

Company registration number 09118770 (England and Wales)

THE SMALLWOOD ACADEMY TRUST
(A COMPANY LIMITED BY GUARANTEE)

ANNUAL REPORT AND ACCOUNTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2024

THE SMALLWOOD ACADEMY TRUST

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THE SMALLWOOD ACADEMY TRUST

REFERENCE AND ADMINISTRATIVE DETAILS

Members

I Borthwick (Resigned 13/12/23)
C Pear (Appointed 13/12/23)
Corporate Member Chester Diocese Board of Education

Trustees

H Canham (Vice Chair)
Rev A Naylor (Resigned 30 July 2024)
A Rayner
I Lewis (Accounting Officer)
H Hall
N Holt
O Lofthouse
T Pear (Chair)
Mrs A Thompson (Appointed 1 September 2023)

Senior management team

- CEO/Accounting Officer/Headteacher	I Lewis
- Deputy Headteacher	K Carr
- SEND Coordinator (SENCO)	J Priest

Company registration number

09118770 (England and Wales)

Principal and registered office

Smallwood C of E Primary School
School Lane
Smallwood
Sandbach
Cheshire
CW11 2UR

Independent auditor

Mitchell Charlesworth (Audit) Limited
24 Nicholas Street
Chester
CH1 2AU

Bankers

Lloyds Bank plc
13 Victoria Street
Crewe
Cheshire
CW1 2JQ

THE SMALLWOOD ACADEMY TRUST

TRUSTEES' REPORT

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2024

The trustees present their annual report together with the accounts and auditor's report of the charitable company for the year 1 September 2023 to 31 August 2024. The annual report serves the purposes of both a trustees' report, and a directors' report and strategic report under company law.

Smallwood is a village primary school that has grown rapidly over the last ten years but strives to maintain the small school feel of family and community. The majority of children who attend our school come from a wide radius surrounding the school with around 60% of our children travelling from outside catchment area. As a result, we feed into between 6 and 8 different secondary school providers from both the state and private sectors. Children come from a range of socio-economic backgrounds with many professional families with high aspirations for their children.

Emotional and mental wellbeing is hugely important as we have many children who were impacted by the Covid-19 pandemic and are showing increased anxiety. We also need to ensure that our pupil premium families are provided with lots of support and opportunities as the experience gap can be very wide and this can have an impact on friendships, achievement and wellbeing. Our PAN of 25 means that data can be easily skewed in year groups where we have a higher proportion of SEND.

We have a full time nursery on site, run by a private provider who also offers wrap around care for all school pupils; currently 70%+ of our pupils make use of this facility with up to 48 places. The quality of provision in the Nursery and wrap around care is consistently good.

We are a rural school and this is an important aspect of school life which is reflected through our forest school curriculum, eco schools, gardening and the chickens we keep. Pupils are encouraged to embrace and respect their environment and community. At Smallwood, we strive to provide opportunities to allow each individual to find their spark; staff are committed to enriching and broadening the curriculum.

We have a passionate drive to provide the best education for all children and believe that challenging children and providing opportunities and experiences in a rich learning environment motivates and encourages high quality learning. We believe that developing an exciting learning community where all stakeholders are welcomed, involved and valued is fundamental. Smallwood instils the love of learning into all who enter its doors; with God, Church and Faith at the centre of its values. Our faith and beliefs permeate everything that we do at Smallwood and is evident in how we interact with each other, how we behave and our overarching philosophy.

In a world that is changing so rapidly, our role as educators becomes both more challenging and more important. If we are to equip our children for the 21st century we must give them the communication, thinking and creative skills to be adaptive and enquiring learners. We must personalise the learning environment, teach children how to think and learn creatively and enable children to explore the options that the world offers and find where they can achieve and enjoy future success.

The academy trust operates a primary school in Cheshire East, England. Its academies have a combined pupil capacity of 140 and had a roll of 179 in the school census on 16TH May 2024.

THE SMALLWOOD ACADEMY TRUST

TRUSTEES' REPORT (CONTINUED)

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2024

Our Missions Statement, Vision and Values

"Let your light shine before others, that they may see your good deeds and glorify your Father in heaven."

[Matthew 5:16](#)

Our Mission Statement

"Let Your Light Shine"

Our Vision

Smallwood C of E Primary Academy instils the love of learning into all who enter through its doors, with our Christian faith at the heart of everything that we do.

Through a happy, secure, and stimulating environment, we aim to enable every pupil to SHINE in a rapidly changing world and to realise their full potential in life.

Skills

Hope

Inclusion

Nurture

Excellence

Our Values

Ready

Kind

Respectful

Safe

Structure, governance and management

Constitution

The academy trust is a company limited by guarantee and an exempt charity. The charitable company's memorandum and articles of association are the primary governing documents of the academy trust.

The charitable company operates as Smallwood Academy Trust.

The trustees of The Smallwood Academy Trust are also the directors of the charitable company for the purposes of company law. Details of the trustees who served during the year, and to the date these accounts are approved, are included in the Reference and Administrative Details on page 1.

Members' liability

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

Trustees' indemnities

The academy trust has purchased the RPA insurance to cover trustees and officers from claims arising from negligent acts, errors or omissions occurring while on academy trust business. The insurance provides cover up to £2,000,000 on any one claim.

THE SMALLWOOD ACADEMY TRUST

TRUSTEES' REPORT (CONTINUED)

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2024

Method of recruitment and appointment or election of trustees

Trustees are elected through two methods. Firstly, parent trustees are invited to apply for any vacancies. Interested parties are sent out an information pack and if more than one application is received for a single vacancy a parental vote is taken. The second method of recruitment occurs when the board see a need for a particular type of skill set and co-opt a suitable applicant.

Policies and procedures adopted for the induction and training of trustees

The training and induction provided for new trustees will depend on their existing experience. All new trustees complete the statutory training of safeguarding and prevent the courses are provided with relevant documentation to help them fulfil their role. Trustees also have access to the Key and Governor hub training. As well as this the trustees complete a key skills matrix and training will be provided for any areas which identify gaps in their experience.

Organisational structure

The Academy has three levels of management: Members, Trustees/Directors and the Senior Management Team.

There are currently one Member plus one corporate Member. Members play a limited but crucial role in safeguarding academy trust governance. While they must ensure they do not stray into undertaking the Academy Trustees' role, they should assure themselves that the governance of the trust is effective, that Academy Trustees are acting in accordance with the trust's charitable object(s) and that they, the Members, use their powers to step in if governance is failing.

There are eight Trustees/Directors and they meet a minimum of six times a year together with the Senior Management Team. Each individual has specific areas of expertise that can be applied when discussing general school policy such as the annual school development plan, budget, special needs provision, etc. The Board of Trustees/Directors have delegated some of its functions to committees;

Teaching and Learning
Faith and Ethos
Pay Committee
Finance, Estates and Audit

The Senior Management Team includes the Headteacher, Deputy Head Teacher and SENCO. They meet on a weekly basis to discuss curriculum related issues and any issues arising with regards to the children in its care.

The Head teacher is also the Chief Executive Office of the Trust and the School Business Manager is the Trust's Chief Financial Officer.

Arrangements for setting pay and remuneration of key management personnel

The teaching staff pay policy has been developed to comply with current legislation and the requirements of the "school teachers' pay and conditions document". Annual appraisals take place during the autumn term which can potentially lead to incremental rises. The non-teaching pay policy acts in much the same way with incremental rises following annual appraisals and is structured to follow the NJC pay and conditions structure as laid out by Unison.

Trade Union Officials

The Trust has no relevant Trade Union Officials.

THE SMALLWOOD ACADEMY TRUST

TRUSTEES' REPORT (CONTINUED)

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2024

Related parties and other connected charities and organisations

The Smallwood Academy Trust is a member of the Congleton Education Community Partnership (CECP). A termly fee is paid based on pupil numbers which then allows the group to buy services such as play therapy, health and wellbeing, early years, sports, SEND and so forth at a reduced rate should it wish to do so. The group also applies for grants such as heritage funding that then allows the schools to take part in joint activities.

The Chair is also the Chair of Castle Primary School who are a part of the Learning Alliance and is the Director of Reliance Medical.

4 Trustees and 1 member have children who attend the school and our Vicar is Chair of Astbury St Marys School who are in Chester Diocesan Academies Trust (CDAT).

Objectives and activities

Objects and aims

The school has been focusing on becoming OFSTED Outstanding, embedding a new curriculum and looking at the possibility of becoming a part of, or leading a new Multi Academy Trust.

We have been working on the following for the period ended 31 August 2024.

To become an Outstanding School
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Smallwood provides an outstanding quality of education
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• All pupils engage with a rich personal development programme
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Leverage the full potential of a driven and focussed team
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Every pupil comes to school with a positive learning attitude and is an excellent example to others
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• To ensure directors are robust and rigorous in holding leaders to account for the quality of education and school improvement

Objectives, strategies and activities

Our MAT Vision

We are currently meeting with several schools in the local area to start the process of forming a growth strategy for a Multi Academy Trust.

Public benefit

In setting our objectives and planning our activities, the trustees have carefully considered the Charity Commission's general guidance on public benefit.

THE SMALLWOOD ACADEMY TRUST

TRUSTEES' REPORT (CONTINUED)

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2024

Strategic report

Achievements and performance

The school was inspected by OFSTED on the 2nd and 3rd July 2024, under a section 8 ungraded inspection, and continues to be a Good school. Leaders have focussed on improving the quality of the curriculum to ensure it is broad and balanced whilst remaining challenging.

- Quality of Education is good because there is a broad and balanced curriculum in place, teachers have good subject knowledge and reading is given a high priority. Outcomes are very good and children make good progress, particularly in English and maths, by the time they leave KS2.
- Curriculum The move to single-age classes has afforded the leadership team to re-design the school's curriculum with a focus on it being broad, balanced and challenging. There is a focus on the acquisition of progressive skills and knowledge. Children know which subjects they are learning.
- Developing joy in Books and Reading is a core value at Smallwood; being an avid reader impacts upon all aspects of the curriculum and helps pupils to shine. Reading high quality texts to children, and using them in our writing units, is greatly valued and is a consistent element of our timetable. From September 2022 a new Phonics scheme is in place (Ready Steady Phonics) and Accelerated Reader is in place from Years 2 to Year 6
- Disadvantaged pupils and those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) make good progress across the curriculum.
- Behaviour and Attitudes is generally good because pupils are keen to learn, have good attendance and pupils respond well to the high expectations of the staff in terms of behaviour and achievement.
- Pupils' behaviour is outstanding. Excellent conduct and manners are the norm. Pupils treat one another with courtesy and respect.
- Attendance is consistently above national average and rates of persistent absence are low. Attendance is also good for PP, SEND and Vulnerable children and this is regularly tracked and monitored.
- Our children learn that they can shape the world, making it a better place. They are encouraged to have hopes and dreams, learning how to achieve them and supporting each other as they work towards them.
- Pupil feedback states that they feel safe and make a very strong contribution to the school and wider communities, and their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is outstanding. The school ethos is built on Christian Values which are embedded into assemblies and other areas of learning. Pupils enjoy coming to school from the moment they join the Early Years Foundation Stage. They make good progress from this point and this is maintained throughout the school. Pupils are enthusiastic about the curriculum, especially the topics, which effectively develop pupils' skills and also their knowledge of the local area and the wider world.
- Personal Development is outstanding because pastoral care and the wellbeing of both pupils and staff has a high priority across the whole school community. Children are respectful of each other and interact well. Warm relationships exist between staff and pupils.
- Pastoral care is an integral element of Smallwood life, it is at the heart of our ethos as a Christian school and children are encouraged to take on responsibilities around school such as being a Playground Leader and joining the School and Faith and Ethos Council. Every child is assigned a buddy from the moment they start at the school - this encourages a real community feel where older children support younger children really well. Support is readily available for those pupils who need it and Play Therapy, Counselling and ELSA are all used to give additional emotional assistance. In the Spring and summer terms of 2021/2022 all staff received Emotion Coaching training with a local charity, Visyon.
- Cultural Capital is a strength of the school. Every child and family who joins our school will have their own knowledge and experiences that will link to their culture and wider family. This might include: languages, beliefs, traditions, cultural and family heritage, interests, travel and work. At Smallwood, children benefit from a carefully planned, broad and balanced curriculum that builds on what they understand and know already. We believe that exposure, not only to culture but also to situations in which the children might not have previous experiences of, is of paramount importance to their ongoing successes. Gradually widening children's experiences as they progress through school is an important step in providing rich and engaging learning across the curriculum. Cultural Capital Experiences at Smallwood CE Primary School include: After-school clubs –football, Spanish, Gardening, running, karate, chess, music (choir), multi-skills, netball, STEM, Cookery, Lego and Board Games - Ethical Farming Project – Dundee University and Chester DBE, Play leaders year 6 – lead lunchtime play for EYFS and KS1, New Vic Theatre visit – whole school, Macclesfield Forest Children in Need Countryfile ramble, Reverse Advent Calendar for local food bank and Year 6 Restaurants enterprise project.

THE SMALLWOOD ACADEMY TRUST

TRUSTEES' REPORT (CONTINUED)

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2024

- Music is a great strength of the school; all children learn to play an instrument: recorders in Key Stage One, and keyboard tuition forming part of each year's music curriculum at Key Stage 2. A high proportion of pupils take part in peripatetic music lessons, which are of an excellent standard and lead to many of our pupils achieving grades 1 – 3. We value the impact that music has on pupils' self-esteem, concentration and listening skills and regularly fund music lessons for pupil premium children. The school choir has been very successful and more than half of Key Stage 2 regularly attends; it has a prominent presence across local community music events. Our orchestra is moving from strength to strength and have previously reached the final of the Cheshire East Schools music festival. The Performing Arts are greatly valued and all pupils participate in a range of performance opportunities across the school year including music concerts, plays and presentations. We also ensure that children have regular opportunities to see high quality performances.
- The school celebrates and promotes our rural environment. We have consistently maintained our Green Flag status and have a very active Eco Council. Children develop their awareness of local, national and international issues through many aspects of the curriculum. The school keeps chickens and this enables older pupils to develop their economic understanding of the rural community they live in. Our very successful 'Gardening Club', regularly wins Congleton in Bloom and grows a wide range of produce which children learn to cook and also sell to the local community to fund further projects.
- Enrichment is a real strength of the school and one that we feel is vital to ensuring all pupils flourish. Forest School is an integral element of this and we value the self-confidence, resilience, emotional wellbeing and problem solving skills which are developed within these sessions. Children follow a well-designed curriculum with a clear progression which enables them to link learning across all subjects with the outdoor environment.
- Leadership and Management is securely good because leaders have a clear awareness of the school strengths and weaknesses and are effective in addressing areas for development swiftly. The SLT place staff and pupil wellbeing as a priority and there is a strong culture of safeguarding. Governance is strong.
- Since the headteacher took the reins in April 2021, and restructured the leadership team, the school acted quickly to put in place actions that would address the issues raised by the inspector. These strategies, along with a range of new initiatives, have had a positive an impact on the standards across the school; there is good evidence of the impact this work is continuing to have on children's attainment and progress in these areas.
- Monitoring (such as learning walks, child interviews, book scrutinies and lesson observations) from the Headteacher, by the SLT and planned time for Subject leaders (from September 2023) ensures consistency and progression across the school.
- The school and staff have a good relationship with parents and 100% of respondents agreed that the school is welcoming to parents, carers and visitors.
- Leaders have ensured that all arrangements for the safeguarding of pupils are effective. A strong culture of safeguarding permeates the school.
- There is effective school-to-school support through the CECF community learning partnership, consisting of 7 schools, with a variety of groups of schools working together. In addition, Smallwood works with other diocesan schools whose headteachers meet each half term to share targeted strategies for improvement.
- The school's rigorous drive for improvement and the cohesive nature of the school community demonstrates that its capacity for sustained improvement is at least good. We believe the school is in a very strong position to continue to improve.
- EYFS is securely good because pupils make good progress and have good attainment. Pupils also benefit from an engaging curriculum, which makes effective use of the outdoor environment.

The Headteacher has been in post as of 1st April, 2021 having previously been the Deputy Headteacher. A new Chair and Vice-Chair are also in place along with other new Directors.

There is a calendar that spans the entire academic year with all leadership and monitoring tasks outlined. Assessment weeks, data and tracking deadlines, book scrutinies, learning walks, observations and staff meetings are all outlined. Each teacher leads at least one subject area and, with support, monitor and track the learning across the school, ongoing development of middle leaders is a school focus. As a result, the scope and impact of their roles is increasing. Most subject leaders carry out book scrutinies, learning walks and discussions with children to gain an insight into their subject across the school. Senior Leadership Team carry out regular book scrutinies to monitor teaching and learning, feedback and good practise is shared through key stage meetings. Governors visit school to monitor the SDP target areas and feedback to the full governing body.

THE SMALLWOOD ACADEMY TRUST

TRUSTEES' REPORT (CONTINUED)

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2024

The SDP is a working document which is visited regularly and carefully monitored. Progress and next steps are shared and developed with staff and Governors which enables a flexible and dynamic approach to school development. Governor visits follow SDP focuses and provide Governors with additional insight to the impact of strategies in place.

Assessment systems have been developed to support the curriculum. Monitoring takes place regularly with a calendar in place and there are strong systems in place to track pupils' progress - as a result, all staff have a clear picture of every pupil's needs and ensure they are well supported.

Pupil Progress meetings each term highlight good progress and those children who may require intervention to make improved progress. Tracking data is used as part of these discussions to highlight any issues.

Directors carry out their role as 'critical friend' by asking appropriately challenging questions in meetings and during visits into school as well as holding leaders to account for their actions and ensuring all statutory duties (e.g. safeguarding training) are carried out thoroughly. The safeguarding governor takes his role very seriously and meets with the Headteacher to discuss protocol and policy matters, as well as monitoring the Single Central Record – he is up to date with his safeguarding training to enable him to carry out this role effectively.

The school communicates well with parents and carers, involving them in their children's learning, for example in giving them information sessions about Phonics, SATs, Pupil premium, SEND and Reading strategies. The school has a Parents Council that provide regular feedback on school policies and developments. When possible, meetings and open day sessions are set up with parents to involve them in their children's learning.

Productive links with other schools in the local Congleton Education and Community Partnership (CECP).

Strong links within the local community are forged, such as Congleton in Bloom, Rose Queen and close partnership with our Parish including events such as Harvest, Remembrance and Christmas and the PTA sponsor projects in school. An example of this excellent support is the annual Village Summer Fete fundraiser which donates a third of its profits to the school. The Headteacher is a member of the PCC and Village Hall committee.

The Headteacher (DSL) and Deputy Head (DDSL) have attended all appropriate safeguarding training to Level 2 and all staff are trained in Level 1 'Introduction to Child Protection' (including PREVENT). and have read the document 'Keeping Children Safe in Education September 2023'. Safeguarding is a focus of our fortnightly staff and briefing meetings and any specific concerns are shared and discussed by staff. The Safeguarding Lead (and/or Deputy) attend local SCIES safeguarding update meetings each term. Staff receive training in Prevent and do the online – 'PREVENT' training. There is a dedicated safeguarding training calendar and record kept. Background checks for all staff, governors and volunteers are carried out systematically as well as a clear induction process.

Staff well-being is closely monitored by the leadership team and there exists a culture of openness and sharing of concerns wherever possible. Amongst the school community there is a strong emphasis on team work and everyone working together towards a shared vision. Workload of teachers is managed by ensuring that PPA time is a priority and takes place for a whole day on a fortnightly basis for class teachers. Regular feedback through appraisal, staff reviews, whole staff meetings and 1-1 support ensure that all staff communicate well and feel valued. CPD is carefully planned through the National College, linking to Performance Management, and rolled out to other staff where appropriate.

Team work and everyone working together towards a shared vision. Workload of teachers is managed by ensuring that PPA time is a priority and takes place for a whole day on a fortnightly basis for class teachers. Regular feedback through appraisal, staff reviews, whole staff meetings and 1-1 support ensure that all staff communicate well and feel valued. CPD is carefully planned through the National College, linking to Performance Management, and rolled out to other staff where appropriate.

THE SMALLWOOD ACADEMY TRUST

TRUSTEES' REPORT (CONTINUED)

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2024

Key performance indicators

EYFS

	Not Met	Met	
Good Level of Development 2023	4/24 = 16.7%	20/24 = 83.3%	2023 National Average 67.2%
Good Level of Development 2024	5/29 = 16%	24/29 = 83%	2024 National Average 67.7%

Year 1 Phonics Assessment

Number of Children: 24

2024 Year 1 Phonics test average score = 36

2023 Year 1 phonics test average score = 35 (34.96)

2022 Year 1 phonics test average score = 33.6

National average score =

<32	33	34	35	36	37	38	39	40
2		1	2	1	3	4	6	4

2024	2024 National Average	2023	2023 National Average	2022 National Average	2022	2022 National Average	2021 (Year 2 in December)	2019	2019 National Average
91.67%		84%	79%	33	81.5%	75%	90.9%	94%	82%

Year 2 Phonics Assessment Re-take

Number of Children: 6

2024 Year 2 Phonics test average score = 36.8

National average score =

<32	33	34	35	36	37	38	39	40
				3	2		1	

2024 (by the end of Year 2)	2024 National Average
100%	

Year 4 MTC Results

	2024	2024 National	2023	2023 National	2022	2022 National
Average Score	17.5		15.3	19.8	15.9	19.8

THE SMALLWOOD ACADEMY TRUST

TRUSTEES' REPORT (CONTINUED)

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2024

Year 6 Comparative Data

	Expected +						Greater Depth				
	2024	2023	2022	2021	Cheshire East 2023	National 2024	2024	2023	2022	Cheshire East 2023	National 2023
Reading	95.2%	87.1%	71.4%	80%	75%	74%	38.1%	32.3%	16%	32%	29%
Writing	95.2%	87.1%	59.1%	76%	73%	72%	19.0%	6.5%	12%	9%	13%
SPAG	90.5%	83.8%	81%	72%	76%	72%	28.6%	32.3%	16%	32%	30%
Maths	90.5%	80.6%	71.4%	72%	75%	73%	14.3%	22.6%	14.3%	26%	24%
Science	90.5%					81%					
Combined RWM	90%	74%	43%		61%	61%		3%		6%	8%

Average Scores

Subject	School 2024	National 2024	School 2023	National 2023	School 2022	National 2022	School 2019	National 2019
Reading	108.6	105	106.3	105	102	105	108.5	104
Maths	104.9	104	104.9	104	102.7	104	107.6	105
SPAG	107.2	105	105.9	105	105	105	108	106

Going concern

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

Financial review

Most of the Trust's income is obtained from the DfE in the form of grants, the use of which is restricted to particular purposes. The grants received from the DfE during the year and the associated expenditure are shown as restricted funds in the statements of financial activities. The principal accounting policies adopted during the year are detailed in the notes to the financial statements.

During the year ended 31 August 2024, total expenditure of £1,184,617 (2023: £1,108,353) was not quite covered by grant funding from the DfE together with other incoming resources. The excess of expenditure over income (excluding actuarial losses on the defined benefit pension scheme) was £69,807 (2023: £23,447).

As at the 31st August 2024, the net book value of fixed assets was £4,541,196 (2023: £4,622,979), including the value of the land and building which are on a 125-year lease. The assets are used exclusively for providing education and the associated support services to the pupils of the academy.

THE SMALLWOOD ACADEMY TRUST

TRUSTEES' REPORT (CONTINUED)

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2024

Reserves policy

The academy seeks to have 1 month's overheads in general restricted and unrestricted reserves. Reserves at 31 August 2024 would cover 1 month of salaries only. The trustees review the reserve levels of the academy trust annually. This review encompasses the nature of income and expenditure streams, the need to match income with commitments and the nature of reserves. These reserves are reviewed regularly during the year by the finance committee. The board of trustees has adopted a cautious policy of building up reserves over many years, to provide for a contingency in future years.

The Trust has overall reserves of £4,600,888 (2023: £4,644,695), included within is restricted general reserves (excluding pension & fixed asset reserves) of £nil (2023: £8,292) and unrestricted reserves of £68,408 (2023: £52,089). The total free reserves (excluding pension & fixed asset reserves) amounts to £68,408 (2023: £60,381).

The pension scheme liability as at 31st August 2024 was £15,000 (2023: £45,000). The vast majority of the movement of the pension scheme liability is due to actuarial assumptions and does not have a direct cash impact.

Investment policy

Apart from the cash held for the operation of the school there are no realisable investments. However Smallwood C of E Primary Academy has a current account with Lloyds Bank on which it receives a small amount of interest.

Principal risks and uncertainties

The principal risks facing the academy are:-

Reputation risk - mitigated by continual highly effective education and being a small village Church school.

Performance risk - mitigated by continued high quality expertise of the staff of the academy and the strong leadership of the Head Teacher.

Financial risk - there are a number of financial risks such as a reduction in pupil numbers, reduction in central government funding, unbudgeted increases in staffing costs or unbudgeted major capital repairs.

Through careful planning financial risk is kept to a minimum as the board of trustees have adopted a cautious policy of building up reserves over many years, to provide for a contingency in future years.

Consideration has been given to ensure the Trust's estate is safe, well maintained and complies with the relevant regulations.

Fundraising

The Academy Trust does not use any external fundraisers. The school undertakes a variety of fundraising activities to support several charities and the Trust itself. All fundraising undertaken during the year was monitored by the Trustees.

Streamlined energy and carbon reporting

As the trust has not consumed more than 40,000 kWh of energy in this reporting period nor is it classed as a large company as determined by sections 465 and 466 of the Companies Act 2006, it is not required to report on its emissions, energy consumption or energy efficiency activities.

Plans for future periods

Directors have met as a working party looking at the growth strategy of the wider trust. They are exploring options for growth or joining an existing MAT.

The school will focus on the areas for improvement identified during the OFSTED inspection in July 2024.

The school is looking at enhancing all computer software to cloud based systems.

Fundraising for all weather surfaces for the playgrounds.

Enhancing the building security and safeguarding.

THE SMALLWOOD ACADEMY TRUST

TRUSTEES' REPORT (CONTINUED)

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2024

Funds held as custodian trustee on behalf of others

The Trust does not hold any fund as custodian for others.

Auditor

Insofar as the trustees are aware:

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

Mitchell Charlesworth (Audit) Limited was appointed auditor to the charitable company. A resolution proposing re-appointment will be put to the members.

12/18/2024

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



.....

T Pear
Chair

THE SMALLWOOD ACADEMY TRUST

GOVERNANCE STATEMENT

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2024

Scope of responsibility

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

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

The Board of Trustees has delegated the day-to-day responsibility to the Headteacher (who is also the Chief Executive Officer), as accounting officer, for ensuring financial controls conform with the requirements of both propriety and good financial management and are in accordance with the requirements and responsibilities assigned to it in the funding agreement between The Smallwood Academy Trust and the Secretary of State for Education. The accounting officer is also responsible for reporting to the Board of Trustees any material weaknesses or breakdowns in internal control.

Governance

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

Trustees	Meetings attended	Out of possible
H Canham (Vice Chair)	4	4
Rev A Naylor (Resigned 30 July 2024)	1	4
A Rayner	3	4
I Lewis (Accounting Officer)	4	4
H Hall	1	4
N Holt	4	4
O Lofthouse	3	4
T Pear (Chair)	4	4
Mrs A Thompson (Appointed 1 September 2023)	3	4

Anne-Marie Naylor (our incumbent and foundation trustee) has now left the parish to start a role in a new parish. Tom Pear continues to be Chair of Trustees and Helen Canham continues to be the Vice Chair. We have a balance of trustees with a wide range of public and private experience. Our Board receive bi-monthly financial reports, assess the Trusts overall performance, formulate strategy planning and receive reports from various sub-committees.

Conflicts of interest

The school maintain an update-to-date register of interests, and it is reviewed regularly by the CFO to identify conflicts of interest and ensure all purchases are assessed against the Academy Trust Handbook regulations.

Meetings

The Trustees meet 4 times a year. They meet every half term. The first half term consists of all the detailed information at committee levels and the second half term is for the ratification and approval agenda items put forward.

Governance reviews

The governance structure was developed using best practice guidance from the National Governance Association and the Confederation of School Trusts, taking into account advice from the appointed governance professional. A skills audit of trustees was carried out to ensure that there is a wide breadth of knowledge and experience on the trust board and its committees. A review of governance will be undertaken within the first full year of operation of the trust, and annually thereafter.

THE SMALLWOOD ACADEMY TRUST

GOVERNANCE STATEMENT (CONTINUED)

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2024

The Audit, Finance & Building Committee is a sub-committee of the main Board of Trustees.

Purpose of this committee

Smallwood C of E Primary Academy (the Trust) is constituted as a Multi Academies Trust (MAT). The Academies Financial Handbook advises that: every MAT must have in place a process for independent checking of financial controls, systems, transactions and risks and ideally this process should be driven by an Audit and Finance Committee (A&FC) appointed by the Trust Board (MATB). This document sets out the main responsibilities and terms of reference for the Trust's A&FC.

Core Purpose of the A&FC

The A&FC must review the risks to internal financial control at the Trust and must agree a programme of work that will address these risks, inform the statement of internal control and, so far as is possible, provide assurance to the external auditors.

Membership: The A&FC will consist of four members from the Trust Board. Additionally up to two external co-opted members may also be appointed. At least one of the members should have relevant financial experience.

Chair: The Chair of the A&FC shall be appointed by the Trust Board at the start of the academic year or as required. The Chair of the A&FC will not be a member of any other sub-committee.

Quorum: The A&FC will be quorate if two members are present and more than 50% of those members present are members of the Trust Board.

Meetings: The A&FC will normally meet at least once per term and not less than twice per year.

Agendas: The Clerk shall circulate an agenda for each meeting, together with any supporting papers, at least one week in advance of the meeting. Minutes of meetings will be taken and will be submitted to the Trust Board after being approved in draft by the Chair of the A&FC.

Decisions:

Decisions may be taken only by Members of the A&FC. Each question shall be determined by a majority of the votes of the Members present and voting on the question. Every Member shall have one vote. Where necessary, the Chair will have a second or casting vote. The Chief Financial Officer/School Business Manager and other members of the Trust Board may be invited to attend the A&FC but will have no voting rights.

THE SMALLWOOD ACADEMY TRUST

GOVERNANCE STATEMENT (CONTINUED)

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2024

Duties

The A&FC will consider matters relating to internal control and auditors. In particular the A&FC will:

- advise the Trust Board on the adequacy and effectiveness of its systems of internal control and arrangements for risk management, control and governance processes, and securing economy, efficiency and effectiveness (value for money);
- review the statement on internal control and make appropriate recommendations to the Trust Board;
- advise the Trust Board on the appointment, reappointment, dismissal and remuneration of auditors (both external and internal auditors);
- review the external auditor's annual planning document and approve the planned audit approach;
- ensure effective coordination of the work of the external auditor and internal auditor;
- ensure that any additional services undertaken by the auditors is compatible with audit independence and objectivity;
- agree the work programme of internal audit including the checking of financial controls, systems, transactions and risks;
- consider the reports of the auditors and, when appropriate, advise the Trust Board of material controls issues;
- monitor the implementation of agreed audit recommendations;
- ensure that any allegations of fraud or irregularity are appropriately investigated and control weaknesses addressed;
- meet with the external auditor and internal auditor at least once per year; and
- report its findings annually to the Trust Board.

Authority

- The A&FC is authorised by the Trust Board to investigate any activity within its terms of reference. It is authorised to seek any information it requires to discharge its duties from any other Committee of the Trust Board and/or employee of the Trust. Trust employees are directed to cooperate with any reasonable request made by the A&FC.
- The A&FC is delegated financial authority by the Trust Board for non-routine revenue expenditure of up to £6,000 per annum.

Attendance at meetings in the year was as follows:

Trustees	Meetings attended	Out of possible
H Canham (Vice Chair)	3	3
I Lewis (Accounting Officer)	3	3
H Hall	0	3
O Lofthouse	3	3
T Pear (Chair)	2	3
Mrs A Thompson (Appointed 1 September 2023)	3	3

Review of value for money

As accounting officer, the Head Teacher has responsibility for ensuring that the academy trust delivers good value in the use of public resources. The accounting officer understands that value for money refers to the educational and wider societal outcomes, as well as estates safety and management, achieved in return for the taxpayer resources received.

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

- Following our financial procedures, applying tight financial controls and measuring value for money for services via 3 quotes over £3,000. The SBM Networks are attended regularly, sharing best practice and recommending good quality traders.

THE SMALLWOOD ACADEMY TRUST

GOVERNANCE STATEMENT (CONTINUED)

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2024

The purpose of the system of internal control

The system of internal control is designed to manage risk to a reasonable level rather than to eliminate all risk of failure to achieve policies, aims and objectives. It can, therefore, only provide reasonable and not absolute assurance of effectiveness. The system of internal control is based on an on-going process designed to identify and prioritise the risks to the achievement of academy trust policies, aims and objectives, to evaluate the likelihood of those risks being realised and the impact should they be realised, and to manage them efficiently, effectively and economically. The system of internal control has been in place in The Smallwood Academy Trust for the period 1 September 2023 to 31 August 2024 and up to the date of approval of the annual report and accounts.

Capacity to handle risk

The Board of Trustees has reviewed the key risks to which the academy trust is exposed together with the operating, financial and compliance controls that have been implemented to mitigate those risks. The Board of Trustees is of the view that there is a formal ongoing process for identifying, evaluating and managing the academy trust's significant risks that has been in place for the period 1 September 2023 to 31 August 2024 and up to the date of approval of the annual report and accounts. This process is regularly reviewed by the Board of Trustees.

The risk and control framework

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

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

The Board of Trustees has decided:

- to appoint Jennifer Rowlands (Director of Finance and Operations at Cumbria Futures), an accredited SRMA auditor, to carry out a programme of checks.

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

Integrated Curriculum Financial Planning and costed recommendations

- Key metrics
- Financial health
- Financial governance of the Trust
- Contracts and Procurement (Buying for Schools)
- HR and Recruitment Procurement

Twice, during the 2023-2024 year, the reviewer reported to the board of trustees, through the sub-committee on the operation of the systems of control and on the discharge of the board of trustees' financial responsibilities and annually prepares an annual summary report to the committee outlining the areas reviewed, key findings, recommendations and conclusions to help the committee consider actions and assess year on year progress.

THE SMALLWOOD ACADEMY TRUST

GOVERNANCE STATEMENT (CONTINUED)

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2024

Review of effectiveness

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

- the work of the internal auditor/reviewer;
- the financial management and governance self-assessment process or the school resource management self-assessment tool;
- the work of the executive managers within the academy trust who have responsibility for the development and maintenance of the internal control framework;
- the work of the external auditor; and
- correspondence from ESFA, eg financial notice to improve/notice to improve (FNtI/NtI) and 'minded to' letters.

The accounting officer has been advised of the implications of the result of their review of the system of internal control by the Audit and Finance Committee and ensures continuous improvement of the system is in place.

Conclusion

Based on the advice of the Audit, Finance & Building Committee and the accounting officer, the Board of Trustees is of the opinion that the academy trust has an adequate and effective framework for governance, risk management and control.

18/12/2024

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



I Lewis
Accounting Officer



T Pear
Chair

THE SMALLWOOD ACADEMY TRUST

STATEMENT OF REGULARITY, PROPRIETY AND COMPLIANCE

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2024

As accounting officer of The Smallwood Academy Trust, I have considered my responsibility to notify the academy trust Board of Trustees and the Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA) of material irregularity, impropriety and non-compliance with terms and conditions of all funding, including for estates safety and management, under the funding agreement in place between the academy trust and the Secretary of State for Education. As part of my consideration I have had due regard to the requirements of the Academy Trust Handbook 2023, including responsibilities for estates safety and management.

I confirm that I and the academy trust's Board of Trustees are able to identify any material irregular or improper use of funds by the academy trust, or material non-compliance with the terms and conditions of funding under the academy trust's funding agreement and the Academy Trust Handbook 2023.

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



I Lewis
Accounting Officer

18/12/2024

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THE SMALLWOOD ACADEMY TRUST

STATEMENT OF TRUSTEES' RESPONSIBILITIES

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2024

The trustees (who are also the directors of The Smallwood Academy Trust for the purposes of company law) are responsible for preparing the trustees' report and the accounts in accordance with the Academies Accounts Direction 2023 to 2024 published by the Education and Skills Funding Agency, United Kingdom Accounting Standards (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice) and applicable law and regulations.

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

In preparing these accounts, the trustees are required to:

- select suitable accounting policies and then apply them consistently;
- observe the methods and principles in the Charities SORP 2019 and the Academies Accounts Direction 2023 to 2024;
- make judgements and accounting estimates that are reasonable and prudent;
- state whether applicable UK Accounting Standards have been followed, subject to any material departures disclosed and explained in the accounts; and
- prepare the accounts on the going concern basis unless it is inappropriate to presume that the charitable company will continue in business.

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

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

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

12/18/2024

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



T Pear
Chair

THE SMALLWOOD ACADEMY TRUST

INDEPENDENT AUDITOR'S REPORT TO THE MEMBERS OF THE SMALLWOOD ACADEMY TRUST

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2024

Opinion

We have audited the accounts of The Smallwood Academy Trust for the year ended 31 August 2024 which comprise the statement of financial activities, the balance sheet, the statement of cash flows and notes to the accounts, including significant accounting policies. The financial reporting framework that has been applied in their preparation is applicable law and United Kingdom Accounting Standards, including Financial Reporting Standard 102 'The Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland' (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice), the Charities SORP 2019 and the Academies Accounts Direction 2023 to 2024 issued by the Education and Skills Funding Agency.

In our opinion the accounts:

- give a true and fair view of the state of the charitable company's affairs as at 31 August 2024 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 Charities SORP 2019 and the Academies Accounts Direction 2023 to 2024.

Basis for opinion

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

Conclusions relating to going concern

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

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

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

Other information

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

We have nothing to report in this regard.

Opinions on other matters prescribed by the Companies Act 2006

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

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

THE SMALLWOOD ACADEMY TRUST

INDEPENDENT AUDITOR'S REPORT TO THE MEMBERS OF THE SMALLWOOD ACADEMY TRUST (CONTINUED)

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2024

Matters on which we are required to report by exception

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

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

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

Responsibilities of trustees

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

Auditor's responsibilities for the audit of the accounts

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

The extent to which our procedures are capable of detecting irregularities, including fraud, is detailed below.

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

We identify and assess the risks of material misstatement of the financial statements, whether due to fraud or error, and then design and perform audit procedures responsive to those risks, including obtaining audit evidence that is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our opinion.

THE SMALLWOOD ACADEMY TRUST

INDEPENDENT AUDITOR'S REPORT TO THE MEMBERS OF THE SMALLWOOD ACADEMY TRUST (CONTINUED)

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2024

Identifying and assessing potential risks related to irregularities

In identifying and assessing risks of material misstatement in respect of irregularities, including fraud and non-compliance with laws and regulations, we considered the following:

- the nature of the industry and sector, control environment and business performance;
- the schools' own assessment of the risks that irregularities may occur either as a result of fraud or error;
- the results of our enquiries of management and members of the board of governors of their own identification and assessment of the risks of irregularities;
- any matters we identified having obtained and reviewed the schools' documentation of their policies and procedures relating to:
 - identifying, evaluating and complying with laws and regulations and whether they were aware of any instances of non-compliance;
 - detecting and responding to the risks of fraud and whether they have knowledge of any actual, suspected or alleged fraud;
 - the internal controls established to mitigate risks of fraud or non-compliance with laws and regulations; and
 - the matters discussed among the audit engagement team regarding how and where fraud might occur in the financial statements and any potential indicators of fraud.

As a result of these procedures, we considered the opportunities and incentives that may exist within the organisation for fraud and identified the greatest potential for fraud in the following areas:

(i) The presentation of the trust's Statement of Financial Activities, (ii) revenue recognition (iii) the overstatement of salary and other costs (iv) the assumptions used in the calculation of the valuation of the surplus or deficit on the defined benefit pension scheme and the movements for the year. In common with all audits under ISAs (UK), we are also required to perform specific procedures to respond to the risk of management override.

We also obtained an understanding of the legal and regulatory framework that the charity operates in, focusing on provisions of those laws and regulations that had a direct effect on the determination of material amounts and disclosures in the financial statements. The key laws and regulations we considered in this context included the UK Companies Act, the Statement of Recommended Practice - 'Accounting and Reporting by Charities' issued by the joint SORP making body, along with the Academy Trust Handbook and Accounts Direction 2023-24 issued by the Education and Skills Funding Agency.

In addition, we considered provisions of other laws and regulations that do not have a direct effect on the financial statements but compliance with which may be fundamental to the academy's ability to operate or to avoid a material penalty. This includes regulations concerning Data Protection and Safeguarding.

Audit response to risks identified

As a result of performing the above, we identified income recognition, override of controls and adherence to laws and regulations as the key audit matters related to the potential risk of fraud.

THE SMALLWOOD ACADEMY TRUST

INDEPENDENT AUDITOR'S REPORT TO THE MEMBERS OF THE SMALLWOOD ACADEMY TRUST (CONTINUED)

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2024

As a result of performing the above, we identified the presentation of the academy's Statement of Financial Activities, revenue recognition and overstatement of wages and other costs as the key audit matters related to the potential risk of fraud. The key audit matters section of our report explains the matters in more detail and also describes the specific procedures we performed in response to those key audit matters.

In addition to the above, our procedures to respond to risks identified included the following:

- reviewing the financial statement disclosures and testing to supporting documentation to assess compliance with relevant laws and regulations described above as having a direct effect on the financial statements;
- enquiring of management and members of the board concerning actual and potential litigation and claims;
- performing analytical procedures to identify any unusual or unexpected relationships that may indicate risks of material misstatement due to fraud;
- reading minutes of meetings of those charged with governance and reviewing correspondence with relevant authorities where matters identified were significant;
- in addressing the risk of fraud through management override of controls we carried out testing of the appropriateness of journal entries and other adjustments; assessed whether the judgements made in making accounting estimates were indicative of a potential bias; and evaluated the business rationale of any significant transactions that are unusual or outside the normal course of business.

We also communicated relevant identified laws and regulations and potential fraud risks to all engagement team members and remained alert to any indications of fraud or non-compliance with laws and regulations throughout the audit.

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

Use of our report

This report is made solely to the 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.



Robert Hall (Senior Statutory Auditor)
for and on behalf of Mitchell Charlesworth (Audit) Limited

18/12/2024

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Accountants
Statutory Auditor

24 Nicholas Street
Chester
CH1 2AU

THE SMALLWOOD ACADEMY TRUST

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

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2024

In accordance with the terms of our engagement letter dated 7 July 2023 and further to the requirements of the Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA) as included in the Academies Accounts Direction 2023 to 2024, we have carried out an engagement to obtain limited assurance about whether the expenditure disbursed and income received by The Smallwood Academy Trust during the period 1 September 2023 to 31 August 2024 have been applied to the purposes identified by Parliament and the financial transactions conform to the authorities which govern them.

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

Respective responsibilities of The Smallwood Academy Trust's accounting officer and the reporting accountant

The accounting officer is responsible, under the requirements of The Smallwood Academy Trust's funding agreement with the Secretary of State for Education dated 28 July 2014 and the Academy Trust Handbook, extant from 1 September 2023, for ensuring that expenditure disbursed and income received is applied for the purposes intended by Parliament and the financial transactions conform to the authorities which govern them.

Our responsibilities for this engagement are established in the United Kingdom by our profession's ethical guidance, and are to obtain limited assurance and report in accordance with our engagement letter and the requirements of the Academies Accounts Direction 2023 to 2024. 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 2023 to 31 August 2024 have not been applied to purposes intended by Parliament or that the financial transactions do not conform to the authorities which govern them.

Approach

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

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

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

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

The work undertaken to draw to our conclusion includes:

- Reviewing the activities to ensure they are in keeping with the charitable objectives and framework.
- Reviewing declarations of interest and seeking further representations.
- Reviewing the control environment and considering potential weaknesses.
- Reviewing minutes of various committees, management accounts and holding discussions with key personnel.

THE SMALLWOOD ACADEMY TRUST

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

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2024

Conclusion

In the course of our work, nothing has come to our attention which suggests that in all material respects the expenditure disbursed and income received during the period 1 September 2023 to 31 August 2024 has not been applied to purposes intended by Parliament and the financial transactions do not conform to the authorities which govern them.



Reporting Accountant

Mitchell Charlesworth (Audit) Limited

18/12/2024

Dated:

THE SMALLWOOD ACADEMY TRUST

STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES INCLUDING INCOME AND EXPENDITURE ACCOUNT

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2024

	Notes	Unrestricted funds £	Restricted funds: General £	Fixed asset £	Total 2024 £	Total 2023 £
Income and endowments from:						
Donations and capital grants	3	7,037	-	6,036	13,073	31,712
Charitable activities:						
- Funding for educational operations	4	-	1,041,541	-	1,041,541	953,703
Other trading activities	5	60,176	-	-	60,176	99,483
Investments	6	20	-	-	20	8
Total		<u>67,233</u>	<u>1,041,541</u>	<u>6,036</u>	<u>1,114,810</u>	<u>1,084,906</u>
Expenditure on:						
Raising funds	7	465	-	-	465	2,340
Charitable activities:						
- Educational operations	8	43,673	1,045,833	94,646	1,184,152	1,106,013
Total	7	<u>44,138</u>	<u>1,045,833</u>	<u>94,646</u>	<u>1,184,617</u>	<u>1,108,353</u>
Net income/(expenditure)		23,095	(4,292)	(88,610)	(69,807)	(23,447)
Transfers between funds	16	(6,776)	-	6,776	-	-
Other recognised gains/(losses)						
Actuarial gains on defined benefit pension schemes	18	-	26,000	-	26,000	62,000
Net movement in funds		16,319	21,708	(81,834)	(43,807)	38,553
Reconciliation of funds						
Total funds brought forward		52,089	(36,708)	4,629,314	4,644,695	4,606,142
Total funds carried forward		<u>68,408</u>	<u>(15,000)</u>	<u>4,547,480</u>	<u>4,600,888</u>	<u>4,644,695</u>

THE SMALLWOOD ACADEMY TRUST

STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES (CONTINUED) INCLUDING INCOME AND EXPENDITURE ACCOUNT

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2024

Comparative year information Year ended 31 August 2023		Unrestricted funds £	Restricted funds:		Total 2023 £
			General £	Fixed asset £	
	Notes				
Income and endowments from:					
Donations and capital grants	3	12,715	-	18,997	31,712
Charitable activities:					
- Funding for educational operations	4	-	953,703	-	953,703
Other trading activities	5	99,483	-	-	99,483
Investments	6	8	-	-	8
Total		<u>112,206</u>	<u>953,703</u>	<u>18,997</u>	<u>1,084,906</u>
Expenditure on:					
Raising funds	7	2,340	-	-	2,340
Charitable activities:					
- Educational operations	8	49,998	960,411	95,604	1,106,013
Total	7	<u>52,338</u>	<u>960,411</u>	<u>95,604</u>	<u>1,108,353</u>
Net income/(expenditure)		59,868	(6,708)	(76,607)	(23,447)
Transfers between funds	16	(10,605)	-	10,605	-
Other recognised gains/(losses)					
Actuarial gains on defined benefit pension schemes	18	-	62,000	-	62,000
Net movement in funds		49,263	55,292	(66,002)	38,553
Reconciliation of funds					
Total funds brought forward		2,826	(92,000)	4,695,316	4,606,142
Total funds carried forward		<u>52,089</u>	<u>(36,708)</u>	<u>4,629,314</u>	<u>4,644,695</u>

THE SMALLWOOD ACADEMY TRUST

BALANCE SHEET

AS AT 31 AUGUST 2024

	Notes	2024		2023	
		£	£	£	£
Fixed assets					
Tangible assets	12		4,541,196		4,622,979
Current assets					
Debtors	13	27,953		25,204	
Cash at bank and in hand		146,644		122,231	
			174,597		147,435
Current liabilities					
Creditors: amounts falling due within one year	14	(99,905)		(80,719)	
Net current assets			74,692		66,716
Net assets excluding pension liability			4,615,888		4,689,695
Defined benefit pension scheme liability	18		(15,000)		(45,000)
Total net assets			4,600,888		4,644,695
Funds of the academy trust:					
Restricted funds					
- Fixed asset funds	16		4,547,480		4,629,314
- Restricted income funds			-		8,292
- Pension reserve			(15,000)		(45,000)
Total restricted funds			4,532,480		4,592,606
Unrestricted income funds	16		68,408		52,089
Total funds			4,600,888		4,644,695

12/18/2024

The accounts on pages 26 to 48 were approved by the trustees and authorised for issue on and are signed on their behalf by:



.....
T Pear
Chair

Company registration number 09118770 (England and Wales)

THE SMALLWOOD ACADEMY TRUST

STATEMENT OF CASH FLOWS

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2024

	Notes	2024 £	£	2023 £	£
Cash flows from operating activities					
Net cash provided by operating activities	19		31,220		76,797
Cash flows from investing activities					
Dividends, interest and rents from investments		20		8	
Capital grants from DfE Group		6,036		18,997	
Purchase of tangible fixed assets		(12,863)		(23,267)	
Net cash used in investing activities			<u>(6,807)</u>		<u>(4,262)</u>
Net increase in cash and cash equivalents in the reporting period			24,413		72,535
Cash and cash equivalents at beginning of the year			<u>122,231</u>		<u>49,696</u>
Cash and cash equivalents at end of the year			<u><u>146,644</u></u>		<u><u>122,231</u></u>

THE SMALLWOOD ACADEMY TRUST

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2024

1 Accounting policies

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

1.1 Basis of preparation

The accounts of the academy trust, which is a public benefit entity under FRS 102, have been prepared under the historical cost convention in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard Applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102), the Accounting and Reporting by Charities: Statement of Recommended Practice applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102) (Charities SORP (FRS 102)), the Academies Accounts Direction 2023 to 2024 issued by ESFA, the Charities Act 2011 and the Companies Act 2006.

The financial statements are prepared in sterling, which is the functional currency of the trust. Monetary amounts in these financial statements are in £.

1.2 Going concern

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

1.3 Income

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

Grants

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

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

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

Sponsorship income

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

Donations

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

THE SMALLWOOD ACADEMY TRUST

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONTINUED)

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2024

1 Accounting policies

(Continued)

Other income

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

Donated goods, facilities and services

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

Donated fixed assets

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

1.4 Expenditure

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

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

All resources expended are inclusive of irrecoverable VAT.

Expenditure on raising funds

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

Charitable activities

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

THE SMALLWOOD ACADEMY TRUST

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONTINUED)

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2024

1 Accounting policies

(Continued)

1.5 Tangible fixed assets and depreciation

Assets costing £500 or more are capitalised as tangible fixed assets and are carried at cost, net of depreciation and any provision for impairment.

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

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

Leasehold Land and building	Over 125 years
Computer equipment	33.3% per annum straight line basis
Fixtures, fittings & equipment	15% per annum reducing balance basis

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

1.6 Liabilities

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

1.7 Leased assets

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

1.8 Financial instruments

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

Financial assets

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

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

Financial liabilities

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

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

THE SMALLWOOD ACADEMY TRUST

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONTINUED)

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2024

1 Accounting policies

(Continued)

1.9 Taxation

The academy trust is considered to pass the tests set out in Paragraph 1 Schedule 6 of the Finance Act 2010 and therefore it meets the definition of a charitable company for UK corporation tax purposes. Accordingly, the academy trust is potentially exempt from taxation in respect of income or capital gains received within categories covered by chapter 3 part 11 of the Corporation Tax Act 2010 or Section 256 of the Taxation of Chargeable Gains Act 1992, to the extent that such income or gains are applied exclusively to charitable purposes.

1.10 Pensions benefits

Retirement benefits to employees of the academy trust are provided by the Teachers' Pension Scheme ('TPS') and the Local Government Pension Scheme ('LGPS'). These are defined benefit schemes and the assets are held separately from those of the academy trust.

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

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

1.11 Fund accounting

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

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

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

1.12 Provisions

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

Provisions are measured at the best estimate of the amounts required to settle the obligation. Where the effect of the time value of money is material, the provision is based on the present value of those amounts, discounted at the pre-tax discount rate that reflects the risks specific to the liability. The unwinding of the discount is recognised within interest payable and similar charges.

THE SMALLWOOD ACADEMY TRUST

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONTINUED)

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2024

2 Critical accounting estimates and areas of judgement

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

Critical accounting estimates and assumptions

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

The present value of the Local Government Pension Scheme defined benefit asset/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 18, will impact the carrying amount of the pension asset/liability. Furthermore a roll forward approach which projects results from the latest full actuarial valuation performed at 31 March 2022 has been used by the actuary in valuing the pensions asset/liability at 31 August 2024. 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 asset/liability.

Critical areas of judgement

The trustees consider there are no critical areas of judgement relevant to the academy.

3 Donations and capital grants

	Unrestricted funds £	Restricted funds £	Total 2024 £	Total 2023 £
Capital grants	-	6,036	6,036	18,997
Other donations	7,037	-	7,037	12,715
	<u>7,037</u>	<u>6,036</u>	<u>13,073</u>	<u>31,712</u>

THE SMALLWOOD ACADEMY TRUST

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONTINUED)

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2024

4 Funding for the academy trust's educational operations

	Unrestricted funds £	Restricted funds £	Total 2024 £	Total 2023 £
DfE/ESFA grants				
General annual grant (GAG)	-	870,768	870,768	757,471
Other DfE/ESFA grants:				
- Pupil premium	-	26,043	26,043	29,828
- Others	-	104,775	104,775	55,529
	-	1,001,586	1,001,586	842,828
Other government grants				
Local authority grants	-	39,955	39,955	78,761
Special educational projects	-	-	-	32,114
	-	39,955	39,955	110,875
Total funding	-	1,041,541	1,041,541	953,703

5 Other trading activities

	Unrestricted funds £	Restricted funds £	Total 2024 £	Total 2023 £
Hire of facilities	8,000	-	8,000	8,497
Catering income	27,022	-	27,022	27,217
Other income	25,154	-	25,154	63,769
	60,176	-	60,176	99,483

6 Investment income

	Unrestricted funds £	Restricted funds £	Total 2024 £	Total 2023 £
Short term deposits	20	-	20	8

THE SMALLWOOD ACADEMY TRUST

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONTINUED)

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2024

7 Expenditure

	Non-pay expenditure		Total 2024 £	Total 2023 £
	Staff costs £	Premises £		
Expenditure on raising funds				
- Direct costs	-	-	465	2,340
Academy's educational operations				
- Direct costs	683,379	70,985	72,818	710,689
- Allocated support costs	117,915	84,109	154,946	395,324
	<u>801,294</u>	<u>155,094</u>	<u>228,229</u>	<u>1,108,353</u>

Net income/(expenditure) for the year includes:

	2024 £	2023 £
Depreciation of tangible fixed assets	94,646	95,604
Fees payable to auditor for:		
- Audit	5,000	4,995
- Other services	1,032	2,100
Net interest on defined benefit pension liability	2,000	5,000
	<u>102,678</u>	<u>107,700</u>

8 Charitable activities

	Unrestricted	Restricted	Total 2024 £	Total 2023 £
	funds £	funds £		
Direct costs				
Educational operations	43,673	783,509	827,182	710,689
Support costs				
Educational operations	-	356,970	356,970	395,324
	<u>43,673</u>	<u>1,140,479</u>	<u>1,184,152</u>	<u>1,106,013</u>

THE SMALLWOOD ACADEMY TRUST

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONTINUED)

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2024

8 Charitable activities	(Continued)	
	2024	2023
	£	£
Analysis of support costs		
Support staff costs	117,915	149,706
Depreciation	23,661	23,901
Technology costs	29,103	17,476
Premises costs	60,448	62,612
Legal costs - other	22,488	17,225
Other support costs	95,755	115,732
Governance costs	7,600	8,672
	<u>356,970</u>	<u>395,324</u>
	<u><u>356,970</u></u>	<u><u>395,324</u></u>
9 Staff		
Staff costs and employee benefits		
Staff costs during the year were:		
	2024	2023
	£	£
Wages and salaries	615,643	499,879
Social security costs	42,897	45,067
Pension costs	139,328	117,226
	<u>797,868</u>	<u>662,172</u>
Staff costs - employees	797,868	662,172
Agency staff costs	3,426	33,697
Staff restructuring costs	-	15,567
	<u>801,294</u>	<u>711,436</u>
Staff development and other staff costs	6,504	4,729
	<u>807,798</u>	<u>716,165</u>
	<u><u>807,798</u></u>	<u><u>716,165</u></u>
Staff restructuring costs comprise:		
Severance payments	-	15,567
	<u>-</u>	<u>15,567</u>
	<u><u>-</u></u>	<u><u>15,567</u></u>

Severance payments

The academy trust paid no severance payments in the year (2023: 1, disclosed in the following bands: £0 - £25,000).

THE SMALLWOOD ACADEMY TRUST

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONTINUED)

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2024

9 Staff

(Continued)

Staff numbers

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

	2024 Number	2023 Number
Teachers	8	9
Administration and support	18	17
Management	1	1
	<u>27</u>	<u>27</u>

Higher paid staff

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

	2024 Number	2023 Number
£60,001 - £70,000	1	-
	<u>1</u>	<u>-</u>

Key management personnel

The key management personnel of the academy trust comprise the trustees and the senior management team as listed on page 1. The total amount of key management personnel benefits (including employer pension contributions and employer national insurance contributions) received by key management personnel for their services to the academy trust was £210,292 (2023: £244,675).

10 Trustees' remuneration and expenses

One or more of the trustees has been paid remuneration or has received other benefits from an employment with the academy trust. The Head Teacher and other staff trustees only receive remuneration in respect of services they provide undertaking the roles of Head Teacher and staff members under their contracts of employment, and not in respect of their services as trustees.

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

I Lewis (Head Teacher & Trustee)

Remuneration £60,000 - £65,000 (2023: £55,000 - £60,000)

Employer's pension contributions paid £15,000 - £20,000 (2023 £10,000 - £15,000)

During the year, no trustees received any reimbursement of expenses (2023: £nil).

THE SMALLWOOD ACADEMY TRUST

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONTINUED)

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2024

11 Trustees' and officers' insurance

In accordance with normal commercial practice, the academy trust has purchased insurance to protect trustees and officers from claims arising from negligent acts, errors or omissions occurring whilst on academy trust business. The insurance provides cover up to £2,000,000 on any one claim and the cost for the year ended 31 August 2024 was £4,140 (2023: £3,486). The cost of this insurance is included in the total insurance cost.

12 Tangible fixed assets

	Leasehold Land and building £	Computer equipment £	Fixtures, fittings & equipment £	Total £
Cost				
At 1 September 2023	4,547,535	146,792	1,001,305	5,695,632
Additions	2,801	10,062	-	12,863
At 31 August 2024	4,550,336	156,854	1,001,305	5,708,495
Depreciation				
At 1 September 2023	198,660	118,881	755,112	1,072,653
Charge for the year	28,391	29,326	36,929	94,646
At 31 August 2024	227,051	148,207	792,041	1,167,299
Net book value				
At 31 August 2024	4,323,285	8,647	209,264	4,541,196
At 31 August 2023	4,348,875	27,911	246,193	4,622,979

Land and buildings have been included in the financial statements at a value of £4,000,000 based on the deemed valuation by insurance. The legal title to land and buildings is held by Chester Diocesan Education Association, the Academy utilises the asset under a licence agreement and has done since its conversion to an academy on 4 July 2017.

Subsequent land and building improvements have been included at cost.

13 Debtors

	2024 £	2023 £
Trade debtors	-	4,908
Other debtors	10,271	10,011
Prepayments and accrued income	17,682	10,285
	27,953	25,204

THE SMALLWOOD ACADEMY TRUST

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONTINUED)

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2024

14 Creditors: amounts falling due within one year

	2024	2023
	£	£
Trade creditors	42,346	27,926
Other taxation and social security	26,037	21,726
Accruals and deferred income	31,522	31,067
	<u>99,905</u>	<u>80,719</u>

15 Deferred income

	2024	2023
	£	£
Deferred income is included within:		
Creditors due within one year	19,349	18,648
	<u>19,349</u>	<u>18,648</u>
Deferred income at 1 September 2023	18,648	18,968
Released from previous years	(18,648)	(18,968)
Resources deferred in the year	19,349	18,648
	<u>19,349</u>	<u>18,648</u>
Deferred income at 31 August 2024	<u>19,349</u>	<u>18,648</u>

At the balance sheet date the academy trust was holding funds received in advance for UIFSM funding of £19,349 (2023: £18,648).

THE SMALLWOOD ACADEMY TRUST

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONTINUED)

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2024

16 Funds

	Balance at 1 September 2023 £	Income £	Expenditure £	Gains, losses and transfers £	Balance at 31 August 2024 £
Restricted general funds					
General Annual Grant (GAG)	8,292	870,768	(879,060)	-	-
Pupil premium	-	26,043	(26,043)	-	-
Other DfE/ESFA grants	-	104,775	(104,775)	-	-
Other government grants	-	39,955	(39,955)	-	-
Pension reserve	(45,000)	-	4,000	26,000	(15,000)
	<u>(36,708)</u>	<u>1,041,541</u>	<u>(1,045,833)</u>	<u>26,000</u>	<u>(15,000)</u>
Restricted fixed asset funds					
Inherited on conversion	4,525,526	-	(56,645)	-	4,468,881
DfE group capital grants	89,447	6,036	(32,765)	-	62,718
Capital expenditure from unrestricted funds	14,341	-	(5,236)	6,776	15,881
	<u>4,629,314</u>	<u>6,036</u>	<u>(94,646)</u>	<u>6,776</u>	<u>4,547,480</u>
Total restricted funds	<u>4,592,606</u>	<u>1,047,577</u>	<u>(1,140,479)</u>	<u>32,776</u>	<u>4,532,480</u>
Unrestricted funds					
General funds	<u>52,089</u>	<u>67,233</u>	<u>(44,138)</u>	<u>(6,776)</u>	<u>68,408</u>
Total funds	<u>4,644,695</u>	<u>1,114,810</u>	<u>(1,184,617)</u>	<u>26,000</u>	<u>4,600,888</u>

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

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

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

Restricted general fund comprise all other restricted funds received and include grants from the Education and Skills Funding Agency and Department for Education.

The academy trust is not subject to GAG carried forward limits.

THE SMALLWOOD ACADEMY TRUST

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONTINUED)

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2024

16 Funds

(Continued)

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

	Balance at 1 September 2022 £	Income £	Expenditure £	Gains, losses and transfers £	Balance at 31 August 2023 £
Restricted general funds					
General Annual Grant (GAG)	-	757,471	(749,179)	-	8,292
Pupil premium	-	29,828	(29,828)	-	-
Other DfE/ESFA COVID-19 funding	-	-	(2,030)	-	(2,030)
Other DfE/ESFA grants	-	55,529	(53,499)	-	2,030
Other government grants	-	110,875	(110,875)	-	-
Pension reserve	(92,000)	-	(15,000)	62,000	(45,000)
	<u>(92,000)</u>	<u>953,703</u>	<u>(960,411)</u>	<u>62,000</u>	<u>(36,708)</u>
Restricted fixed asset funds					
Inherited on conversion	4,587,932	-	(62,406)	-	4,525,526
DfE group capital grants	102,333	18,997	(31,883)	-	89,447
Capital expenditure from unrestricted funds	5,051	-	(1,315)	10,605	14,341
	<u>4,695,316</u>	<u>18,997</u>	<u>(95,604)</u>	<u>10,605</u>	<u>4,629,314</u>
Total restricted funds	<u>4,603,316</u>	<u>972,700</u>	<u>(1,056,015)</u>	<u>72,605</u>	<u>4,592,606</u>
Unrestricted funds					
General funds	<u>2,826</u>	<u>112,206</u>	<u>(52,338)</u>	<u>(10,605)</u>	<u>52,089</u>
Total funds	<u>4,606,142</u>	<u>1,084,906</u>	<u>(1,108,353)</u>	<u>62,000</u>	<u>4,644,695</u>

17 Analysis of net assets between funds

	Unrestricted Funds £	Restricted funds: General £	Fixed asset £	Total Funds £
Fund balances at 31 August 2024 are represented by:				
Tangible fixed assets	-	-	4,541,196	4,541,196
Current assets	61,632	106,681	6,284	174,597
Current liabilities	6,776	(106,681)	-	(99,905)
Pension scheme liability	-	(15,000)	-	(15,000)
Total net assets	<u>68,408</u>	<u>(15,000)</u>	<u>4,547,480</u>	<u>4,600,888</u>

THE SMALLWOOD ACADEMY TRUST

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONTINUED)

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2024

17 Analysis of net assets between funds (Continued)

	Unrestricted Funds £	Restricted funds: General £	Fixed asset £	Total Funds £
Fund balances at 31 August 2023 are represented by:				
Tangible fixed assets	-	-	4,622,979	4,622,979
Current assets	52,089	69,147	26,199	147,435
Current liabilities	-	(60,855)	(19,864)	(80,719)
Pension scheme liability	-	(45,000)	-	(45,000)
Total net assets	52,089	(36,708)	4,629,314	4,644,695

18 Pension and similar obligations

The academy trust's employees belong to two principal pension schemes: the Teachers' Pension Scheme England and Wales (TPS) for academic and related staff; and the Local Government Pension Scheme (LGPS) for non-teaching staff, which is managed by Cheshire Pensions. Both are multi-employer defined benefit schemes.

The latest actuarial valuation of the TPS related to the period ended 31 March 2020, and that of the LGPS related to the period ended 31 March 2022.

Contributions amounting to £21,078 were payable to the schemes at 31 August 2024 (2023: £12,186) 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' Pension Scheme Regulations 2014. Membership is automatic for teachers in academy trusts. All teachers have the option to opt out of the TPS following enrolment.

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

Valuation of the Teachers' Pension Scheme

The Government Actuary, using normal actuarial principles, conducts a formal actuarial review of the TPS in accordance with the Public Service Pensions (Valuations and Employer Cost Cap) Directions 2014 published by HM Treasury every 4 years. The aim of the review is to ensure scheme costs are recognised and managed appropriately and the review specifies the level of future contributions.

THE SMALLWOOD ACADEMY TRUST

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONTINUED)

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2024

18 Pension and similar obligations

(Continued)

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 2020. The valuation report was published by the Department for Education on 27 October 2023, with the SCAPE rate, set by HMT, applying a notional investment return based on 1.7% above the rate of CPI. The key elements of the valuation outcome are:

- Employer contribution rates set at 28.68% of pensionable pay (including a 0.08% administration levy). This is an increase of 5% in employer contributions and the cost control result is such that no change in member benefits is needed.
- Total scheme liabilities (pensions currently in payment and the estimated cost of future benefits) for service to the effective date of £262,000 million and notional assets (estimated future contributions together with the notional investments held at the valuation date) of £222,200 million, giving a notional past service deficit of £39,800 million.

The result of this valuation has been implemented from 1 April 2024. The next valuation result is due to be implemented from 1 April 2028.

The employer's pension costs paid to the TPS in the period amounted to £96,870 (2023: £74,829).

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

Under the definitions set out in FRS 102, the TPS is an unfunded multi-employer pension scheme. The academy trust is unable to identify its share of the underlying assets and liabilities of the plan. Accordingly, the academy trust has taken advantage of the exemption in FRS 102 and has accounted for its contributions to the scheme as if it were a defined contribution scheme. The academy trust has set out above the information available on the scheme.

Local Government Pension Scheme

The LGPS is a funded defined benefit pension scheme, with the assets held in separate trustee-administered funds. The total contributions are as noted below. The agreed contribution rates for future years are 23% for employers and 5.5% - 12.5% for employees.

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

Total contributions made	2024	2023
	£	£
Employer's contributions	48,000	42,000
Employees' contributions	12,000	10,000
	=====	=====
Total contributions	60,000	52,000
	=====	=====

THE SMALLWOOD ACADEMY TRUST

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONTINUED)

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2024

18	Pension and similar obligations	(Continued)	
	Principal actuarial assumptions	2024	2023
		%	%
	Rate of increase in salaries	3.35	3.70
	Rate of increase for pensions in payment/inflation	2.65	3.00
	Discount rate for scheme liabilities	5.00	5.20
		<u> </u>	<u> </u>
	The current mortality assumptions include sufficient allowance for future improvements in mortality rates. The assumed life expectations on retirement age 65 are:		
		2024	2023
		Years	Years
	Retiring today		
	- Males	20.0	20.1
	- Females	24.4	24.4
	Retiring in 20 years		
	- Males	20.8	20.9
	- Females	25.6	25.6
		<u> </u>	<u> </u>
	Sensitivity analysis		
	Scheme liabilities would have been affected by changes in assumptions as follows:		
		2024	2023
	0.1% decrease in Real Discount Rate	15,000	14,000
	1 year increase in member life expectancy	27,000	24,000
	0.1% increase in the Pension Increase Rate	15,000	14,000
		<u> </u>	<u> </u>
	Defined benefit pension scheme net liability	2024	2023
		£	£
	Scheme assets	652,000	547,000
	Scheme obligations	(667,000)	(592,000)
		<u> </u>	<u> </u>
	Net liability	(15,000)	(45,000)
		<u> </u>	<u> </u>

THE SMALLWOOD ACADEMY TRUST

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONTINUED)

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2024

18 Pension and similar obligations	(Continued)	
The academy trust's share of the assets in the scheme	2024	2023
	Fair value	Fair value
	£	£
Equities	346,000	284,000
Bonds	215,000	181,000
Cash	6,000	5,000
Property	85,000	77,000
	<u> </u>	<u> </u>
Total market value of assets	652,000	547,000
	<u> </u>	<u> </u>
The actual return on scheme assets was £54,000 (2023: £(25,000)).		
Amount recognised in the statement of financial activities	2024	2023
	£	£
Current service cost	42,000	52,000
Interest income	(30,000)	(23,000)
Interest cost	32,000	28,000
	<u> </u>	<u> </u>
Total amount recognised	44,000	57,000
	<u> </u>	<u> </u>
Changes in the present value of defined benefit obligations	2024	2023
	£	£
At 1 September 2023	592,000	622,000
Current service cost	42,000	52,000
Interest cost	32,000	28,000
Employee contributions	12,000	10,000
Actuarial gain	(2,000)	(110,000)
Benefits paid	(9,000)	(10,000)
	<u> </u>	<u> </u>
At 31 August 2024	667,000	592,000
	<u> </u>	<u> </u>

THE SMALLWOOD ACADEMY TRUST

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONTINUED)

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2024

18	Pension and similar obligations	(Continued)	
	Changes in the fair value of the academy trust's share of scheme assets	2024	2023
		£	£
	At 1 September 2023	547,000	530,000
	Interest income	30,000	23,000
	Actuarial (gain)/loss	24,000	(48,000)
	Employer contributions	48,000	42,000
	Employee contributions	12,000	10,000
	Benefits paid	(9,000)	(10,000)
		<u> </u>	<u> </u>
	At 31 August 2024	<u>652,000</u>	<u>547,000</u>
		<u> </u>	<u> </u>
19	Reconciliation of net expenditure to net cash flow from operating activities	2024	2023
		£	£
	Notes		
	Net expenditure for the reporting period (as per the statement of financial activities)	(69,807)	(23,447)
	Adjusted for:		
	Capital grants from DfE and other capital income	(6,036)	(18,997)
	Investment income receivable	6 (20)	(8)
	Defined benefit pension costs less contributions payable	18 (6,000)	10,000
	Defined benefit pension scheme finance cost	18 2,000	5,000
	Depreciation of tangible fixed assets	94,646	95,604
	Decrease in stocks	-	784
	(Increase)/decrease in debtors	(2,749)	13,703
	Increase/(decrease) in creditors	19,186	(5,842)
		<u> </u>	<u> </u>
	Net cash provided by operating activities	<u>31,220</u>	<u>76,797</u>
		<u> </u>	<u> </u>
20	Analysis of changes in net funds	1 September 2023	Cash flows 31 August 2024
		£	£
	Cash	122,231	146,644
		<u> </u>	<u> </u>
		<u> </u>	<u> </u>

THE SMALLWOOD ACADEMY TRUST

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONTINUED)

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2024

21 Long-term commitments

Operating leases

At 31 August 2024 the total of the academy trust's future minimum lease payments under non-cancellable operating leases was:

	2024	2023
	£	£
Amounts due within one year	3,052	4,236
Amounts due in two and five years	7,583	2,295
	<u>10,635</u>	<u>6,531</u>
	<u><u>10,635</u></u>	<u><u>6,531</u></u>

22 Related party transactions

Owing to the nature of the academy trust and the composition of the Board of Trustees being drawn from local public and private sector organisations, transactions may take place with organisations in which the trustees have an interest.

The following related party transactions took place in the period of account, along with certain trustees' remuneration and expenses already disclosed in note 10.

During the year the school paid fees of £3,300 (2023: £3,129) to the Congleton Education Community Partnership in which the school is a member and the Head Teacher is a director.

23 Members' liability

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