TRUST (A COMPANY LIMITED BY GUARANTEE)

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONTINUED)

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2023

21 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 Greater Manchester Pension Fund and Lancashire County Pension Fund. Both are multi-employer defined benefit schemes.

The pension costs are assessed in accordance with the advice of independent qualified actuaries. The latest actuarial valuation of the TPS related to the period ended 31 March 2016, and that of the LGPS related to the period ended 31 March 2019.

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

Teachers' Pension Scheme

Introduction

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

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

Valuation of the Teachers' Pension Scheme

The Government Actuary, using normal actuarial principles, conducts a formal actuarial review of the TPS in accordance with the Public Service Pensions (Valuations and Employer Cost Cap) Directions 2014 published by HM Treasury every 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% employer administration charge)
- total scheme liabilities (pensions currently in payment and the estimated cost of future benefits) for service to the effective date of £218,100 million, and notional assets (estimated future contributions together with the notional investments held at the valuation date) of £196,100 million giving a notional past service deficit of £22,000 million
- the SCAPE rate, set by HMT, is used to determine the notional investment return. The current SCAPE rate is 2.4% above the rate of CPI. The assumed real rate of return is 2.4% in excess of prices and 2% in excess of earnings. The rate of real earnings growth is assumed to be 2.2%. The assumed nominal rate of return including earnings growth is 4.45%.

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

The employer's pension costs paid to the TPS in the period amounted to £608,696 (2022: £574,142).

A copy of the valuation report and supporting documentation is on the Teachers' Pensions website.

**THE LEARNING TOGETHER TRUST
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NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONTINUED)

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2023

21 Pension and similar obligations (continued)

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

Local Government Pension Scheme

The LGPS is a funded defined benefit pension scheme, with the assets held in separate trustee-administered funds. The total contributions are as noted below. The agreed contribution rates for future years are 17.2% to 18.3% for employers and 5.5% to 8.5% for employees.

Parliament has agreed, at the request of the Secretary of State for Education, to a guarantee that, in the event of academy closure, outstanding Local Government Pension Scheme liabilities would be met by the Department for Education. The guarantee came into force on 18 July 2013 and on 21 July 2022, the Department for Education reaffirmed its commitment to the guarantee, with a parliamentary minute published on GOV.UK.

Total Contributions made	2023 £'000	2022 £'000
Employer's contributions	235	206
Employee's contributions	69	60
Total contributions	304	266

Principal actuarial assumptions	2023 %	2022 %
Rate of increase in salaries	4.05	4.05
Rate of increase in pensions in payment	2.95	2.98
Discount rate	5.30	4.28
Inflation assumption (CPI)	2.80	2.80

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

	2023 Years	2022 Years
Retiring today		
- Males	19.7	21.3
- Females	23.7	24.1
Retiring in 20 years		
- Males	21.1	22.7
- Females	25.0	26.0

Scheme liabilities would have been affected by changes in assumptions as follows:	2023 £'000	2022 £'000
Discount rate + 0.1%	(88)	(96)
Discount rate - 0.1%	88	96
Mortality assumption + 1 year	148	150
Mortality assumption - 1 year	(148)	(150)
CPI rate + 0.1%	82	87
CPI rate - 0.1%	(82)	(87)

**THE LEARNING TOGETHER TRUST
(A COMPANY LIMITED BY GUARANTEE)**

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONTINUED)

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2023

21 Pension and similar obligations (continued)

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

	2023	2022
	Fair Value	Fair Value
	£'000	£'000
Equities	2,595	2,255
Bonds	486	446
Cash	314	253
Property	318	306
Other assets	177	81
Total market value of assets	3,890	3,341

Actual return on scheme assets – gain/(loss)	295	55
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Amounts recognised in the statement of financial activities

	2023	2022
	£'000	£'000
Current service cost (net of employer contributions)	87	394
Interest income	(148)	(52)
Interest cost	172	110
Benefit changes, curtailments and settlements gains or losses	67	52
Administrative expenses	1	1
Total operating charge	179	505

**THE LEARNING TOGETHER TRUST
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NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONTINUED)

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2023

21 Pension and similar obligations (continued)

Changes in the present value of defined benefit obligations	2023 £'000	2022 £'000
Obligations at 1 September 2022	3,898	6,403
Current service cost	322	600
Interest cost	172	110
Employee contributions	69	60
Actuarial (gain)/ loss	(582)	(3,277)
Benefits paid	(49)	(50)
Past service cost	67	52
At 31 August 2023	3,897	3,898

Changes in the fair value of the academy trust's share of scheme assets	2023 £'000	2022 £'000
Assets at 1 September 2022	3,341	3,071
Interest income	148	52
Actuarial gain/(loss)	147	3
Employer contributions	235	206
Employee contributions	69	60
Admin expenses	(1)	(1)
Benefits paid	(49)	(50)
At 31 August 2023	3,890	3,341

22 Related party transactions

Owing to the nature of the academy trust's operations and the composition of the governing body being drawn from local public and private sector organisations, transactions may take place with organisations in which the academy trust has an interest. All transactions involving such organisations are conducted at arm's length and in accordance with the academy trust's financial regulations and normal procurement procedures.

A connected party to Mr A Stokes, a trustee, is a teaching assistant at the Trust. Total remuneration paid in the year was £19,252 (2022: £16,824).

23 Members' liability

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

24 Capital commitments

	2023 £'000	2022 £'000
Capital commitments	151	65