

Company Registration No. 07400386 (England and Wales)

**UNITY SCHOOLS PARTNERSHIP
(A COMPANY LIMITED BY GUARANTEE)**

**ANNUAL REPORT AND FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2021**

UNITY SCHOOLS PARTNERSHIP

REFERENCE AND ADMINISTRATIVE DETAILS

Members

Christine Quinn (from 3 July 2020)
Paul Marshall
Lesley Birch
Tim Elbourne

Directors

Laura Barbrook
Tim Coulson (Accounting Officer)
Ian Jacobs (Safeguarding Lead, Chair of Standards Committee)
Nick Jenkins (Resigned 15 January 2021)
Gordon Jones
Janet Morris (Appointed 15 September 2021)
Roger Quince (Vice Chair and Chair of Audit & Risk Committee)
Christine Quinn (Chair of Trust Board)
Lloyd Spencer-Witcomb (Chair of Remuneration Committee)
Dean Sykes
Andrew Willett (Chair of Finance Committee)

Executive Leadership Team

- Chief Executive Officer	Tim Coulson
- Director of Education (Primary)	Darren Woodward
- Director of Education (Primary)	Stephen Astley
- Director of Education (Secondary)	Rosemary Prince
- Director of Education (Secondary)	Lois Reed (until 31 August 2021)
- Director of Research School & Teaching School	Andy Samways
- Deputy CEO, Director of Finance and HR	Sarah Garner
- Director of SEND	Lucie Calow
- Director of Operations	Debbie Willson

Trust Secretary

Lisa Taylor

Company registration number

07400386 (England and Wales)

Registered office

Unity Schools Partnership
Park Road
Haverhill
Suffolk
CB9 7YD

UNITY SCHOOLS PARTNERSHIP

REFERENCE AND ADMINISTRATIVE DETAILS

Academies operated

Abbots Green Primary School
Burton End Primary Academy
County Upper School
Castle Manor Academy
Churchill Special Free School
Clements Primary Academy
Coupals Primary Academy
Ditton Lodge Primary School
Felixstowe Academy
Glemsford Primary Academy
Horringer Court Middle School
Houldsworth Valley Primary Academy
Kedington Primary Academy
Langer Primary School
Laureate Community Academy
Newmarket Academy
Place Farm Primary Academy
Samuel Ward Academy
Sir Bobby Robson School
St Edward's Church of England Academy
Steeple Bumpstead Primary School
Sybil Andrews Academy
The Bridge School
Thomas Gainsborough School
Tollgate Primary School
Wells Hall Primary School
Westfield Primary Academy
Westley Middle School
Wickhambrook Primary Academy
Woodhall Primary School

Location

Bury St Edmunds
Haverhill
Bury St Edmunds
Haverhill
Haverhill
Haverhill
Haverhill
Newmarket
Felixstowe
Glemsford
Horringer
Newmarket
Kedington
Felixstowe
Newmarket
Newmarket
Haverhill
Haverhill
Ipswich
Romford
Steeple Bumpstead
Bury St Edmunds
Ipswich
Great Cornard
Bury St Edmunds
Great Cornard
Haverhill
Bury St Edmunds
Wickhambrook
Sudbury

Headteacher

A Morrison
K Sheargold
V Neale/N Froy
V Whitcombe
G Ellis/C Komodromos
V Hogg
D Maguire
M Moore
E Wilson-Downes
B Jeffrey/N George
S Palmer
L Tweed
V Doherty
M Hughes
D Perkins
N Froy/E Wilson
J Sendall
A Hunter
A Dabin
J Hassan
M Nicholls
T King
H Simmons
W Lloyd/H Yapp
H Brookman
D Gunn/R Towns
T Kittle
I Kearns/B Jeffrey
R Towns/H Tyzack
M Fuller

Independent auditor

RSM UK Audit LLP
Blenheim House
Newmarket Road
Bury St Edmunds
Suffolk
IP33 3SB

Bankers

Lloyds Bank plc
8 High Street
Haverhill
Suffolk
CB9 8BA

Solicitors

Stone King LLP
Wellington House
East Road
Cambridge
CB1 1BH

UNITY SCHOOLS PARTNERSHIP

DIRECTORS' REPORT

The Directors present their annual report together with the financial statements and auditor's report of the Charitable Company for the year 1 September 2020 to 31 August 2021. The report of Directors serves the purposes of both a Trustees' report, and a Directors' report under company law.

The Academy Trust is responsible for three special schools (one opened on 1 September 2020), seventeen primary academies, two middle school academies and eight secondary academies predominantly in Suffolk, but also including schools in Cambridgeshire, Essex and the London Borough of Havering, with the aim, through geographical hubs of like-minded schools and a vision of excellence that is shared by all, that schools smash through barriers to achieve more than others think possible. The Trust has been approved to open four further new schools in the coming few years.

- The vision of Unity Schools Partnership is to achieve the highest standards of education in all of its schools.
- It is our intention that all trust schools, and the Trust as a whole, be recognised locally and nationally for the exceptional quality of its educational provision
- We are a family of interdependent schools with a shared ambition to transform lives
- We are committed to the development of a very high-quality, and evidence-informed, model of how excellence is achieved
- Our work is fostered by geographical hubs of schools in close proximity that understand their specific communities.

Our schools have a combined pupil roll of 13,517 as at 31 August 2021.

STRUCTURE, GOVERNANCE AND MANAGEMENT

Constitution

The Trust is a company limited by guarantee (registration number 07400386) and an exempt charity. The Charitable Company's Memorandum and Articles of Association is the primary governing document of the Trust.

Unity Schools Partnership was incorporated on 7 October 2010 and became a Multi-Academy Trust on 9 August 2013. At this time, it comprised of Samuel Ward Academy and Churchill Special Free School. Over the last ten years the Trust has continued to grow at a steady pace with one new school joining the Trust this academic year – Sir Bobby Robson Special School opened on the 1 September 2020.

The Directors are Directors of the Charitable Company for the purpose of the Companies Act 2006 and Trustees for the purpose of charity legislation. Details of the Directors who served during the year, and to the date these financial statements are approved, are included in the Reference and Administrative Details on page 1.

Members' liability

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

Directors' indemnities

Directors of the company are covered by the Education, Skills and Funding Agency Risk Protection Arrangements under their Directors' Indemnity policy.

UNITY SCHOOLS PARTNERSHIP

DIRECTORS' REPORT (CONTINUED)

Method of recruitment and appointment or election of Directors

The management of the Academy Trust is the responsibility of the Directors who are elected and co-opted under the terms of the Articles of Association. The members can appoint up to 11 Directors through such a process as they may determine. In practical terms, this is led by the Chair of the Trust Board, who is also a Member with the support of external agencies.

Directors are subject to retirement after a term of 4 years. After the term they are eligible for re-election at the meeting at which they retire.

The make-up of the board includes experienced professionals who have a good understanding of the operational and legal requirements of running an establishment such as Unity Schools Partnership.

Policies and procedures adopted for the induction and training of Directors

Directors have developed a scheme of delegation and provided training for all Directors. Additional training has been provided by the Trust and is available from external providers including Suffolk County Council. The Trust has also engaged the support and expertise of a highly experienced Educationalist to support and advise the Board adding valuable sector insight.

Organisational structure

Unity Schools Partnership has established a unified structure to enable its efficient running. The structure consists of three levels: The Trust Board along with its Audit & Risk Committee, Finance Committee, Remuneration Committee and Standards Committee; the Executive Leadership Team, and Local Governing Bodies at each individual school. The aim of the management structure is to devolve responsibility and encourage involvement in decision making at all levels. In September 2021, the Trust Board also established a Safeguarding Monitoring Group.

The Board of Directors is responsible for making major decisions about the strategic direction of the Trust, ensuring that its aims are met, and its ethos is maintained. Specifically, this includes setting general policy, adopting an annual plan and budget, monitoring the Trust's financial performance and educational outcomes, making senior staff appointments and approving major investment programmes.

Each school has a Senior Leadership Team consisting of the senior management at each school. These teams are responsible for the day-to-day operation of the schools, organising the teaching staff, curriculum, facilities and students.

The Local Governing Bodies are made up of a mix of local people including staff, parents and central trust nominees. They act as a 'critical friend' to the Head Teacher and school, a 'sounding' board at a local level and to ensure that Unity Schools Partnership values remain at the heart of the school community. The Trust has a governance adviser to support the work of the local governing bodies and the Trust Board.

The Chair of the Trust Board and the Chief Executive Officer meet and share information with chairs of the Local Governing Bodies on a regular basis. Furthermore, members of the Executive Leadership Team regularly attend Local Governing Body meetings and sub committees.

Each layer of the organisation is structured according to a set of terms of reference with associated delegation of authority for all decision-making matters. The Trust Board meets regularly throughout the academic year through a series of structured and systematic meetings.

UNITY SCHOOLS PARTNERSHIP

DIRECTORS' REPORT (CONTINUED)

Arrangements for setting pay and remuneration of key management personnel

Unity Schools Partnership has its own Remuneration Committee which meets on a regular basis to discuss matters relating to the setting of pay and remuneration of the Executive Leadership Team. Where appropriate this committee will also review any settlement agreements.

The Remuneration Committee also review all recommendations for pay increments for the Executive Leadership Team.

Key Management Personnel salaries are set in accordance with the Trust's pay policy. The Trust's pay scales are set in accordance with the National Teaching and Support staff pay scales. These are reviewed annually in line with other Trusts.

Trade Union facility time

Unity Schools Partnership subscribe to the Trade Union Facility service provided by the JCNC (Joint Consultative and Negotiating Committee). This is a service provided by lay officers from the Union who are teachers and can therefore provide relevant, appropriate and robust support to staff.

Related parties, connected charities and co-operation with other organisations

The Trust operates under the Seven Principles of Public Life, known as the Nolan Principles. These are:

- Selflessness
- Integrity
- Objectivity
- Accountability
- Openness
- Honesty
- Leadership

These principles are reflected in the way we declare and deal with related party transactions so that we are operating fairly, transparently and we are open to scrutiny. Potential for conflict of interest arises when an individual could gain, or be perceived to gain, from an aspect of the Trust business. All potential conflicts of interest and pecuniary interests are declared at the start of each meeting. All purchasing decisions made by the Trust follow the same procurement and/or commissioning procedures. Any business links with Directors or other Trust Officers have been made in accordance with these procedures.

The Trust Board is confident that conflict of interest is handled according to the Seven Principles of Public Life and in accordance with the Academies Financial Handbook.

The Trust is responsible for the Unity Research School, which has a responsibility to promote evidence informed practice in a wide range of schools that includes all those within the Trust but much wider too. The objectives of the Research School are to support schools through research and development and initial teacher training (ITT) and provide continuous professional development (CPD).

Unity Teaching School Hub

Unity Teaching School Hub was approved by the Department for Education as one of '87 centres of excellence for teacher training and development, focused on some of the best schools and multi-academy trusts in the country. This programme replaces the previous network of around 750 teaching schools' which ended in August 2021. Teaching school hubs are expected to provide high-quality professional development to teachers at all stages of their careers. The hub has responsibility for a defined area encompassing 180 schools across the four districts of Forest Heath, Mid-Suffolk, St. Edmundsbury and Suffolk Coastal. Our work as a teaching school hub requires us to play a significant role in delivering:

- school-based initial teacher training (ITT)
- the early career framework for teachers in their first two years
- the new national professional qualifications (NPQ)
- appropriate body services for early career teachers

UNITY SCHOOLS PARTNERSHIP

DIRECTORS' REPORT (CONTINUED)

Unity Schools Partnership is funded for 3 years from September 2021 to operate as the teaching school hub, receiving an annual grant, subject to conditions, including demonstrating progress against key performance indicators. Unity Teaching School Hub reports into the trust's Standards Committee, is guided by an Advisory Group of stakeholders and is supported by five organisations from across the designated area acting as Teaching School Hub Partners. It is also a delivery partner for Ambition Institute for the Early Career Teacher Programme, and the Teacher Development Trust and the Church of England for NPQs.

Schools Partnership Tutors (SP Tutors)

SP Tutors was established in July 2020 in response to the Government's Education Recovery Programme – the programme designed to support pupils whose education has been disproportionately affected by the COVID-19 pandemic. The National Tutoring Programme (NTP) aims to support schools with their catch-up programme by providing access to high-quality tutoring. In November 2020, SP Tutors were proud to become one of only 32 approved providers during the academic year 2020/21. During this year, SP Tutors onboarded over 360 tutors, and educated over 3,500 pupils via over 30,000 tutoring sessions. SP Tutors benefitted from the support and expertise available from within Unity Schools Partnership, and other organisations with whom they collaborate closely, such as Unity's Pupil Premium Advisor, Unity Research School, Norwich Research School and Unity employees who provided strategic and operational support. SP Tutors developed at pace, designing and implementing bespoke IT systems, training programmes, operational procedures, learning app, intranet, website and a vast library of documents and policies (amongst other things).

SP Tutors continues to plan strategically and invest in operational capacity to ensure it can fulfil the 3-year contract it has been awarded and looks to diversify to ensure longevity while the NTP subsidy reduces over the next few years to ensure it can complete its mission of equipping children with the tools to be confident and successful learners through high-quality and evidence informed tutors.

SP Tutors vision dovetails with the Trust's vision to 'Make remarkable change happen'; SP Tutors strives to provide high-quality tutoring which supplements the school curriculum to accelerate pupils' progress, ensuring no child is left behind. Tutors use tailored strategies from the best-bets in evidence-informed research to nurture children's well-being and build effective learning behaviours, empowering all learners to fulfil their potential.

We are proud to be making a difference for those pupils who have been disproportionately affected by COVID-19 and the lockdowns.

Streamlined energy and carbon reporting

This content is included under that heading within the Strategic Report section.

Engagement with employees

In accordance with the Trust's Disability Equality Policy:

- The Trust has established its own Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Committee which is committed to addressing issues of inequality and discrimination and raising awareness of current issues across the Trust, the Committee are recognising special educational needs and disability (SEND) and disability amongst its priorities for 2021-22.
- Each Local Governing Body and Headteacher, in discussion with disabled staff, will endeavour to provide any aids and support that would help them to fulfil their role in the school.
- Disabled members of staff will be offered the same conditions of service, employment rights, promotion and training opportunities as other staff in the same roles in each school.
- Disabled staff are encouraged to bring any complaints about their treatment as disabled staff to the notice of the Headteacher/Principal in the first instance. All staff may use the Trust's grievance procedure if they consider this to be the best route.

Unity Schools Partnership are committed to being an Equal Opportunities Employer and have recently been accredited as a Disability Confident Employer.

ANTI-RACISM & BLACK LIVES MATTER

In response to the Black Lives Matter campaign in 2020, the Trust partnered with the East Anglia Anti-Racist Education Collective Limited to help raise awareness of racism in the sector, creating a safe environment for staff and students to talk about race, understand the issues surrounding ethnic minorities in our communities and have the confidence to challenge and call out racist acts. The Trust is proud to be associated with this organisation and hope to make a help stamp out racism in education.

UNITY SCHOOLS PARTNERSHIP

DIRECTORS' REPORT (CONTINUED)

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

The Trust's supplier and customer engagement, including all on boarding policies and procedures are designed to ensure a fair and transparent approach to all business transactions.

The Trust actively encourages local community and customer engagement regarding the development and expansion of these facilities and services.

During the COVID-19 pandemic frequent dialogue has been maintained with all parties to ensure the reestablishment and safe operation, where possible under current legislation, of these facilities.

All customer contracts are, where applicable, charged in line with national approved rates and clear service level agreements established.

The Trust operates a transparent procurement process through a value-based approval structure, therefore ensuring all services and products are assessed under the same best value and risk mitigation criteria.

The Trust has reviewed its financial software during the academic year which has enabled more robust control procedures for order management. This has resulted in stronger communication and engagement with suppliers and more efficient and timely order processes for all parties.

The Trust completes regular relationship management meetings with all strategic services suppliers to ensure effective contract management and engagement.

At Unity Schools Partnership, we are also committed to ensuring there is transparency in our own business and in our approach to tackling modern slavery throughout our supply chains, consistent with our disclosure obligations under the Modern Slavery Act 2015. We expect the same high standards from all our contractors, suppliers and other business partners, and as part of our contracting processes, we include specific prohibitions against the use of forced, compulsory or trafficked labour, or anyone held in slavery or servitude, whether adults or children, and we expect that our suppliers will hold their own suppliers to the same high standards.

OBJECTIVES AND ACTIVITIES

Objects and aims

Our objective for the period to 2023 is to achieve "Results Plus" in all schools. This will be achieved when:

- All schools currently in the Trust are such that they can be judged at least good at inspection and 50% outstanding.
- The Trust is amongst the highest performing nationally for attainment of disadvantaged pupils.
- Children and young people are equipped for life.
- The Trust has enabled teachers to be free to attend to what matters for children and young people as well as achieving great results.
- Staff are delighted to work in the Trust.
- The Trust has a leading voice in the development of education policy nationally.
- Income streams have been developed beyond Government funding.

Strategy

It aims to achieve these objectives through:

- ethical leadership
- commitment to inclusion
- excellent communication
- endless ambition
- strong relationships
- a belief in success for every pupil.

UNITY SCHOOLS PARTNERSHIP

DIRECTORS' REPORT (CONTINUED)

Public benefit

The Directors have complied with their duty to have due regard to the guidance on public benefit issued by the Charity Commission in exercising their powers and duties. The Directors consider that the Trust's aims, and the activities undertaken to achieve them are demonstrably to the public benefit. As well as providing education for all their pupils, during the lockdown periods of the past year schools across the Trust showed the wider benefit to which they are committed of their local communities. This was showed through the provision of computer devices for home learning, food parcels and vouchers, and for the close attention to children about whom schools had the most concern.

STRATEGIC REPORT

Achievements and performance

One further new school joined the Trust this year, with the Sir Bobby Robson School opening on 1 September 2020, a school for pupils aged 9-16 with social, emotional or mental health needs. This new addition to the organisation confirms the Trust's commitment to provision for special educational needs within Suffolk.

We believe we have made strong progress in improving educational standards across our schools and would have seen improved results in national tests and examinations in the summer of 2021, but these were again cancelled as part of the Government's response to the coronavirus crisis. The learning environments of many of our schools have improved as the result of investment by the Trust through our own capital monies as well as extensive new building investments by Suffolk County Council.

The Trust is now in the position to play an increasingly strategic regional role. We have developed strong links with community leaders, trusts and councils across the Eastern region, which is informing educational strategy, improving communications, and building capacity. We are committed to supporting the DfE, the Office of the Regional Schools Commissioner and Suffolk County Council in their strategic focus of educational improvement in the East and have positive relationships with all of them.

In both primary and secondary schools, attendance for the Trust finished above the national average in all phases. Attendance in primary schools was 95.2% at end of July 2021 compared to 91.7% the previous year. The national average attendance in primary schools in the previous year was 95.8%. Attendance in secondary schools was 91.9% at the end of July 2021 compared to 94.0% the previous year. The national average attendance in secondary schools in the previous year was 94.5%.

Persistent absence in primary schools was at 10.4% at the end of July 2021. At the same point in the previous year, it was at 19.9%. Persistent absence in secondary schools was at 18.3% at the end of July 2021. At the same point in the previous year, it was 15.1%.

For 2021/22, as well as maintaining our push towards 97% attendance for all, we will be focusing closely on the attendance of disadvantaged pupils and SEND pupils, to ensure this gap is decreased, especially in light of the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic.

During 2020/21 Ofsted suspended all full inspections. The three schools in the Trust with previously 'inadequate' judgements had visits by Ofsted both virtually during lockdowns and in person during the summer term. All three expect to have full inspections during the coming academic year. The current school year has started well with four successful school inspections.

As part of work to improving the standard of provision for pupils with special educational needs, five schools successfully opened new specialist provision in September 2020 for pupils with particular needs that require greater levels of support than is generally available in mainstream schools – Burton End Primary Academy, Clements Primary Academy, Houldsworth Primary Academy, Castle Manor Academy and Newmarket Academy. A sixth hub is now also planned for Woodhall Primary school and is due to open in January 2022.

UNITY SCHOOLS PARTNERSHIP

DIRECTORS' REPORT (CONTINUED)

Promoting the success of the charitable company

In accordance with Section 172 of the Companies Act 2006, the Directors (who form our Trust Board) complied with their duty to promote the success of the Trust.

The Trust makes all key decision through reference to its long-term strategic plan, vision and values and after projecting the timing and impact of such decisions. This strategy is primarily designed around the objective to achieve the highest standards or education in all its schools. Every decision and operational approach is regularly reviewed for its impact on all stakeholders and the need for any changes or modifications to decisions previously taken.

Our employees are vital to the Trust and we regard ongoing, regular engagement with them as a top priority. We measure employee engagement through regular feedback and open communication. We address any issues raised by our employees as quickly as possible and look for ways to continually improve the Trust. All staff are offered access to a number of well-being support services and the Trust seeks to ensure that staff welfare is actively considered and addressed. Through our health and safety policies as well as through the termly "Team-Around-The-School" meetings we also actively seek to ensure that the working environment meets due high standards of safety and security as well as comfort.

Our relationships with partners and suppliers are key to our effectiveness. The Trust actively seeks to engage in service reviews with all key suppliers. These reviews are focussed on a two-way relationship with the Trust based with an aim of helping one another to achieve an optimum service as efficiently as possible and according to the best value for money. Where the Trust procures outsourced services, we seek to ensure that staff and management from that contractor are supported as an equal member of the school community and stakeholders.

We recognise our responsibility to care for the environment and aim to minimise our environmental impact in all our activities. As well as covering environmental issues in our school curriculum, the Trust encourages all staff and students to participate in initiatives to reduce negative environmental impacts. These include the promotion of recycling of waste and actions to maximise efficiency in energy consumption.

The Trust has this year embarked on a Climate protection plan and are looking forward to exploring this further within 2021/22.

In terms of Members of the Trust, fairness in our dealings is upheld through having a clear and well communicated strategy, and financial discipline backed by strong internal controls. We have transparent reporting at regular intervals through the year, open and continual access to senior management and a track record of successful growth through new school joiners who have been appropriately integrated into the Trust, as well as developing other funding streams.

We aim to be a fully inclusive organisation and we will not unfairly discriminate against our students, staff or any other member of our community and stakeholders.

UNITY SCHOOLS PARTNERSHIP

DIRECTORS' REPORT (CONTINUED)

COVID-19 Impact

Over the course of the last two years the Directors have taken a considerable amount of time to consider the educational, financial and operational impact of the COVID-19 pandemic. As a result of this, the Directors, together with the Executive Leadership Team and Headteachers within the Trust have taken direct action and implemented a variety of measures to respond to the Government guidance to restrict transmission of the virus, provide both remote learning whilst keeping schools open for vulnerable children and children of critical workers and plan for children's education recovery.

With the early decision again this year to cancel national exams, the leadership teams within the schools worked collaboratively to address and implement some rigorous and robust methods for student assessments, working as a group of schools to find common benchmarks and peer reviews.

Financially the pandemic again impacted numerous areas across the Trust:

Catering Services and other ancillary services – with tough regulations governing procurement policy and schools shouldering some of the responsibility for their key suppliers, we were able to negotiate mutually acceptable terms with catering providers allowing them to provide some core services to key worker and vulnerable children and also ensure that their staff were protected through an enhanced furlough service. Similar arrangements were made with other partners including supply agencies and therapy services.

Across the Trust, 29 staff were furloughed in 2020/21, these staff were all in roles where the Trust previously had enjoyed alternative income streams, e.g., lettings, catering, nurseries and sports centres. The Trust did not furlough any staff who are paid using Government funding.

Over the course of the year the Trust encountered numerous COVID-19 cases amongst children, staff and their families. Not only did this result in further school and 'bubble' closures, but each school impacted was subject to deep cleans and fogging, incurring further costs of staff, supplies and materials.

There was a heavier reliance on IT for remote learning activities which created an increased demand for devices, broadband and equipment with some additional devices for disadvantaged children provided by the Government.

Free Schools Meals – despite the national scheme being available again during 2020/21, the Trust managed its own voucher scheme providing all families in receipt of free school meals with a voucher equivalent to the funding received during periods of closed bubbles and isolation. This resulted in the Trust being out of pocket covering catering suppliers' costs as well as the cost of the voucher scheme.

Over the years, the Trust has developed a significant income stream relating to lettings, sports centre facilities and other fundraising activities (in particular PTA fundraising, and events such as proms, productions and Summer Fayres), many of which needed to be cancelled for the second year in a row, some with little notice. This had a significant and detrimental impact on the income streams within the Trust, with Secondary Schools being the most impacted.

With all the uncertainties mentioned above as well as the uncertainty around timings, closures and when life might return to normal, the Trust implemented several measures, including a spending review on resources and supplies needed for the summer term.

The Trust monitors the risk register on a regular basis - without doubt COVID-19 became the biggest risk factor for a second year inciting regular discussions around the impact. The Board considered the impact educationally, financially and operationally, considering the impact of losing key members of staff to the virus, being able to manage on fewer staff, risk assessing those staff and students who are considered to be critically and critically vulnerable as well as the additional resources need to provide enhanced cleaning regimes, remote learning possibilities and a significant increase on the demand of our safeguarding leads to ensure children were safe at home, learning appropriately and in receipt of the resources they were entitled to.

Unity Schools Partnership maintained its Hardship fund, set up in the previous year when the pandemic first struck, providing supermarket vouchers to some of our neediest families. This was well received by schools and local communities.

UNITY SCHOOLS PARTNERSHIP

DIRECTORS' REPORT (CONTINUED)

As a Trust with a competent financial team and robust systems, we were able to apply to the various COVID-19 grant options available to us throughout the year and took advantage of the grants available for workforce shortages (covering supply staff needed to cover teaching roles), testing grants (available to secondary schools supporting COVID-19 testing programmes) and exceptional cost claims where outbreaks occurred.

In addition to this each of our schools received the COVID-19 Catch-up funding grants to support with recovery education, closing the gap in attainment and supporting our most disadvantaged educationally. Due to the further lockdowns in the Spring Term and on-going ad-hoc closures of bubbles and year groups throughout the rest of the year, many schools were not able to fully maximise this spending resulting in funds being carried forward into 2021/22.

The Trust continues in 2021/22 to monitor the situation, carefully planning and considering spending requirements, whilst also sensitively balancing the safety, wellbeing and comfort of staff and students.

Financial review

Most of the Trust's income is obtained from the Education Skills & Funding Agency (ESFA) in the form of recurrent grants, the use of which is restricted to educational purposes. These grants received from the ESFA during the year ended 31 August 2021 and the associated expenditure are shown as restricted funds in the statement of financial activities.

During the year ended 31 August 2021, total income of £95,830k (2020: £82,307k) (which excludes transfers of existing academies) exceeded total expenditure of £93,813k (2020: £78,747k). The excess of income over expenditure for the year before transfers, pension fund movements, restricted fixed asset movements, and transfers from existing academies was £2,017k (2020: £1,794k).

At 31 August 2021 the net book value of fixed assets was £251,508k (2020: £249,225k). Movements in intangible fixed assets are shown in note 14 and tangible assets in note 15 to the financial statements. The assets were used exclusively for providing education and the associated support services to the pupils of the Academy Trust.

Assets of £8,805k (2020: £13,097k) were acquired during the year ended 31 August 2021 which were funded through a combination of General Annual Grant (GAG), capital grants, other restricted funds and unrestricted funds.

In accordance with FRS102, the Trust received an actuarial assessment of its pension scheme deficit. The deficit balance of £43,525k (2020: £30,183k) is included within the Balance Sheet as at 31 August 2021 and supporting notes to the financial statements.

Though the pension scheme represents a significant liability on the Balance Sheet, it does not present a significant issue for the Trust in respect of cash flow, as it will not crystallise at once. Contributions for the coming year are the primary factor for the Trust when considering the impact that the liability has on cash flow, and these have been appropriately reflected within forecasts and will be settled on a timely basis.

The surplus on restricted income funds as at 31 August 2021 was £1,887k, increased from a deficit of £855k at 31 August 2020. A conscious effort was made at Trust level to recover historic deficits early in the budgeting process, as such each school was asked to contribute 2% of its GAG income to support the aggregated Trust reserves position. This resulted in a contribution towards reserves of £1,436k, the remainder of the surplus was achieved as a direct impact of closer scrutiny of costs, procurement savings in staffing reorganisations in some schools. This was then further supported with COVID-19 associated grants, such as catch-up funding, workforce grants and the reimbursement of extraordinary costs associated with the pandemic.

Going concern

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

UNITY SCHOOLS PARTNERSHIP

DIRECTORS' REPORT (CONTINUED)

Financial and risk management objectives and policies

The Directors have assessed the major risks to which the Trust is exposed, and specific risks are identified relating to the teaching, safeguarding, provision of facilities and other operational areas of the Trust and its finances.

The Directors have implemented a number of systems to assess risks that the Trust faces, especially in the operational areas (e.g. in relation to teaching, health and safety, bullying and school trips) and in relation to the controls in order to minimise risk.

The Directors and the Executive Leadership Team undertake their responsibilities towards safeguarding very seriously and ensure that all staff receive regular, appropriate and relevant safeguarding training. The Trust has a safeguarding Lead for the Trust and ensures that safer recruitment trained individuals are involved in the appointment of all staff.

Furthermore, the Trust has continued to take positive action this year to ensure that all staff are aware of the whistleblowing policy and how to invoke it should they feel the need to.

Where significant financial risk still remains, the Trust has ensured it has adequate insurance cover. The Trust has an effective system of internal financial controls and this is explained in more detail in the following statement.

Effective risk management provides the Trust Board with assurance that:

- their financial responsibilities are being properly discharged;
- resources are being managed in an efficient, economical and effective manner;
- sound systems of internal financial control are being maintained; and
- financial considerations are fully taken into account in reaching decisions.

These arrangements can provide only reasonable and not absolute assurance that assets are safeguarded, transactions are authorised and properly recorded, and that material errors or irregularities are either prevented or would be detected within a timely period. As a trust, the level of financial risk mainly occurs around certainty of year-on-year funding, cash flow and actuarial assessed pension fund deficit. The Trust monitors the impact of cash flow and projects cash flow based on cash inflows and outflows at the start of the year and reviews the bank balance throughout the year. Future budgets are monitored in line with staffing levels/costs and follow benchmarking guidelines as set out by the ESFA.

Reserves policy

The Directors have determined that a level of funds retained should be at least equivalent to 5% of its GAG to enable the Trust to react to budget changes within a manageable period without the use of cash flow advances from the ESFA. In August 2021, 5% amounted to £5.6m. The total of restricted income and unrestricted funds (excluding the pension reserve) held on 31 August 2021 is a surplus of £4,700k (2020: £1,830K). The trust has set the target of increasing reserves at a measured pace to reach 5% by August 2023. We expect that the current position will reduce again by the end of August 2022 due to exceptional carry forward restricted funds being utilised in year.

The free reserves are represented by the unrestricted fund. As at 31 August 2021, the free reserves are £2,813k (2020: £2,685k).

Investment policy

The Trust is committed to continue to invest in its strategic aims to enhance the experiences of young individuals by ensuring that they are all safe, receiving the best education possible and that they become confident and considerate individuals.

Furthermore, the Trust prides itself on investing in the continuous professional development of its staff, offering them a wider range of opportunities to meet their career aspirations and pushing the boundaries to help them to achieve the best for their students. It is a Research School and, from September 2021, a Teaching School Hub, responsible across 170 schools for significant aspects of school staff professional development,

In terms of its infrastructure, the Trust will continue to invest in its assets, to build, maintain and develop conducive learning environments and central places for the community to be proud of.

UNITY SCHOOLS PARTNERSHIP

DIRECTORS' REPORT (CONTINUED)

Plans for future periods

The Trust will continue to focus on improving the education of the children it is responsible for by further improving achievement, teaching and learning and leadership. Its expectation is that all its schools will be at least good in Ofsted terms. It will continue to focus on improving the quality of teaching, the development of the curriculum and improvements in the attainment achieved by pupils at all ages, with a particular focus on outcomes for disadvantaged pupils across all schools.

The Trust Board and the Executive Leadership Team are working effectively with school leadership teams and local governing bodies and over the next year the Trust will continue to develop its infrastructure and centralised services and policies.

We will continue to find ways to enhance our back-office functions to offer academies the benefits of economies of scale and improved more efficient levels of service.

Principal risks and uncertainties

The Companies Act 2006 s417 (3b) requires disclosure of the principal risks and uncertainties facing a company. The Trust Board has reviewed the key risks to which the Trust is exposed together with the operating, financial and compliance controls that have been implemented to mitigate those risks.

The Trust's risk register is comprehensive and is actively reviewed by the Executive Leadership Team, the Audit & Risk Committee and the Trust Board on a regular basis. The Trust utilises the use of an independent internal auditor to perform a suite of internal audits based around a rolling programme aligned around the risk register and topical risks.

Local school level risks are monitored via termly meetings with key members of the Executive Leadership Team. Where appropriate, systems or procedures have been established to mitigate the risks each school faces.

The key areas of focus are:

Governance & Legal

The key risks in this area relate to the relationship with the Directors and local governing bodies, the capacity and performance of the board and the maintenance of a strong internal control framework. Internal auditors advise the Trust Board on issues regarding financial control.

Strategic

The key risks in this area relate to the delivery of Unity Schools Partnership strategic ambition for "Results Plus" whilst ensuring suitable attention to core business and the performance of the executive team. Capacity with the central team is continually reviewed to ensure correct skill set and sufficient capacity.

Educational

The key risk in this area relates to under performance of schools and underachievement against student outcomes and progress with adverse Ofsted judgements. Significant board and Executive Leadership Team time is spent focusing on the delivery of the key strategic objectives of the Trust of which student outcomes are paramount.

UNITY SCHOOLS PARTNERSHIP

DIRECTORS' REPORT (CONTINUED)

Human Resources

Key risks in this area relate to retention and recruitment of key employees, attendance management, consistency of HR practice and policy implementation.

The centralised HR team undertake robust vetting procedures of new staff following whilst also ensuring that all appointments and recruitment processes are managed by personnel who have been "safer recruitment" trained.

Other Legal & Operational

The key risks in this area relate to non-compliance with the Freedom of Information Act, General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR) and data quality. Comprehensive annual training on GDPR is provided to all staff including what to do in the case of a data breach and training on Freedom of Information is provided to key personnel.

The Trust's risk register is comprehensive and deals with a wide range of matters relating to the above. Where appropriate, adequate insurance cover is procured to mitigate any residual risks.

Financial Liquidity Risk

Unity Schools Partnership manages its cash resources, including appropriate working capital balances, so that all operating needs are met without the need of any borrowings. Surplus cash is invested in short term deposit accounts with the objective of maximising interest income without incurring undue risk. Trade debtors and trade creditors are managed within the credit terms agreed.

Financial Sustainability Risk

The Trust must demonstrate rigorous medium term financial planning and an operating environment focused on value for money in line with the Academies Financial Handbook. The Trust has cash surpluses which have built up over the last two years.

Other Risks

The Trust is exposed to risks similar to other MATs and academies related to the funding from central and local governments. Credit risk in this respect is negligible however appropriate funding levels specifically related to the needs of the children in its schools will rely on the future of fair funding for Education.

Streamlined energy and carbon reporting

<i>Energy consumption</i>	2021	2020*
	kWh	kWh
Aggregate of energy consumption in the year		
- Gas combustion	11,399,505	8,183,230
- Fuel consumed for transport	5,502,449	4,536,906
- Electricity purchased	172,418	345,794
- Biomass	856,232	926,180
	<hr/>	<hr/>
	17,930,604	13,992,110
	<hr/>	<hr/>

UNITY SCHOOLS PARTNERSHIP

DIRECTORS' REPORT (CONTINUED)

	2021	2020*
	metric tonnes	metric tonnes
<i>Emissions of CO2 equivalent</i>		
Scope 1 - direct emissions		
- Gas combustion	2,095.00	1,564.00
- Fuel consumed for owned transport	25.00	45.00
- Wood Chip & Pellet Consumption	12.00	13.00
	<hr/>	<hr/>
	2,132.00	1,622.00
Scope 2 - indirect emissions		
- Electricity purchased	1,168.00	1,083.00
Scope 3 - other indirect emissions		
- Fuel consumed for transport not owned by the Trust	18.00	42.00
	<hr/>	<hr/>
Total gross emissions	3,318.00	2,747.00
	<hr/> <hr/>	<hr/> <hr/>
<i>Intensity ratio</i>		
Tonnes CO2e per pupil	0.24	0.24
	<hr/> <hr/>	<hr/> <hr/>

* The comparative figures have been updated to include information relating to biomass and wood chip & pellet consumption which was not disclosed in the previous accounts.

Quantification and reporting methodology

We have followed the 2019 HM Government Environmental Reporting Guidelines. We have also used the GHG Reporting Protocol – Corporate Standard and have used the 2021 UK Government's Conversion Factors for Company Reporting.

Intensity measurement

The chosen intensity measurement ratio is total gross emissions in metric tonnes CO2 equivalent per pupil, the recommended ratio for the sector.

Measures taken to improve energy efficiency

The Trust commissioned and completed Energy surveys for its schools to highlight future potential energy saving projects and has committed to a pathway to NetZero. COVID-19 will have impacted the Trust's energy figures by virtue of a different on-site occupancy level against the previous year and also due to having to heat buildings whilst increasing ventilation with open windows. It is difficult to assess the true effects of COVID-19 on this year's emissions but it will certainly have made an impact.

Actions taken on renewable energy and carbon offsets

The Trust has provisioned new supply contracts to ensure that its Electricity consumption will be 100% renewable from April 2022.

The Trust has put in place carbon offset provision to ensure that its Gas consumption will be 100% offset from April 2021.

UNITY SCHOOLS PARTNERSHIP

DIRECTORS' REPORT (CONTINUED)

Actions taken on climate change

Unity Schools Partnership's Directors, CEO and Executive Leadership Team have all recognised the significant challenges posed by the world's Climate Crisis and are therefore declaring a Climate Emergency. As a Trust, we are now working towards publishing our NetZero ambitions and strategy. These will fully support and, where possible, exceed the Government ambitions to reach NetZero by 2050 and the independent Climate Change Committee, Sixth Carbon Budget. The Trust has set ambitious CO2 emission reduction targets of: 68% by 2030, 78% by 2035 and 100% by 2040.

To enable the delivery of these targets, the Trust's pledges to its students, staff and communities are to:

- Set up a NetZero Taskforce that will report directly to the Trust Board.
- The NetZero Taskforce will be empowered to make and implement recommendations for organisational changes.
- To develop a Carbon Reduction plan with externally verified science-based Carbon Targets.
- The Carbon Targets will (wherever possible) exceed the Government Targets and deliver a NetZero Trust as soon as is practicably possible.
- To match the UK Government NetZero ambitions as a minimum.
- Publicly report on our progress at least annually.

AUDITOR

The auditor, RSM UK Audit LLP, is deemed to be reappointed under section 487(2) of the Companies Act 2006.

Statement as to disclosure of information to auditor

The Directors have confirmed that, as far as they are aware, there is no relevant audit information of which the auditor is unaware. Each of the Directors have confirmed that they have taken all the steps that they ought to have taken as Directors in order to make themselves aware of any relevant audit information and to establish that it has been communicated to the auditor.

The report of Directors is approved by order of the Trust Board and the Strategic Report (included therein) is approved by the Trust Board in their capacity as the directors at a meeting on 14 December 2021 and signed on its behalf by:



Christine Quinn
Chair of Trust Board

UNITY SCHOOLS PARTNERSHIP

GOVERNANCE STATEMENT

Scope of responsibility

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

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

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

Governance

The information on governance included here supplements that described in the Directors' Report and in the Statement of Directors' Responsibilities. The Trust Board has formally met 6 times during the year. Attendance during the year at meetings of the Trust Board was as follows:

Directors	Meetings attended	Out of possible
Laura Barbrook	4	6
Tim Coulson (Accounting Officer)	6	6
Ian Jacobs (Safeguarding Lead, Chair of Standards Committee)	6	6
Nick Jenkins (Resigned 15 January 2021)	2	2
Gordon Jones	6	6
Janet Morris (Appointed 15 September 2021)	0	0
Roger Quince (Vice Chair and Chair of Audit & Risk Committee)	6	6
Christine Quinn (Chair of Trust Board)	6	6
Lloyd Spencer-Witcomb (Chair of Remuneration Committee)	5	6
Dean Sykes	6	6
Andrew Willett (Chair of Finance Committee)	6	6

Despite the continued pandemic, the Trust Board has been actively supporting the Executive Leadership Team and the Trust as a whole with guidance, direction and sharing of their own experiences to the benefit of the Trust.

Governance reviews

The Trust's Head of Governance appointed person continues to support the Trust Board and local governing bodies (LGBs) to ensure compliance and robust governance practice throughout. In 2020/21 she has undertaken further informal reviews with almost all LGBs ensuring standardisation of meeting agendas, discussions, negotiation and implementation around a new scheme of delegation and supporting with the recruitment of new governors.

In 2020/21 all LGBs were issued with an updated Trust Governance Handbook which sets out best practice and gives support, information and guidance on the roles and responsibilities of local governors.

The Head of Governance now attends all board meetings to ensure compliance and provide guidance where necessary.

The Trust Board and the Head of Governance were both recognised by the National Governance Association and leaders in their field, gaining an Award for Best Trust Board and a highly commended Award for Outstanding Lead Governance Professional.

UNITY SCHOOLS PARTNERSHIP

GOVERNANCE STATEMENT (CONTINUED)

Internal Audit services were commissioned in the year through SBM Services Limited, several audits were carried out identifying minor issues within some schools around controls and procedures, all of which have been reviewed and remedied. Initial audits planned and agreed with the Audit & Risk Committee in the autumn term 2020 had to be postponed due to lockdown and the restriction of visitors in schools in the spring and summer terms, the Executive Leadership Team and Audit & Risk Committee reacted quickly and diverted the internal audit team to reviews which could be carried out remotely during the Spring term, with the SBM team back on site during the summer.

The Audit & Risk Committee is a sub-committee of the main Trust Board. The terms of reference for the Audit & Risk Committee are:

- to monitor the integrity of the Financial Statements of the Trust and any formal announcements relating to the Trust's financial performance, reviewing significant financial reporting judgements contained in them;
- to review the Trust's internal financial controls and the internal control and risk management systems;
- to monitor and review the effectiveness of the Trust's internal audit function;
- to make recommendations to the Trust Board in relation to the appointment of the external auditor and to approve the remuneration and terms of engagement of the external auditor;
- to review and monitor the external auditor's independence and objectivity and the effectiveness of the audit process, taking into consideration relevant UK professional and regulatory requirements;
- to report to the Trust Board on how it has discharged its responsibilities.

Attendance at meetings in the year was as follows:

Directors	Meetings attended	Out of possible
Laura Barbrook	4	4
Ian Jacobs (Safeguarding Lead, Chair of Standards Committee)	4	4
Gordon Jones	1	1
Roger Quince (Vice Chair and Chair of Audit & Risk Committee)	4	4

Review of value for money

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

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

- reviewing central service contracts with some larger contracts being tendered with alternative providers;
- supporting and leading the establishment of a Suffolk Schools procurement framework;
- regularly reviewing long term contracts and comparing against other providers, in order to achieve the best price without compromising quality;
- using economies of scale on purchases such as print, broadband and IT equipment.

The Trust have also undertaken a review of external services we are currently purchasing to look at opportunities to provide services internally and therefore save money as well as provide a more effective service e.g. training, Governor services and Helpdesk services.

The purpose of the system of internal control

The system of internal control is designed to manage risk to a reasonable level rather than to eliminate all risk of failure to achieve policies, aims and objectives. It can therefore only provide reasonable and not absolute assurance of effectiveness. The system of internal control is based on an on-going process designed to identify and prioritise the risks to the achievement of trust policies, aims and objectives, to evaluate the likelihood of those risks being realised and the impact should they be realised, and to manage them efficiently, effectively and economically. The system of internal control has been in place in Unity Schools Partnership for the period 1 September 2020 to 31 August 2021 and up to the date of approval of the annual report and financial statements.

UNITY SCHOOLS PARTNERSHIP

GOVERNANCE STATEMENT (CONTINUED)

Capacity to handle risk

The Trust Board has reviewed the key risks to which the Trust is exposed together with the operating, financial and compliance controls that have been implemented to mitigate those risks. The Trust Board is of the view that there is a formal ongoing process for identifying, evaluating and managing the Trust's significant risks that has been in place for the period 1 September 2020 to 31 August 2021 and up to the date of approval of the annual report and financial statements. This process is regularly reviewed by the Trust Board.

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 Trust Board;
- regular reviews by the Trust Director of Finance and HR, the Trust Board and Local Governing Bodies of reports which indicate financial performance against the forecasts and of major purchase plans, capital works and expenditure programmes;
- setting targets to measure financial and other performance;
- clearly defined purchasing (asset purchase or capital investment) guidelines;
- delegation of authority and segregation of duties;
- identification and management of risks;
- termly operational reviews by the Trust's Executive Leadership team at each academy.

Internal Audit services were commissioned in the year through SBM Services Ltd, several audits were carried out identifying minor issues within some schools around controls and procedures, all of which have been reviewed and remedied. Initial audits planned and agreed with the Audit & Risk Committee in the autumn term 2020 had to be postponed due to lockdown and the restriction of visitors in schools in the spring and summer terms, the Executive Leadership Team and Audit & Risk Committee reacted quickly and diverted the internal audit team to reviews which could be carried out remotely during the Spring term, with the SBM team back on site during the summer.

During the course of the 2020/21 financial and academic year, SBM Services completed two very detailed and thorough audits:

- Autumn Term 2020 – Purchasing and Creditors
- Spring term 2021 – Cash management, bank reconciliations and income collection

Review of effectiveness

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

- The work of the Executive Leadership Team within the Trust who have responsibility for the development and maintenance of the internal control framework.
- The work of the internal auditor.
- The work of the external auditor.

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

Approved by order of the Trust Board on 14 December 2021 and signed on its behalf by:



Tim Coulson
Accounting Officer



Christine Quinn
Chair of Trust Board

UNITY SCHOOLS PARTNERSHIP

STATEMENT OF REGULARITY, PROPRIETY AND COMPLIANCE

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

I confirm that I and the Trust's Board are able to identify any material irregular or improper use of funds by the Trust, or material non-compliance with the terms and conditions of funding under the Trust's Funding Agreement and the Academies Financial Handbook 2020.

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 Trust Board and ESFA.



Tim Coulson
Accounting Officer

14 December 2021

UNITY SCHOOLS PARTNERSHIP

STATEMENT OF DIRECTORS' RESPONSIBILITIES

The Directors (who also act as trustees for Unity Schools Partnership) are responsible for preparing the Directors' report (including the Strategic Report) and the financial statements in accordance with the Academies Accounts Direction published by the Education and Skills Funding Agency, United Kingdom Accounting Standards (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice) and applicable law and regulations.

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

In preparing these financial statements, the Directors are required to:

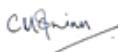
- select suitable accounting policies and then apply them consistently;
- observe the methods and principles in the Charities SORP 2019 and the Academies Accounts Direction 2020 to 2021;
- make judgements and accounting estimates that are reasonable and prudent;
- state whether applicable UK Accounting Standards have been followed, subject to any material departures disclosed and explained in the financial statements; and
- prepare the financial statements on the going concern basis unless it is inappropriate to presume that the charitable company will continue in business.

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

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

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

Approved by order of the members of the Trust Board on 14 December 2021 and signed on its behalf by:



Christine Quinn
Chair of Trust Board

INDEPENDENT AUDITOR'S REPORT TO THE MEMBERS OF UNITY SCHOOLS PARTNERSHIP

Opinion

We have audited the financial statements of Unity Schools Partnership (the "charitable company") for the year ended 31 August 2021 which comprise the Statement of Financial Activities, the Balance Sheet, the Statement of Cash Flows and the notes to the financial statements, including significant accounting policies. The financial reporting framework that has been applied in their preparation is applicable law and United Kingdom Accounting Standards, including FRS 102 "The Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland" (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice), and the Academies Accounts Direction 2020 to 2021 issued by the Education and Skills Funding Agency.

In our opinion the financial statements:

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

Basis for opinion

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

Conclusions relating to going concern

In auditing the financial statements, we have concluded that the Directors' 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 charitable company'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 Directors 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 financial statements and our auditor's report thereon. The Directors are responsible for the other information contained within the Annual Report. Our opinion on the financial statements does not cover the other information and, except to the extent otherwise explicitly stated in our report, we do not express any form of assurance conclusion thereon.

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

We have nothing to report in this regard.

INDEPENDENT AUDITOR'S REPORT TO THE MEMBERS OF UNITY SCHOOLS PARTNERSHIP (CONTINUED)

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 Annual Report which includes the Directors' Report and the Strategic Report prepared for the purposes of company law, for the financial year for which the financial statements are prepared is consistent with the financial statements; and
- the Directors' Report and the Strategic Report included within the Annual Report have been prepared in accordance with applicable legal requirements.

Matters on which we are required to report by exception

In the light of the knowledge and understanding of the charitable company and its environment obtained in the course of the audit, we have not identified material misstatements in the Directors' Report or the Strategic Report included within the Annual Report.

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

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

Responsibilities of Directors

As explained more fully in the Statement of Directors' Responsibilities set out on page 21, the directors, who also act as trustees for the charitable activities of Unity Schools Partnership, are responsible for the preparation of the financial statements and for being satisfied that they give a true and fair view, and for such internal control as the Directors determine is necessary to enable the preparation of financial statements that are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

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

Auditor's responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements

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

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

Irregularities are instances of non-compliance with laws and regulations. The objectives of our audit are to obtain sufficient appropriate audit evidence regarding compliance with laws and regulations that have a direct effect on the determination of material amounts and disclosures in the financial statements, to perform audit procedures to help identify instances of non-compliance with other laws and regulations that may have a material effect on the financial statements, and to respond appropriately to identified or suspected non-compliance with laws and regulations identified during the audit.

In relation to fraud, the objectives of our audit are to identify and assess the risk of material misstatement of the financial statements due to fraud, to obtain sufficient appropriate audit evidence regarding the assessed risks of material misstatement due to fraud through designing and implementing appropriate responses, and to respond appropriately to fraud or suspected fraud identified during the audit.

However, it is the primary responsibility of management, with the oversight of those charged with governance, to ensure that the entity's operations are conducted in accordance with the provisions of laws and regulations and for the prevention and detection of fraud.

INDEPENDENT AUDITOR'S REPORT TO THE MEMBERS OF UNITY SCHOOLS PARTNERSHIP (CONTINUED)

In identifying and assessing risks of material misstatement in respect of irregularities, including fraud, the audit engagement team:

- obtained an understanding of the nature of the sector, including the legal and regulatory framework that the charitable company operates in and how the charitable company is complying with the legal and regulatory framework;
- inquired of management, and those charged with governance, about their own identification and assessment of the risks of irregularities, including any known actual, suspected or alleged instances of fraud;
- discussed matters about non-compliance with laws and regulations and how fraud might occur including assessment of how and where the financial statements may be susceptible to fraud.

As a result of these procedures we consider the most significant laws and regulations that have a direct impact on the financial statements are FRS 102, Charities SORP (FRS 102), Companies Act 2006, Education and Skills Funding Agency's Academies Financial Handbook and Annual Accounts Direction. We performed audit procedures to detect non-compliances which may have a material impact on the financial statements which included reviewing the financial statements including the Annual Report.

The most significant laws and regulations that have an indirect impact on the financial statements are those in relation to the Education Inspection Framework under the Education Act 2005 (as amended), Keeping Children Safe in Education under the Education Act 2002, the UK General Data Protection Regulation (UK GDPR) and the Data Protection Act 2018. We performed audit procedures to inquire of management and those charged with governance whether the charitable company is in compliance with these law and regulations and inspected correspondence with regulatory authorities.

The audit engagement team identified the risk of management override of controls as the area where the financial statements were most susceptible to material misstatement due to fraud. Audit procedures performed included but were not limited to testing manual journal entries and other adjustments, evaluating the business rationale in relation to significant, unusual transactions and transactions entered into outside the normal course of business, challenging judgments and estimates.

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

Use of our report

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

Claire Sutherland (Senior Statutory Auditor)
For and on behalf of RSM UK Audit LLP, Statutory Auditor
Chartered Accountants
Blenheim House
Newmarket Road
Bury St Edmunds
Suffolk, IP33 3SB
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UNITY SCHOOLS PARTNERSHIP

STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES INCLUDING INCOME AND EXPENDITURE ACCOUNT

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2021

	Notes	Unrestricted Funds £000	Restricted General Funds £000	Restricted Fixed Asset Funds £000	Total 2021 £000	Total 2020 £000
Income and endowments from:						
Donations and capital grants	4	235	30	9,610	9,875	11,892
Donations - transfer of existing academy into the trust		-	-	-	-	53,407
Charitable activities:						
- Funding for educational operations	5	2,360	81,905	-	84,265	69,129
- Funding for teaching school	32	-	80	-	80	251
Other trading activities	6	1,576	32	-	1,608	1,026
Investments	7	2	-	-	2	9
Total		<u>4,173</u>	<u>82,047</u>	<u>9,610</u>	<u>95,830</u>	<u>135,714</u>
Expenditure on:						
Raising funds	8	602	1	-	603	163
Charitable activities:						
- Educational operations	9	2,354	84,240	6,522	93,116	78,180
- Teaching School	32	-	80	-	80	404
Charitable expenditure - transfer of existing academy into the trust	33	-	16	(2)	14	-
Total	8	<u>2,956</u>	<u>84,337</u>	<u>6,520</u>	<u>93,813</u>	<u>78,747</u>
Net income/(expenditure)		1,217	(2,290)	3,090	2,017	56,967
Transfers between funds	21	(1,089)	814	275	-	-
Other recognised gains/(losses)						
Actuarial losses on defined benefit obligations	28	-	(9,124)	-	(9,124)	(3,420)
Net movement in funds		128	(10,600)	3,365	(7,107)	53,547
Reconciliation of funds						
Total funds brought forward		<u>2,685</u>	<u>(31,038)</u>	<u>249,846</u>	<u>221,493</u>	<u>167,946</u>
Total funds carried forward		<u>2,813</u>	<u>(41,638)</u>	<u>253,211</u>	<u>214,386</u>	<u>221,493</u>

UNITY SCHOOLS PARTNERSHIP

BALANCE SHEET

AS AT 31 AUGUST 2021

	Notes	2021		2020	
		£000	£000	£000	£000
Fixed assets					
Intangible assets	14		132		126
Tangible assets	15		251,376		249,099
			<u>251,508</u>		<u>249,225</u>
Current assets					
Stocks	16	34		31	
Debtors	17	4,844		3,472	
Cash at bank and in hand		9,602		7,017	
		<u>14,480</u>		<u>10,520</u>	
Current liabilities					
Creditors: amounts falling due within one year	18	(7,914)		(7,834)	
Net current assets			<u>6,566</u>		<u>2,686</u>
Total assets less current liabilities			<u>258,074</u>		<u>251,911</u>
Creditors: amounts falling due after more than one year	19		(163)		(235)
Net assets before defined benefit pension scheme liability			<u>257,911</u>		<u>251,676</u>
Defined benefit pension scheme liability	28		(43,525)		(30,183)
Total net assets			<u>214,386</u>		<u>221,493</u>
Funds of the Trust:					
Restricted funds	21				
- Restricted fixed asset funds			253,211		249,846
- Restricted income funds			1,887		(855)
- Pension reserve			(43,525)		(30,183)
Total restricted funds			<u>211,573</u>		<u>218,808</u>
Unrestricted income funds	21		<u>2,813</u>		<u>2,685</u>
Total funds			<u>214,386</u>		<u>221,493</u>

The financial statements on pages 25 to 60 were approved by the Trust Board and authorised for issue on 14 December 2021 and are signed on their behalf by:

Christine Quinn
Chair of Trust Board

Tim Coulson
Accounting officer

UNITY SCHOOLS PARTNERSHIP

STATEMENT OF CASH FLOWS

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2021

	Notes	2021 £000	£000	2020 £000	£000
Cash flows from operating activities					
Net cash provided by operating activities	25		1,803		3,675
Cash flows from investing activities					
Cash funds transferred from academies joining the academy trust		-		1,052	
Interest received		2		9	
Capital grants from DfE Group		3,753		2,524	
Capital funding received from sponsors and others		1,172		204	
Purchase of intangible fixed assets		(2)		(24)	
Purchase of tangible fixed assets		(4,077)		(5,043)	
Proceeds from sale of tangible fixed assets		-		23	
		<u> </u>		<u> </u>	
Net cash provided by/(used in) investing activities			848		(1,255)
Cash flows from financing activities					
Repayment of other loan		(66)		(59)	
		<u> </u>		<u> </u>	
Net cash used in financing activities			(66)		(59)
			<u> </u>		<u> </u>
Net increase in cash and cash equivalents in the reporting period			2,585		2,361
Cash and cash equivalents at beginning of the year			7,017		4,656
			<u> </u>		<u> </u>
Cash and cash equivalents at end of the year			9,602		7,017
			<u> </u>		<u> </u>

UNITY SCHOOLS PARTNERSHIP

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2021

1 Accounting policies

General information

Unity Schools Partnership is a charitable company (the Trust). The address of its principal place of business is given on page 1 and the nature of its operations are set out in the Directors' Report.

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

Basis of preparation

The financial statements of the Trust 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 financial statements in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102) (Charities SORP (FRS 102)), the Academies Accounts Direction 2020 to 2021 issued by the ESFA, the Charities Act 2011 and the Companies Act 2006. The Trust is a public benefit entity under FRS 102 and has therefore applied the relevant public benefit requirements of FRS 102.

The financial statements are presented in sterling which is also the functional currency of the Trust.

Monetary amounts in these financial statements are rounded to the nearest whole £1,000, except where otherwise indicated.

Going concern

At the time of approving the financial statements, the Directors have a reasonable expectation that the Trust has adequate resources to continue in operational existence for the foreseeable future. Thus, the Directors continue to adopt the going concern basis of accounting in preparing the financial statements.

Following the uncertainty presented by COVID-19, management has reassessed the going concern assumption and confirms that it remains appropriate based on the strong cash and net asset position which enables the Trust to meet its liabilities as they fall due.

The Directors make this assessment in respect of a period of at least one year from the date of authorisation for issue of the financial statements and have concluded that the Trust has adequate resources to continue in operational existence for the foreseeable future and there are no material uncertainties about the Trust's ability to continue as a going concern. Thus they continue to adopt the going concern basis of accounting in preparing the financial statements.

Income

All income is recognised when the 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.

UNITY SCHOOLS PARTNERSHIP

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONTINUED) FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2021

1 Accounting policies (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, when performance-related conditions have been met, and are not deferred over the life of the asset on which they are expended.

Donations

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

Donated assets are recognised within income when title passes to the Trust, and the value can be reliably measured.

Other income

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

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

Charitable activities

These are costs incurred on the Trust's educational operations to further its charitable aims for the benefit of the beneficiaries, including support costs and costs relating to the governance of the Trust apportioned to charitable activities.

Intangible fixed assets and amortisation

Intangible assets costing £1,000 or more are capitalised and recognised when future economic benefits are probable and the cost or value of the asset can be measured reliably. Intangible assets are initially recognised at cost and are subsequently measured at cost net of amortisation and any provision for impairment. Amortisation is provided on intangible fixed assets at rates calculated to write off the cost of each asset on a straight-line basis over its expected useful life, as follows:

Purchased computer software	20%
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UNITY SCHOOLS PARTNERSHIP

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONTINUED) FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2021

1 Accounting policies (Continued)

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. Subsequent costs are capitalised only when it is probable that such costs will generate future economic benefits. All other costs of repairs and maintenance are charged to the Statement of Financial Activities as incurred.

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.

Depreciation is provided on all tangible fixed assets other than freehold land, so as to write off the cost of assets less their residual values on a straight-line basis over their useful lives on the following bases:

Freehold property	2%
Leasehold property	2%
Building improvements	10%
Computer equipment	20%
Fixtures, fittings, plant and machinery	10 - 20%

Assets in the course of construction are included at cost less any identified impairment loss. Cost includes professional fees and other directly attributable costs that are necessary to bring the property to its operating condition. Depreciation on these assets is not charged until they are brought into use and reclassified to freehold or leasehold land and buildings.

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

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 Trust anticipates it will pay to settle the debt or the amount it has received as advanced payments for the goods or services it must provide.

Leased assets

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

Stock

Unsold uniforms, textbooks and catering stocks are valued at the lower of cost and estimated selling price less costs to complete and sell.

Financial instruments

The Trust has adopted Sections 11 and 12 of FRS 102 in full in respect of financial instruments.

UNITY SCHOOLS PARTNERSHIP

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONTINUED) FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2021

1 Accounting policies (Continued)

Financial assets and liabilities

Financial assets and financial liabilities are recognised when the Trust becomes a party to the contractual provisions of the instrument.

Financial liabilities are classified according to the substance of the financial instrument's contractual obligations, rather than the financial instrument's legal form.

All financial assets and liabilities are initially measured at transaction price (including transaction costs). A financial asset or financial liability that is payable or receivable in one year is measured at the undiscounted amount expected to be received or paid net of impairment.

Financial assets are derecognised only when the contractual rights to the cash flows from the asset expire or are settled, or when the company transfers the financial asset and substantially all the risks and rewards of ownership to another entity, or if some significant risks and rewards of ownership are retained but control of the asset has transferred to another party that is able to sell the asset in its entirety to an unrelated third party.

Taxation

The Trust is considered to pass the tests set out in Paragraph 1 Schedule 6 of the Finance Act 2010 and therefore it meets the definition of a charitable company for UK corporation tax purposes. Accordingly, the Trust is potentially exempt from taxation in respect of income or capital gains received within categories covered by 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.

Pensions benefits

Retirement benefits to employees of the Trust are provided by the Teachers' Pension Scheme ('TPS') and the Local Government Pension Scheme ('LGPS'), which are multi-employer defined benefit schemes.

The TPS is an unfunded scheme and contributions are calculated so as to spread the cost of pensions over employees' working lives with the Trust in such a way that the pension cost is a substantially level percentage of current and future pensionable payroll. The contributions are determined by the Government Actuary on the basis of quadrennial valuations using a projected unit credit method. The TPS is a multi-employer scheme but there is insufficient information available to use defined benefit accounting. The TPS is therefore treated as a defined contribution scheme for accounting purposes and the contributions are recognised in the period to which they relate. Differences between contributions payable in the year and contributions actually paid are shown as either accruals or prepayments.

The LGPS is a funded multi-employer scheme and the assets are held separately from those of the Trust in separate trustee administered funds. Pension scheme assets are measured at fair value and liabilities are measured on an actuarial basis using the projected unit credit method and discounted at a rate equivalent to the current rate of return on a high quality corporate bond of equivalent term and currency to the liabilities. The actuarial valuations are obtained at least triennially and are updated at each reporting date. The amounts charged to net income 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.

UNITY SCHOOLS PARTNERSHIP

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONTINUED) FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2021

1 Accounting policies (Continued)

Fund accounting

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

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 DfE Group, as well as other third parties.

Agency arrangements

The Trust acts as an agent in distributing 16-19 bursary funds from the ESFA. Payments received from the ESFA and subsequent disbursements to students are excluded from the Statement of Financial Activities as the Trust does not have control over the charitable application of the funds. The Trust can use up to 5% of the allocation towards its own administration costs and this is recognised in the Statement of Financial Activities.

The Trust is also acting as an agent to distribute a one-off amount from the Combined Cadet Force Association. These funds are being held on behalf of the cadets and will be drawn down by the cadets from the Trust. These funds have been excluded from the Statement of Financial Activities as the Trust does not have control over the charitable application of the funds.

The funds received and paid and any balances held are disclosed in note 31.

Employee benefits

The best estimate of the expenditure required to settle an obligation for termination benefits is recognised immediately as an expense when the Trust is demonstrably committed to terminate the employment of an employee or to provide termination benefits.

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 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.

UNITY SCHOOLS PARTNERSHIP

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONTINUED) FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2021

2 Critical accounting estimates and areas of judgement (Continued)

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 28, will impact the carrying amount of the pension liability. Furthermore a roll forward approach which projects results from the latest full actuarial valuation performed at 31 March 2019 has been used by the actuary in valuing the pensions liability at 31 August 2021. Any differences between the figures derived from the roll forward approach and a full actuarial valuation would impact on the carrying amount of the pension liability.

Church school land and buildings

On transfer of St Edward's Church of England Academy into the Trust, a value was required to be attributed to the land and buildings occupied by the School, as it was considered that the substance of the arrangements relating to occupation of the site equate to ownership. As no previous valuations had been performed on the site, a Directors' valuation was used, based upon an existing School within the Trust with a comparable PAN, and reflecting the location of the transferring site. Though assumptions have been applied, it is not considered that the resulting value reflected within these financial statements would result in a material difference from the transferring value of the site.

UNITY SCHOOLS PARTNERSHIP

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONTINUED) FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2021

3 Statement of financial activities - comparative year information

Year ended 31 August 2020	Unrestricted Funds £000	Restricted General Funds £000	Restricted Fixed asset Funds £000	Total 2020 £000
Income and endowments from:				
Donations and capital grants	101	29	11,762	11,892
Donations - transfer of existing academy into the trust	142	(4,913)	58,178	53,407
Charitable activities:				
- Funding for educational operations	2,273	66,856	-	69,129
- Funding for teaching school	-	251	-	251
Other trading activities	942	84	-	1,026
Investments	9	-	-	9
Total	<u>3,467</u>	<u>62,307</u>	<u>69,940</u>	<u>135,714</u>
Expenditure on:				
Raising funds	162	1	-	163
Charitable activities:				
- Educational operations	2,237	69,535	6,408	78,180
- Teaching School	-	404	-	404
Total	<u>2,399</u>	<u>69,940</u>	<u>6,408</u>	<u>78,747</u>
Net income/(expenditure)	1,068	(7,633)	63,532	56,967
Transfers between funds	(598)	194	404	-
Other recognised gains/(losses)				
Actuarial losses on defined benefit pension schemes	-	(3,420)	-	(3,420)
Net movement in funds	<u>470</u>	<u>(10,859)</u>	<u>63,936</u>	<u>53,547</u>

4 Donations and capital grants

	Unrestricted funds £000	Restricted funds £000	Total 2021 £000	Total 2020 £000
Donated fixed assets	-	4,685	4,685	9,034
Capital grants	-	3,990	3,990	2,706
Other donations	235	965	1,200	152
	<u>235</u>	<u>9,640</u>	<u>9,875</u>	<u>11,892</u>

UNITY SCHOOLS PARTNERSHIP

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONTINUED) FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2021

5 Funding for the Trust's educational operations

	Unrestricted funds £000	Restricted funds £000	Total 2021 £000	Total 2020 £000
DfE / ESFA grants				
General annual grant (GAG)	-	65,300	65,300	54,386
Other DfE / ESFA grants:				
- Universal infant free school meals	-	682	682	657
- Pupil premium	-	3,292	3,292	2,862
- Start up grants	-	25	25	160
- Teachers' pay and teachers pension grants	-	3,145	3,145	2,671
- Others	-	790	790	766
	-	73,234	73,234	61,502
Other government grants				
Local authority grants	-	6,864	6,864	5,300
COVID-19 additional funding (DfE / ESFA)				
Catch-up premium		1,059	1,059	-
Other DfE / ESFA COVID-19 funding	-	516	516	57
	-	1,575	1,575	57
COVID-19 additional funding (non-DfE / ESFA)				
Coronavirus job retention scheme grant	33	-	33	58
Other non-DfE / ESFA COVID-19 funding	406	-	406	-
	439	-	439	58
Teaching School	-	80	80	251
Other incoming resources	1,921	232	2,153	2,212
	1,921	312	2,233	2,463
	2,360	81,985	84,345	69,380

UNITY SCHOOLS PARTNERSHIP

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONTINUED) FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2021

5 Funding for the Trust's educational operations (Continued)

Following the reclassification in the Academies Accounts Direction 2020/21 of some grants received from the Department for Education (DfE) and ESFA, the Trust's funding for Universal Infant Free School Meals and Pupil Premium is no longer reported within the Other DfE/ESFA grants/Other DfE group grants line item, but as separate lines under the Other DfE/ESFA grants heading. The prior year numbers have been reclassified.

The Trust has been eligible to claim additional funding in year from government support schemes in response to the coronavirus outbreak. The funding received is shown above under COVID-19 additional funding.

The funding received for coronavirus exceptional support covers £523k (2020: £57k) of additional cleaning services and materials and supplies directly related to the protection of staff and children. These costs are included in notes 8 and 10 below as appropriate.

The academy received £1,059k of funding for catch-up premium and costs incurred in respect of this funding totalled £657k, with £402k remaining to be spent in 2021/22.

The Academy Trust furloughed 29 (2020: 19) of its staff under the government's Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme, predominantly in roles within catering, lettings, sports facilities and private nurseries. The funding received of £33k (2020: £58k) relates to staff costs incurred during the year.

6 Other trading activities

	Unrestricted funds £000	Restricted funds £000	Total 2021 £000	Total 2020 £000
Hire of facilities	224	-	224	301
Tutoring income	407	-	407	-
CUSP income	209	-	209	-
Sale of goods	52	-	52	44
Other income	684	32	716	681
	<u>1,576</u>	<u>32</u>	<u>1,608</u>	<u>1,026</u>

7 Investment income

	Unrestricted funds £000	Restricted funds £000	Total 2021 £000	Total 2020 £000
Interest from short term deposits	2	-	2	9
	<u>2</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>9</u>

UNITY SCHOOLS PARTNERSHIP

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONTINUED) FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2021

8 Expenditure

	Staff costs £000	Non Pay Expenditure Premises £000	Other £000	Total 2021 £000	Total 2020 £000
Expenditure on raising funds					
- Direct costs	247	-	356	603	163
Academy's educational operations					
- Direct costs	57,156	6,522	4,837	68,515	56,454
- Allocated support costs	13,838	6,304	4,459	24,601	21,726
Teaching School					
- Direct costs	52	-	13	65	219
- Allocated support costs	11	-	4	15	185
Charitable expenditure - transfer of existing academy into the trust			14	14	-
	<u>71,304</u>	<u>12,826</u>	<u>9,683</u>	<u>93,813</u>	<u>78,747</u>

Net income/(expenditure) for the year includes:

	2021 £000	2020 £000
Operating lease rentals	665	485
Depreciation of tangible fixed assets	6,458	4,379
Amortisation of intangible fixed assets	64	56
Gain on disposal of fixed assets	-	(13)
Impairment of freehold property	-	2,092
Net interest on defined benefit pension liability	543	359
Fees payable to RSM UK Audit LLP and its associates in respect of both audit and non-audit services are as follows:		
- Audit	75	69
- Other services	11	8
- Audit-related assurance	7	11
	<u> </u>	<u> </u>

9 Charitable activities

	Unrestricted funds £000	Restricted funds £000	Total 2021 £000	Total 2020 £000
Direct costs				
Educational operations	720	67,795	68,515	56,454
Teaching School	-	65	65	219
Support costs				
Educational operations	1,634	22,967	24,601	21,726
Teaching School	-	15	15	185
	<u>2,354</u>	<u>90,842</u>	<u>93,196</u>	<u>78,584</u>

UNITY SCHOOLS PARTNERSHIP

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONTINUED) FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2021

9 Charitable activities (Continued)

	Teaching School £000	Educational operations £000	Total 2021 £000	Total 2020 £000
Analysis of support costs				
Support staff costs	11	14,166	14,177	11,792
Impairment of freehold property	-	-	-	2,092
Premises costs	-	6,304	6,304	4,646
Legal costs	4	506	510	472
Other support costs	-	3,514	3,514	2,827
Governance costs	-	111	111	82
	<u>15</u>	<u>24,601</u>	<u>24,616</u>	<u>21,911</u>

10 Staff

Staff costs

Staff costs during the year were:

	2021 £000	2020 £000
Wages and salaries	50,318	41,692
Social security costs	4,871	3,994
Pension costs	14,979	12,244
Staff costs - employees	<u>70,168</u>	<u>57,930</u>
Agency staff costs	863	1,203
Staff restructuring costs	273	226
	<u>71,304</u>	<u>59,359</u>
Staff development and other staff costs	596	671
Total staff expenditure	<u><u>71,900</u></u>	<u><u>60,030</u></u>

Staff restructuring costs comprise:

Redundancy payments	32	6
Severance payments	162	220
Other restructuring costs	79	-
	<u>273</u>	<u>226</u>

No specific funding was received or receivable to support the payments disclosed above in respect of the current or prior year.

UNITY SCHOOLS PARTNERSHIP

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONTINUED) FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2021

10 Staff (Continued)

Non statutory/non-contractual staff severance payments

Included in staff restructuring costs are non-statutory/non-contractual severance payments totalling £138,103 (2020: £138,832). Individually, the payments were: £35,529, £27,635, £24,395, £22,941, £20,734, £4,600 and £2,269.

Staff numbers

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

	2021 Number	2020 Number
Teachers	844	735
Administration and support	1,162	1,013
Management	38	35
	<u>2,044</u>	<u>1,783</u>

Higher paid staff

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

	2021 Number	2020 Number
£60,001 - £70,000	40	31
£70,001 - £80,000	10	7
£80,001 - £90,000	10	7
£90,001 - £100,000	9	6
£100,001 - £110,000	2	1
£120,001 - £130,000	-	1
£130,001 - £140,000	1	-
£150,001 - £160,000	-	1
£160,001 - £170,000	1	-
	<u> </u>	<u> </u>

Key management personnel

The key management personnel of the Trust comprise the Directors and the Executive Leadership Team as listed on page 1. The total amount of employee benefits (including employer pension contributions and national insurance contributions) received by key management personnel for their services to the Trust was £1,280,849 (2020: £978,494). Personnel deemed to be key management have increased from 7 to 9 as the Trust increases its capacity.

UNITY SCHOOLS PARTNERSHIP

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONTINUED) FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2021

11 Central services

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

- Executive Team Leadership
- Targeted school improvement support – Science and Leadership
- Financial administration services, including hub finance support, in-house payroll service and transactional processing services
- Dedicated HR Services (HR transactional support, contract management, wellbeing, HR Helpdesk, recruitment and employee relations)
- Legal & Professional Services
- Teaching & Learning support including school reviews and access to learning advisors and a wide range of educational resources
- Centralised ICT
- Property Management and building condition improvement services
- Executive PA support

The Trust charges for these services on the following basis:

All academies were charged the same flat rate of 6.25% of their whole schools' general annual grant (GAG) funding, and a smaller percentage of some other recurrent grant funding (contribution for Trust IT was 0.5%).

UNITY SCHOOLS PARTNERSHIP

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONTINUED) FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2021

11 Central services (Continued)

The amounts charged during the year were as follows:	2021 £000	2020 £000
Abbots Green Primary School	124	99
Burton End Primary Academy	108	92
County Upper School	349	52
Castle Manor Academy	258	210
Churchill Special Free School	103	97
Clements Primary Academy	85	79
Coupals Primary Academy	86	69
Ditton Lodge Primary School	56	48
Felixstowe Academy	433	372
Glemsford Primary Academy	67	58
Horringer Court Middle School	110	16
Houldsworth Valley Primary Academy	92	79
Kedington Primary Academy	54	48
Langer Primary School	51	48
Laureate Community Academy	71	65
Newmarket Academy	270	226
Place Farm Primary Academy	112	98
Samuel Ward Academy	456	395
Sir Bobby Robson School	40	-
St Edward's Church of England Academy	290	296
Steeple Bumpstead Primary School	52	45
Sybil Andrews Academy	235	220
The Bridge School	244	207
Thomas Gainsborough School	559	469
Tollgate Primary School	89	12
Wells Hall Primary School	119	101
Westfield Primary Academy	107	95
Westley Middle School	157	21
Wickhambrook Primary Academy	48	41
Woodhall Primary School	115	100
	<u>4,940</u>	<u>3,758</u>

UNITY SCHOOLS PARTNERSHIP

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONTINUED) FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2021

12 Directors' remuneration and expenses

One of the Directors has been paid remuneration or has received other benefits from an employment with the Trust. The Accounting Officer only receives remuneration in respect of services provided in undertaking the role of Accounting Officer under his contract of employment, and not in respect of services as Director.

The value of Directors' remuneration and other benefits was as follows:

		2021	2020
		£	£
Dr Tim Coulson	Remuneration	170,000	160,000
	Pension contributions	40,256	37,888

During the year ended 31 August 2021, travel and subsistence expenses totalling £1,780 (2020: £3,233) were reimbursed or paid directly to two Directors (2020: two Directors).

13 Directors and officers' insurance

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

14 Intangible fixed assets

	Computer software
	£000
Cost	
At 1 September 2020	316
Additions	2
Transfer between classes	68
	<hr/>
At 31 August 2021	386
	<hr/>
Amortisation	
At 1 September 2020	190
Charge for year	64
	<hr/>
At 31 August 2021	254
	<hr/>
Carrying amount	
At 31 August 2021	132
	<hr/> <hr/>
At 31 August 2020	126
	<hr/> <hr/>

UNITY SCHOOLS PARTNERSHIP

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONTINUED) FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2021

15 Tangible fixed assets

	Freehold property	Leasehold property	Computer equipment	Fixtures, fittings, plant and machinery	Assets under construction	Total
	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000
Cost						
At 1 September 2020	81,548	175,900	3,668	4,184	927	266,227
Transfer between classes	343	1,365	108	145	(2,029)	(68)
Additions	359	4,768	770	318	2,588	8,803
Disposals	(11)	(2,146)	(220)	(28)	-	(2,405)
At 31 August 2021	82,239	179,887	4,326	4,619	1,486	272,557
Depreciation						
At 1 September 2020	5,943	7,425	2,042	1,718	-	17,128
On disposals	(11)	(2,146)	(220)	(28)	-	(2,405)
Charge for the year	1,360	3,773	636	689	-	6,458
At 31 August 2021	7,292	9,052	2,458	2,379	-	21,181
Net book value						
At 31 August 2021	74,947	170,835	1,868	2,240	1,486	251,376
At 31 August 2020	75,605	168,475	1,626	2,466	927	249,099

Transfer between classes relate to the transfer of assets under construction to their completed categories.

Included in additions of £4,768k for long leasehold buildings is a new school at Sir Bobby Robson School, which has been donated at a fair value of £4,327k. The building was valued by S Gibson, Principal Quantity Surveyor on behalf of Concertus Design and Property Consultants during the year.

16 Stocks

	2021 £000	2020 £000
Goods for resale	34	31

17 Debtors

	2021 £000	2020 £000
Trade debtors	983	364
VAT recoverable	643	580
Other debtors	38	31
Prepayments and accrued income	3,180	2,497
	4,844	3,472

UNITY SCHOOLS PARTNERSHIP

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONTINUED) FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2021

18 Creditors: amounts falling due within one year

	2021	2020
	£000	£000
Other loans	64	58
Trade creditors	2,144	2,605
Other taxation and social security	1,191	1,086
ESFA creditors - abatement of GAG	-	138
Other creditors	1,628	1,828
Accruals and deferred income (see note 20)	2,887	2,119
	<u>7,914</u>	<u>7,834</u>

Loans totalling £63,860 (2020: £58,145) are from ESFA in relation to Salix loans. No interest is charged on these loans and they are unsecured.

19 Creditors: amounts falling due after more than one year

	2021	2020
	£000	£000
Other loans	163	235
	<u>163</u>	<u>235</u>
Analysis of loans	2021	2020
	£000	£000
Wholly repayable within five years	227	293
Less: included in current liabilities	(64)	(58)
	<u>163</u>	<u>235</u>
Amounts included above	<u>163</u>	<u>235</u>
Loan maturity		
Debt due in one year or less	64	58
Due in more than one year but not more than two years	51	66
Due in more than two years but not more than five years	96	126
Due in more than five years	16	43
	<u>227</u>	<u>293</u>

Loans totalling £162,980 (2020: £234,709) are from ESFA in relation to Salix loans. No interest is charged on these loans and they are unsecured.

UNITY SCHOOLS PARTNERSHIP

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONTINUED) FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2021

20 Deferred income

	2021	2020
	£000	£000
Deferred income is included within:		
Creditors due within one year	1,126	1,218
	<u> </u>	<u> </u>
Deferred income at 1 September 2020	1,218	1,046
Released from previous years	(1,218)	(1,046)
Resources deferred in the year	1,126	1,218
	<u> </u>	<u> </u>
Deferred income at 31 August 2021	1,126	1,218
	<u> </u>	<u> </u>

At the reporting date the Trust was holding funds received in advance for future school trips, rates relief, early years funding and universal infant free school meals funding.

UNITY SCHOOLS PARTNERSHIP

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONTINUED) FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2021

21 Funds

	Balance at 1 September 2020 £000	Income £000	Expenditure £000	Gains, losses and transfers £000	Balance at 31 August 2021 £000
Restricted general funds					
General Annual Grant (GAG)	(1,742)	65,300	(63,819)	1,399	1,138
Other DfE / ESFA grants:					
- Universal infant free school meals	2	682	(684)	-	-
- Pupil premium	38	3,292	(3,322)	-	8
- Start up grants	124	25	(152)	-	(3)
- Teachers' pay and teachers pension grants	-	3,145	(3,145)	-	-
- Others	276	790	(408)	(508)	150
Catch-up premium	-	1,059	(657)	-	402
Other DfE / ESFA COVID-19 funding	-	516	(517)	-	(1)
Other government grants	238	6,864	(6,780)	(278)	44
Teaching School	-	80	(80)	-	-
Other restricted funds	209	294	(555)	201	149
Pension reserve	(30,183)	-	(4,218)	(9,124)	(43,525)
	<u>(31,038)</u>	<u>82,047</u>	<u>(84,337)</u>	<u>(8,310)</u>	<u>(41,638)</u>
Restricted fixed asset funds					
Inherited on conversion	211,336	-	(3,963)	(7,733)	199,640
DfE group capital grants	8,325	3,990	(1,007)	(1,040)	10,268
Capital expenditure from GAG	1,366	-	(382)	561	1,545
Unspent capital grants	1,220	-	-	709	1,929
Overspent capital grants	(384)	-	-	384	-
Salix loans	(255)	-	-	28	(227)
Other capital income	28,238	5,620	(1,168)	7,366	40,056
	<u>249,846</u>	<u>9,610</u>	<u>(6,520)</u>	<u>275</u>	<u>253,211</u>
Total restricted funds	<u>218,808</u>	<u>91,657</u>	<u>(90,857)</u>	<u>(8,035)</u>	<u>211,573</u>
Unrestricted funds					
General funds	2,685	4,173	(2,956)	(1,089)	2,813
Total funds	<u>221,493</u>	<u>95,830</u>	<u>(93,813)</u>	<u>(9,124)</u>	<u>214,386</u>

UNITY SCHOOLS PARTNERSHIP

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONTINUED) FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2021

21 Funds (Continued)

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

General Annual Grant (GAG)

The General Annual Grant (GAG) must be used for the normal running costs of the Trust. Under the Funding Agreement with the Secretary of State, the Trust was not subject to a limit on the GAG that it could carry forward at 31 August 2021. The deficit brought forward has been cleared in the current year.

Other DfE/ESFA grants

Other DfE/ESFA grants include:

- Pupil Premium must be used to support the cost of raising the attainment of disadvantaged pupils.
- Universal infant free school meals funding must be used to provide free school meals to infant school pupils.
- Start up grants relates to income received to cover the start up costs of schools on converting to an Academy.
- Teachers' pay and pension grants are received from the ESFA to fund teacher's pay rises and increases to pension contribution rates.
- PE & sport premium represents funding received from the ESFA for the provision of PE and sport, for the benefit of primary aged pupils, to that they develop healthy lifestyles.
- Free school meal supplementary grant represents funding received from the ESFA to help meet the costs of providing more pupils with free school meals linked to the roll out of Universal Credit.
- 16-19 tuition funding received from the ESFA supports small group tuition for 16-19 students in English, maths and other courses to mitigate the disruption to learning arising from COVID-19.
- Academic mentors grant is funding received from the DfE towards the salary costs for mentors on the Academic Mentors programme.

Other government grants

Other government grants include:

- SEN funding which represents grants received in order to provide additional teaching resources for children with special learning needs. The cost of these teaching resources has been set against the income.
- Early years funding received for 3 and 4 year olds.
- Other lower level grants and donations received for a particular purpose. Any relevant costs have been offset against this income.

Other DfE/ESFA COVID-19

Catch-up premium and other non-DfE/ESFA COVID-19 funding funds have arisen from funding received to aid the trust in dealing with the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on both the students and the schools' ability to provide teaching.

Teaching School

During 2020/21, Unity Schools Partnership was awarded a Teaching School Hub contract for three years by the Department for Education. The Teaching School Hub receives an annual grant, which is dependent on meeting key performance indicators. Funding of £80k was received and spent during 2020/21 and from 2021/22, grant funding will amount to £170k per annum.

Other restricted funds

Other restricted funds represent lower level grants and donations received for a particular purpose. Any relevant costs have been offset against this income.

Pension reserve

The Pension reserve represents the Trust's net liability in respect of the Local Government Pension Scheme.

UNITY SCHOOLS PARTNERSHIP

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONTINUED) FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2021

21 Funds (Continued)

Restricted fixed asset funds

Restricted fixed asset funds include:

- Inherited on conversion relates to the assets transferred from predecessor schools upon joining the Trust. Income relates to the value of assets transferred on schools joining the Trust where the net transfer was recognised as a net gain in the Statement of Financial Activities. Expenditure relates to depreciation in respect of these assets.
- DfE group capital grants relates to capital grants received during the year including devolved formula capital grants, schools condition allowance and healthy pupils capital fund.
- Capital expenditure from revenue funds includes fixed assets purchased by schools within the Trust following conversion. Expenditure relates to depreciation charged on these assets.
- The overspent capital grants deficit will be cleared by funding instalments and transfers from unrestricted funds in future periods.
- Unspent capital grants relates to capital grants received which have not been spent at the year end.
- Salix loans represent the amounts owed in respect of loans taken out to fund the purchase of assets.
- Other capital income relates to capital donations and income from other sources.

Unrestricted funds

These funds relate to unrestricted income to be used to support the Trust's objectives and educational activities.

Transfers

Transfers between funds during the year relate to fixed asset purchases from unrestricted income and GAG funding and allocation of capital grants and additions between restricted fixed asset funds.

Following a detailed review of the composition of funds in the previous year, a further transfer between funds has been made to correct the allocation of fund balances at the year end.

UNITY SCHOOLS PARTNERSHIP

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONTINUED) FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2021

21 Funds (Continued)

Funds prior year

	Balance at 1 September 2019 £000	Income £000	Expenditure £000	Gains, losses and transfers £000	Balance at 31 August 2020 £000
Restricted general funds					
General Annual Grant (GAG)	(2,582)	54,764	(53,739)	(185)	(1,742)
Other DfE / ESFA grants:					
- Universal infant free school meals	-	657	(655)	-	2
- Pupil premium	-	2,862	(2,824)	-	38
- Start up grants	164	160	(200)	-	124
- Teachers' pay and teachers pension grants	-	2,671	(2,671)	-	-
- Others	140	766	(630)	-	276
Other DfE group grants	-	127	(136)	9	-
Other DfE / ESFA COVID-19 funding	-	57	(57)	-	-
Other government grants	86	5,335	(5,101)	(82)	238
Teaching School	(87)	251	(404)	240	-
Other restricted funds	119	185	(307)	212	209
Pension reserve	(18,019)	(5,528)	(3,216)	(3,420)	(30,183)
	<u>(20,179)</u>	<u>62,307</u>	<u>(69,940)</u>	<u>(3,226)</u>	<u>(31,038)</u>
Restricted fixed asset funds					
Transfer on conversion	157,911	58,178	(4,736)	(17)	211,336
DfE group capital grants	6,335	2,706	(677)	(39)	8,325
Capital expenditure from GAG	1,428	-	(349)	287	1,366
Unspent capital grants	1,690	-	-	(470)	1,220
Overspent capital grants	(83)	-	-	(301)	(384)
Salix loans	(314)	-	-	59	(255)
Other capital income	18,943	9,056	(646)	885	28,238
	<u>185,910</u>	<u>69,940</u>	<u>(6,408)</u>	<u>404</u>	<u>249,846</u>
Total restricted funds	<u>165,731</u>	<u>132,247</u>	<u>(76,348)</u>	<u>(2,822)</u>	<u>218,808</u>
Unrestricted funds					
General funds	<u>2,215</u>	<u>3,467</u>	<u>(2,399)</u>	<u>(598)</u>	<u>2,685</u>
Total funds	<u>167,946</u>	<u>135,714</u>	<u>(78,747)</u>	<u>(3,420)</u>	<u>221,493</u>

UNITY SCHOOLS PARTNERSHIP

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONTINUED) FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2021

21 Funds (Continued)

In line with the freedoms within the Trust's Master Funding Agreement and with encouragement of the Department of Education, the Trust Board decided to pool all reserves with effect from 12 December 2019. Accordingly, no surpluses or deficits are attributed to particular schools but all are held centrally.

UNITY SCHOOLS PARTNERSHIP

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONTINUED) FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2021

21 Funds (Continued)

Total cost analysis by school

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

	Teaching and educational support staff £000	Other support staff costs £000	Educational supplies £000	Other costs excluding depreciation £000	Total 2021 £000	Total 2020 £000
Abbots Green Primary School	1,518	188	91	252	2,049	1,809
Burton End Primary Academy	1,464	147	73	213	1,897	1,587
County Upper School	3,717	617	337	432	5,103	776
Castle Manor Academy	2,900	510	163	559	4,132	3,660
Churchill Special Free School	1,155	106	23	116	1,400	1,409
Clements Primary Academy	1,137	158	50	196	1,541	1,435
Coupals Primary Academy	1,023	114	84	217	1,438	1,214
Ditton Lodge Primary School	710	73	21	147	951	919
Felixstowe Academy	4,554	742	237	707	6,240	6,081
Glemsford Primary Academy	818	113	53	134	1,118	1,046
Horringer Court Middle School	1,175	166	59	298	1,698	255
Houldsworth Valley Primary Academy	1,190	123	63	211	1,587	1,362
Kedington Primary Academy	595	65	58	154	872	819
Langer Primary School	630	79	82	146	937	831
Laureate Community Academy	906	91	34	187	1,218	1,174
Newmarket Academy	2,947	451	187	531	4,116	3,674
Place Farm Primary Academy	1,366	160	59	225	1,810	1,767
Samuel Ward Academy	4,703	841	247	682	6,473	6,302
Sir Bobby Robson School	666	50	17	119	852	-
St Edward's Church of England Academy	3,030	723	241	673	4,667	5,103
Steeple Bumpstead Primary School	604	111	49	85	849	783
Sybil Andrews Academy	2,397	448	176	580	3,601	3,517
The Bridge School	2,699	249	97	403	3,448	3,635
Thomas Gainsborough School	6,122	1,055	365	915	8,457	8,000
Tollgate Primary School	997	126	42	261	1,426	200
Wells Hall Primary School	1,433	230	94	176	1,933	1,799
Westfield Primary Academy	1,336	165	92	256	1,849	1,710
Westley Middle School	1,879	177	112	335	2,503	368

UNITY SCHOOLS PARTNERSHIP

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONTINUED) FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2021

21 Funds

	Teaching and educational support staff £000	Other support staff costs £000	Educational supplies £000	Other costs excluding depreciation £000	Total 2021 £000	Total 2020 £000
(Continued)						
Wickhambrook Primary Academy	600	71	40	121	832	725
Woodhall Primary School	1,563	129	90	193	1,975	1,919
Central services	1,642	5,898	1,218	1,561	10,319	8,355
	<u>57,476</u>	<u>14,176</u>	<u>4,554</u>	<u>11,085</u>	<u>87,291</u>	<u>72,234</u>

22 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 2021 are represented by:				
Intangible fixed assets	-	-	132	132
Tangible fixed assets	-	-	251,376	251,376
Current assets	2,840	9,710	1,930	14,480
Creditors falling due within one year	(27)	(7,823)	(64)	(7,914)
Creditors falling due after one year	-	-	(163)	(163)
Defined benefit pension liability	-	(43,525)	-	(43,525)
Total net assets	<u>2,813</u>	<u>(41,638)</u>	<u>253,211</u>	<u>214,386</u>

	Unrestricted Funds £000	Restricted funds: General £000	Fixed asset £000	Total Funds £000
Fund balances at 31 August 2020 are represented by:				
Intangible fixed assets	-	-	126	126
Tangible fixed assets	-	-	249,099	249,099
Current assets	2,692	6,792	1,036	10,520
Creditors falling due within one year	(7)	(7,647)	(180)	(7,834)
Creditors falling due after one year	-	-	(235)	(235)
Defined benefit pension liability	-	(30,183)	-	(30,183)
Total net assets	<u>2,685</u>	<u>(31,038)</u>	<u>249,846</u>	<u>221,493</u>

UNITY SCHOOLS PARTNERSHIP

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONTINUED) FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2021

23 Capital commitments

	2021	2020
	£000	£000
Expenditure contracted for but not provided in the financial statements	1,169	691

24 Long-term commitments, including operating leases

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

	2021	2020
	£000	£000
Amounts due within one year	560	508
Amounts due between one and five years	665	337
	<u>1,225</u>	<u>845</u>

25 Reconciliation of net income to net cash flow from operating activities

	2021	2020
	£000	£000
Net income for the reporting period (as per the statement of financial activities)	2,017	56,967
Adjusted for:		
Net deficit/(surplus) on transfer of academy in the trust	14	(53,407)
Capital grants from DfE and other capital income	(9,610)	(11,762)
Interest receivable	(2)	(9)
Pension costs less contributions payable	3,675	2,857
Pension scheme finance costs	543	359
Depreciation of tangible fixed assets	6,458	4,379
Amortisation of intangible fixed assets	64	56
Loss on disposal of fixed assets	-	(13)
Impairment losses on tangible fixed assets	-	2,092
Movements in working capital:		
(Increase)/decrease in stocks	(3)	12
(Increase)/decrease in debtors	(1,372)	866
Increase in creditors	35	1,513
Stocks, debtors and creditors transferred on conversion	(16)	(235)
Net cash provided by operating activities	<u>1,803</u>	<u>3,675</u>

UNITY SCHOOLS PARTNERSHIP

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONTINUED) FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2021

26 Analysis of changes in net funds

	1 September 2020 £000	Cash flows £000	Other non- cash changes £000	31 August 2021 £000
Cash	7,017	2,585	-	9,602
Loans falling due within one year	(58)	66	(72)	(64)
Loans falling due after more than one year	(235)	-	72	(163)
	<u>6,724</u>	<u>2,651</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>9,375</u>

27 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.

28 Pension and similar obligations

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

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.

Contributions amounting to £1,288,742 were payable to the schemes at 31 August 2021 (2020: £1,236,142) and are included within creditors.

Teachers' Pension Scheme

Introduction

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

The TPS is an unfunded scheme and members contribute on a 'pay as you go' basis - these contributions along with those made by employers are credited to the Exchequer.

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 and in accordance with the Public Service Pensions (Valuations and Employer Cost Cap) Directions 2014 except it has been prepared following the Government's decision to pause the operation of the cost control mechanisms at the time when legal challenges were still pending. The valuation report was published by the Department for Education on 5 March 2019.

UNITY SCHOOLS PARTNERSHIP

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONTINUED) FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2021

28 Pension and similar obligations (Continued)

The key elements of the valuation and subsequent consultation are:

- Total scheme liabilities for service (pensions currently payable and the estimated cost of future benefits) of £218 billion
- Value of notional assets (estimated future contributions together with the notional investments held at the valuation date) of £196 billion
- Notional past service deficit of £22 billion
- Discount rate is 2.4% in excess of CPI

As a result of the valuation, new employer contribution rates were set at 23.68% (including a 0.08% administration levy) of pensionable pay from September 2019 onwards (compared to 16.48% during 2019/20). The next valuation result is due to be implemented from 1 April 2023.

The employer's pension costs paid to the TPS in the period amounted to £7,755,251 (2020: £6,318,421).

The TPS is a multi-employer pension plan and there is insufficient information to account for the scheme as a defined benefit plan so it is accounted for as a defined contribution plan.

Local Government Pension Scheme

The LGPS is a funded defined benefit 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 listed below for employers and 5.5% - 12.5% for employees.

As described in note the LGPS obligation relates to the employees of the Trust, being the employees transferred as part of the conversion from the maintained school and new employees who joined the scheme in the period. The obligation in respect of employees who transferred on conversion represents their cumulative service at both the predecessor school and the Trust at the balance sheet date.

Parliament has agreed, at the request of the Secretary of State for Education, to a guarantee that, in the event of academy closure, outstanding Local Government Pension Scheme liabilities would be met by the Department for Education. The guarantee came into force on 18 July 2013.

Principal actuarial assumptions:

The following information is based upon a full actuarial valuation of the funds at 31 March 2019 updated to 31 August 2021 by the qualified independent actuaries.

	Discount rate for scheme liabilities		Rate of increase in salaries		Rate of increase for pensions in payment / inflation	
	2021 %	2020 %	2021 %	2020 %	2021 %	2020 %
Suffolk Local Government Pension Scheme	1.7	1.7	3.6	2.9	2.9	2.2
Cambridgeshire Local Government Pension Scheme	1.7	1.7	3.4	2.7	2.9	2.2
London Borough of Havering Local Government Pension Scheme	1.7	1.7	3.6	3.0	2.9	2.3
Essex Local Government Pension Scheme	1.7	1.6	3.9	3.3	2.9	2.3

UNITY SCHOOLS PARTNERSHIP

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONTINUED) FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2021

28 Pension and similar obligations (Continued)

Mortality

The assumed life expectations are:

	Males		Females	
	Retiring today	Retiring in 20 years	Retiring today	Retiring in 20 years
	2021	2021	2021	2021
Suffolk Local Government Pension Scheme	22.1	23.2	24.5	26.4
Cambridgeshire Local Government Pension Scheme	22.2	23.2	24.4	26.2
London Borough of Havering Local Government Pension Scheme	21.8	22.9	24.1	25.9
Essex Local Government Pension Scheme	21.6	22.9	23.6	25.1

	2021	2020
	£000	£000
Total contributions made		
Employer's contributions	3,580	3,236
Employees' contributions	915	759
Total contributions	4,495	3,995

	2021	2020
	Fair value	Fair value
	£000	£000
The Trust's share of the assets in the scheme		
Equities	37,239	27,531
Bonds	14,849	12,539
Gilts	15	20
Property	4,749	4,616
Other assets	2,332	2,915
Total fair value of assets	59,184	47,621

The actual return on scheme assets was £7,523,000 (2020: £5,277,000).

UNITY SCHOOLS PARTNERSHIP

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONTINUED) FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2021

28 Pension and similar obligations (Continued)

Amount recognised in the statement of financial activities	2021 £000	2020 £000
Current service cost	7,255	6,067
Net interest cost	543	359
Plan introductions, changes, gain/(loss) on curtailment and gain/(loss) on settlement	-	26
Total operating charge	<u>7,798</u>	<u>6,452</u>
Changes in the present value of defined benefit obligations		2021 £000
At 1 September 2020		77,804
Current service cost		7,255
Interest cost		1,291
Employee contributions		915
Actuarial loss		15,899
Benefits paid		(455)
At 31 August 2021		<u>102,709</u>
Changes in the fair value of the Trust's share of scheme assets		2021 £000
At 1 September 2020		47,621
Interest income		748
Return on plan assets (excluding net interest on the net defined pension liability)		6,775
Employer contributions		3,580
Employee contributions		915
Benefits paid		(455)
At 31 August 2021		<u>59,184</u>

UNITY SCHOOLS PARTNERSHIP

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONTINUED) FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2021

29 Related party transactions

During the year the Trust entered into the following related party transactions:

The Trust made sales of £42,000 (2020: £nil) in respect of education services to Sabres Educational Trust, a company in which Tim Coulson is the Chair of the Board. At 31 August 2021, the Trust was owed £7,000 (2020: £nil) which is included within trade debtors.

The Trust made purchases of £1,500 (2020: £nil) in respect of education training from East Anglian Anti Racism Education Collective Limited, a company in which Tim Coulson is a Director. At 31 August 2021, the Trust owed £1,800 (2020: £nil) which is included within trade creditors.

The Trust made sales of £307,435 (2020: £nil), recharged £476,480 (2020: £nil) and received a donation of £100,000 (2020: £nil) from Schools Partnership Tutors Limited, a company in which Tim Coulson and Sarah Garner are Directors. At 31 August 2021, the Trust was owed £343,427 (2020: £nil) which is included with trade debtors.

Certain Directors' remuneration and expenses have already been disclosed in note 12.

30 Post balance sheet events

After the reporting date, Schools Partnership Tutors Limited, a company limited by guarantee became a subsidiary of the Trust. The company is a subsidiary of the Trust on the basis that the Trust exercises significant control over the company by virtue of the directors and members of Schools Partnership Tutors Limited being members of the key management personnel of the Trust.

31 Agency arrangements

The Trust distributes 16-19 bursary funds to students as an agent for ESFA. In the accounting period ending 31 August 2021, the Trust received £64,856 (2020: £46,457), disbursed £53,247 (2020: £27,795) and repaid £122,787 (2020: £nil) to the ESFA from the fund. An amount of £46,952 (2020: £158,130) is included in other creditors relating to undistributed funds that is repayable to ESFA.

As at 31 August 2021, the Trust has included £nil (2020: £25,508) in other creditors as a one-off amount from Combined Cadet Force Association. These funds are being held on behalf of the cadets and will be drawn down by the cadets upon application to the Trust. During the year ending 31 August 2021, the Trust disbursed £25,508 (2020: £Nil) from the fund.

UNITY SCHOOLS PARTNERSHIP

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONTINUED) FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2021

32 Teaching School trading account

	2021		2020	
	£000	£000	£000	£000
Direct income				
External funding		80		60
Other direct income		-		191
				<u> </u>
Total income		80		251
Direct costs				
Direct staff costs	52		208	
Staff development	-		(2)	
Other direct costs	-		8	
Technology costs	-		4	
Educational consultancy	13		1	
		<u> </u>		<u> </u>
		65		219
		<u> </u>		<u> </u>
Other costs				
Support staff costs	11		171	
Maintenance of premises and equipment	-		2	
Catering	-		4	
Other support costs	-		2	
Share of governance costs	4		6	
		<u> </u>		<u> </u>
		15		185
		<u> </u>		<u> </u>
Total expenditure		(80)		(404)
Transfers between funds excluding depreciation		-		240
		<u> </u>		<u> </u>
Surplus from all sources		-		87
Teaching School balances at 1 September 2020		-		(87)
		<u> </u>		<u> </u>
Teaching School balances at 31 August 2021		-		-
		<u> </u>		<u> </u>

33 Transfer of existing academies into the Trust

During the year donations initially recognised on three schools transferred in previous years have been adjusted, further details are included below. The additional liabilities transferred were valued at their fair value and recognised in the Balance Sheet under the appropriate headings with a corresponding net amount recognised as a loss in the Statement of Financial Activities as expenditure on Charitable Activities - transfer of existing academy into the Trust.

UNITY SCHOOLS PARTNERSHIP

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONTINUED) FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2021

33 Transfer of existing academies into the Trust (Continued)

	2021 £000
Adjustments in respect of prior years	
Other tangible fixed assets	2
Other creditors	(16)
	<hr/>
Total net liabilities	(14)
	<hr/> <hr/>

INDEPENDENT REPORTING ACCOUNTANT'S ASSURANCE REPORT ON REGULARITY TO UNITY SCHOOLS PARTNERSHIP AND THE EDUCATION AND SKILLS FUNDING AGENCY

Conclusion

We have carried out an engagement in accordance with the terms of our engagement letter dated 17 June 2021 and further to the requirements of the Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA) as included in the extant Framework and Guide for External Auditors and Reporting Accountants of Academy Trusts, to obtain limited assurance about whether the expenditure disbursed and income received by Unity Schools Partnership during the period 1 September 2020 to 31 August 2021 have been applied to the purposes identified by Parliament and the financial transactions conform to the authorities which govern them.

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 2020 to 31 August 2021 have not been applied to purposes intended by Parliament and the financial transactions do not conform to the authorities which govern them.

Basis for conclusion

The framework that has been applied is set out in the extant Framework and Guide for External Auditors and Reporting Accountants of Academy Trusts. We are independent of Unity Schools Partnership in accordance with the ethical requirements that are applicable to this engagement and we have fulfilled our ethical requirements in accordance with these requirements. We believe the assurance evidence we have obtained is sufficient to provide a basis for our conclusion.

Responsibilities of Unity Schools Partnership's accounting officer and Directors

The accounting officer is responsible, under the requirements of Unity Schools Partnership's funding agreement with the Secretary of State for Education dated 11 June 2014 and the Academies Financial Handbook, extant from 1 September 2020, for ensuring that expenditure disbursed and income received are applied for the purposes intended by Parliament and the financial transactions conform to the authorities which govern them. The accounting officer is also responsible for preparing the Statement of Regularity, Propriety and Compliance. The directors (who also act as trustees of the charitable company) are responsible for the proper conduct and financial operation of Unity Schools Partnership and appointment of the accounting officer.

Reporting Accountant's responsibilities for reporting on regularity

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 extant Framework and Guide for External Auditors and Reporting Accountants of Academy Trusts.

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 the procedures vary in nature and timing from, and are less in extent than for a reasonable assurance engagement; consequently a limited assurance engagement 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.

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 2020 to 31 August 2021 have not been applied to purposes identified by Parliament or that the financial transactions do not conform to the authorities which govern them.

INDEPENDENT REPORTING ACCOUNTANT'S ASSURANCE REPORT ON REGULARITY TO UNITY SCHOOLS PARTNERSHIP AND THE EDUCATION AND SKILLS FUNDING AGENCY (CONTINUED)

Our work included identification and assessment of the design and operational effectiveness of the controls, policies and procedures that have been implemented to ensure compliance with the framework of authorities including the specific requirements of the funding agreement with the Secretary of State for Education, the Academies Financial Handbook 2020 published by the Education and Skills Funding Agency and high level financial control areas where we identified a material risk of irregularity is likely to arise. It also included areas assessed as presenting a higher risk of impropriety. We undertook detailed testing, on a sample basis, based on the identified areas where a material irregularity is likely to arise, or potential impropriety where such areas are in respect of controls, policies and procedures that apply to classes of transactions. Our work was undertaken with due regard to the 'Evidence to support conclusion on regularity' guidance in the extant Framework and Guide for External Auditors and Reporting Accountants of Academy Trusts.

This work was integrated with our audit on the financial statements and evidence was also derived from the conduct of that audit to the extent it supports the regularity conclusion.

Use of our report

This report is made solely to Unity Schools Partnership and the ESFA in accordance with the terms of our engagement letter dated 17 June 2021. Our work has been undertaken so that we might state to the Unity Schools Partnership and the ESFA those matters we are required to state in a report and for no other purpose. To the fullest extent permitted by law, we do not accept or assume responsibility to anyone other than Unity Schools Partnership and the ESFA, for our work, for this report, or for the conclusion we have formed.

RSM UK Audit LLP

Chartered accountants
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Suffolk
IP33 3SB

Dated:
