

Orchard Community Trust

Trustees' Report and Financial Statements

For the Year Ended 31 August 2025



Orchard Community Trust
(A Company Limited by Guarantee)

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Reference and Administrative Details

Members The Lichfield Diocesan Board of Education
Diocese of Lichfield Education Trust
Mr C Tarr (resigned 21 July 2025)
Ms G Howell
Mrs L Whitehead
Rev Rob Goddard (appointed 2 September 2025)

Trustees Mr S Thomson, Accounting Officer (appointed 1 September 2024)¹
Ms S Thomas, Vice Chair (resigned 31 August 2025)¹
Mrs M A S Tatton
Mrs L E Maden¹
Mr N C Carter (resigned 6 November 2025)¹
Ms R Fagan¹
Ms G Howell, Chair of Trustees¹
Mr S Lawley¹
Ms C Higgs
Mrs R Vaughan-Calkin¹
Mr C Sheeran (appointed 5 September 2024)
Mr D Keen (appointed 2 September 2025)

¹ Audit, Risk & Resource Committee

Company registered number 11620282

Company name Orchard Community Trust

Principal and registered office Genesis Centre
North Staffs Business Park
Innovation Way
Stoke-On-Trent
Staffordshire
ST6 4BF

Company secretary Mr K Lawton

Chief executive officer Mr S Thomson

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Reference and Administrative Details (continued)
For the Year Ended 31 August 2025

Senior management team

Mr S Thomson, Chief Executive Officer (from 1 September 2024)
Mrs M Nixon, Chief Finance Officer
Mrs H Sutton, Strategic Lead for Safeguarding and Inclusion (until 22 June 2025).
Temporary Headteacher Abbey Hulton (from 23 June 2025)
Mr C Crook, Headteacher Etruscan Primary School (until 22 June 2025).
Executive Headteacher of Abbey Hulton and Etruscan (from 23 June 2025)
Mrs L Brookes, Headteacher Abbey Hulton Primary School (until 31 August 2025)
Ms S Vorajee, Headteacher Forest Park Primary (from 1 September 2024)
Mrs L Hughes, Headteacher Kemball School
Mrs J Leach, Headteacher Oakhill Primary School (until 31 December 2024).
Strategic Lead for School Improvement (from 1 January 2025)
Mr S Smith, Headteacher Oakhill Primary School (from 1 January 2025)
Mrs J Lomas, Headteacher Watermill School (from 1 September 2024)
Mrs D Sadler, Headteacher St. Mark's CE Primary School

Independent auditors

Dains Audit Limited
Statutory Auditor Chartered Accountants
Suite 2, Albion House
2 Etruria Office Village
Forge Lane
Stoke on Trent
ST1 5RQ

Bankers

Lloyds Bank Plc
Fountain Square
Stoke on Trent
Staffordshire
ST1 1LE

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Trustees' Report
For the Year Ended 31 August 2025

The Trustees present their annual report together with the financial statements and auditors' report of the charitable company for the period 1 September 2024 to 31 August 2025. The annual report serves the purposes of both a Trustees' report and a directors' report under company law.

The Academy Trust operates 5 primary and 2 special schools in Stoke on Trent with a combined pupil capacity of 2557 and a roll of 2499 (including Nursery) in the school census in October 2024.

All 7 of our academies were in the Trust at the start of this reporting period:

- Abbey Hulton Primary School
- Etruscan Primary School
- Forest Park Primary School
- Kemball School
- Oakhill Primary School
- St. Mark's CE Primary School
- Watermill School

Structure, governance and management

a. 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 trustees of Orchard Community Trust are also the directors of the charitable company for the purposes of company law. The charitable company operates as Orchard Community Trust.

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.

b. 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.

c. Trustees' indemnities

The Trustees' benefit from indemnity insurance that covers the liability of the Trustees which by virtue of the rule of law would otherwise attach to them in respect of negligence, default or breach of duty which they may be found guilty in relation to the Academy Trust. The Trust and individual academies are members of the Risk Protection Arrangement (RPA) which provides indemnity cover for Trustees to a maximum aggregated loss of £10,000,000 in the membership year.

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Trustees' Report (continued)
For the Year Ended 31 August 2025

Structure, governance and management (continued)

d. Method of recruitment and appointment or election of Trustees

As laid out in our articles of association, the following method for appointing Trustees is in place:

Appointment of Directors

- The Members shall appoint up to nine Directors. (Trustees)
- The Diocese of Lichfield shall appoint Directors provided that the total number of Directors appointed under this Article would not thereby exceed 40% of the total number of Directors.
- The Members may appoint Staff Directors adopting the process set out in Article 50B but shall ensure that the total number of Directors including the Senior Executive Leader who are employees of the Company does not exceed one third of the total number of Directors.
- In appointing the Staff Directors, the Directors shall, on behalf of the Members, hold a secret ballot of all staff employed under a contract of employment or a contract for services or otherwise engaged to provide services to the Company (excluding the Chief Executive Officer and the Principal) at the relevant Academy. All arrangements for the calling and the conduct of the election and resolution of questions as to whether any person is an eligible candidate shall be determined by the Directors. If a Staff Director ceases to work for the Company then he shall be deemed to have resigned and shall cease to be a Director automatically on termination of his work for the Company. Any election of a Staff Director which is contested shall be held by secret ballot.

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Trustees' Report (continued)
For the Year Ended 31 August 2025

Structure, governance and management (continued)

e. Policies adopted for the induction and training of Trustees

Orchard Community Trust is committed to ensuring that all new trustees receive a comprehensive induction package so that they have the necessary information and support to fulfil their roles with confidence. The process is seen as an investment, leading to more effective governance and retention. The Trust has in place an agreed policy for the induction of Trustees which is regularly reviewed. The MAT Governance Professional supports with the recruitment, induction, training and development of new trustees and local governors.

Our policy states that:

New Trustees will be:

- Welcomed by the Chair of Trustees and the Chief Executive Officer
- Be invited by the Chief Executive Officer to visit MAT central staff.
- Have the opportunity to tour the schools and meet staff and children.
- Receive an informal briefing on the MAT from the Chief Executive Officer and Chair of Trustees.
- Be invited to attend MAT events.

New Trustees will receive:

- The minutes of previous meetings and the Orchard Community Trust Vision and values information.
- A Trustee skills audit form for completion.
- Governance responsibilities document and minimum expectations information
- A copy of the Scheme of Delegation
- Details on how to obtain DBS clearance.
- Board of Trustees meeting dates including OCT events.
- A copy of the Trust's governance plan.
- A copy of the Governance Terms of Reference
- Information that outlines the work, functions and responsibilities of the Trust. These documents are regularly reviewed and updated in line with our cycle for document and policy review.
- A new Orchard Community Trust email address to access Trust information.
- Online cyber training offer.

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Trustees' Report (continued)
For the Year Ended 31 August 2025

Structure, governance and management (continued)

f. Organisational structure

Our Governance Structure clearly outlines levels of accountability at Trust and school level that is reviewed annually

The Trust Board Audit, Resources and Risk Committee continues to be responsible for finance, operations and sustainability and risk management related to the Trust. It also carries out tasks delegated to it by the full Board of Trustees on strategic and capital spending projects.

The Chief Executive Officer, together with the senior leadership teams in the schools, are responsible for monitoring and evaluating the performance of the academies in terms of standards, quality of education, OFSTED inspection outcomes, people, leadership capacity, Trust governance, risk management and compliance.

g. Arrangements for setting pay and remuneration of key management personnel

All key leadership and management staff have annual appraisals and pay progression is awarded in line with the managing support staff performance policy and the teacher's appraisal policy. Setting pay of the Accounting Officer/CEO is decided by the remuneration committee made up of Trustees and in accordance with the guidance contained in the Academy Trust Handbook.

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Trustees' Report (continued)
For the Year Ended 31 August 2025

Structure, governance and management (continued)

h. Trade union facility time

Relevant union officials

Number of employees who were relevant union officials during the year	6
Full-time equivalent employee number	4

Percentage of time spent on facility time

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

Percentage of pay bill spent on facility time **£**

Total cost of facility time	1,386
Total pay bill	19,590,713
Percentage of total pay bill spent on facility time	- %

Paid trade union activities

Time spent on paid trade union activities as a percentage of total paid facility time hours	12 %
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i. Trade Union facility time

The Academy Trust has entered into a local agreement with Stoke on Trent City Council for the delivery of Trade Union facility time.

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Trustees' Report (continued)
For the Year Ended 31 August 2025

Structure, governance and management (continued)

j. Engagement with employees (including disabled persons)

Orchard Community Trust recognises that our staff are fundamental to the success of our schools and the fulfilment of our vision to *Flourish Together*. We are committed to open communication, collaboration, and inclusion across all areas of the Trust, ensuring that employees are informed, involved, and supported in contributing to our shared goals.

The Trust has an Equality and Diversity policy where we recognise the importance of valuing and promoting equality and diversity for all employees and job applicants and avoiding unlawful discrimination in employment and delivery of services. The policy states that the Trust will not discriminate against employees based on age, disability, gender reassignment, marital or civil partner status, pregnancy or maternity, race, religion or belief, sex or sexual orientation (the protected characteristics).

Our Staff Well-being Charter along with the Orchard People Strategy align our values to our vision ensuring that our staff are well looked after, cared for and valued in all that they do. This support extends beyond the workplace with the introduction of the employee wellbeing app allowing all employees access to external services for health and wellbeing.

The principles of nondiscrimination also apply to how we expect our employees to treat other employees, pupils, parents and carers, visitors, clients, customers, suppliers and former employees regardless of whether the legal protection of having a protected characteristic applies.

During this reporting period, Headteachers and members of the Executive team have been offered pure coaching to assist in the delivery and understanding of our teaching, learning and curriculum principles across the wider MAT.

Providing employees with information on matters of concern

The Trust maintains a strong focus on communication and transparency. Information is shared regularly through staff briefings, newsletters, the Trust intranet, and leadership meetings. Staff are updated on key developments, Trust priorities, and matters affecting their roles. Senior leaders maintain an open-door approach, ensuring that employees can raise concerns, ask questions, and contribute ideas in an atmosphere of trust and mutual respect.

Consultation and consideration of employee views

We value the voice of our staff. Consultation takes place through formal and informal mechanisms, including staff surveys, working groups, and engagement sessions with school and Trust leaders. Where organisational changes are proposed, employees and their representatives are consulted to ensure that their views are considered before decisions are made. This collaborative approach reflects our belief that we truly *Flourish Together* when everyone has a voice.

Encouraging involvement in performance and development

All employees are encouraged to play an active part in the life and performance of their school and the wider Trust. Staff are engaged in curriculum development, cross-school collaboration, and the sharing of best practice. Regular professional development and leadership opportunities are provided through our *Flourish Leadership Pathway* and Trust-wide training programmes, supporting staff wellbeing, confidence, and career progression.

Building awareness of performance factors

The Trust ensures that all staff understand the key factors influencing organisational performance and improvement. Termly updates, Trust development days, and leadership briefings communicate our strategic aims, financial context, and educational outcomes. This shared awareness fosters a culture of accountability, collaboration, and continuous

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Trustees' Report (continued)
For the Year Ended 31 August 2025

Structure, governance and management (continued)

Engagement with employees (including disabled persons) (continued)

improvement.

Employment and support of disabled persons

Orchard Community Trust is committed to equality of opportunity and to the fair treatment of all employees, including those with disabilities. Applications from disabled persons are considered on the basis of ability and aptitude. Where an existing employee becomes disabled, the Trust takes all reasonable steps to ensure that employment continues, including making appropriate workplace adjustments and providing additional training and support. Career development and promotion opportunities are accessible to all employees regardless of disability.

Through these actions, Orchard Community Trust continues to develop a positive, inclusive, and collaborative working culture in which all colleagues regardless of role or background.

When looking at employee-related policies the Trust will, through a local arrangement with Stoke on Trent City Council, consult with union officials to ensure views of employees are represented.

Recruitment and retention of great staff remains a priority for the MAT. Upon appointment employees are encouraged to be involved in the Trust's performance through active engagement in internal network groups. Furthermore, the Trust is active in raising awareness of factors that affect the performance of the Trust through the Headteachers' Executive Board.

During this reporting period, the induction of new Headteachers of Watermill School, Oakhill Primary School and Forest Park Primary School has been successful.

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Trustees' Report (continued)
For the Year Ended 31 August 2025

Structure, governance and management (continued)

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

As a Trust we recognise the value of our business relationships. The Trust engages with suppliers and customers in an open and transparent way to develop relationships based on trust and mutual understanding. In engaging with suppliers, the Trust follows its procurement policy, aligned to public procurement regulations and the Academy Trust Handbook.

Orchard Community Trust recognises that strong, ethical, and collaborative relationships with suppliers, service partners, local authorities, and our wider community are essential to achieving our vision to *Flourish Together*. The Trust is committed to working with integrity, transparency, and fairness in all business and partnership arrangements.

During this reporting period, the trustees of OCT have agreed to the expansion of Watermill School to increase the PAN by 70 SEND places in support of the LA following assurances received in place funding.

Engagement with suppliers

The Trust values long-term, sustainable relationships with its suppliers and seeks to work with organisations that share our values of quality, responsibility, and social purpose. Procurement processes follow the Trust's Financial Regulations and the Academy Trust Handbook, ensures fairness, value for money, and compliance with public procurement standards.

We maintain open communication with suppliers, pay invoices promptly in line with agreed terms, and prioritise local or socially responsible suppliers wherever possible to support the regional economy.

Engagement with customers, beneficiaries and partners

Our "customers" are primarily our pupils, families, and communities. We actively engage with them through parent and pupil voice activities, community events, and trust-wide surveys. Feedback from these stakeholders informs service delivery, curriculum design, and strategic decision-making across our academies. We also maintain close relationships with local authorities, diocesan partners, and other educational organisations to ensure effective collaboration, compliance, and best practice sharing.

Engagement with funders and other stakeholders

The Trust engages regularly with the Department for Education (DfE) and other funders to ensure accountability, transparency, and good stewardship of public funds. We also work in partnership with local businesses, community groups, and charitable organisations to enhance opportunities for pupils and to promote social impact.

Community relationships and wider social impact

In keeping with our vision, we aim to contribute positively to the wider community. This includes initiatives such as volunteering, and shared use of school facilities. Our schools serve as hubs of community life, strengthening relationships and promoting mutual benefit between the Trust and the local areas we serve.

Through ethical procurement, transparent communication, and strong partnerships with our suppliers, stakeholders, and community, Orchard Community Trust ensures that all business relationships reflect our core values of integrity, inclusion, and shared flourishing.

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Trustees' Report (continued)
For the Year Ended 31 August 2025

Structure, governance and management (continued)

I. Related parties and other connected charities and organisations

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. All transactions involving such organisations are conducted in accordance with the requirements of the Academy Trust Handbook, including notifying the DfE of all transactions made on or after 1 April 2019 and obtaining their approval where required, and with the Academy Trust's financial regulations and normal procurement procedures relating to connected and related part transactions.

No related party transactions took place in the period of accounts, other than certain trustees' remuneration and expenses already disclosed in the notes to the financial statements.

Objectives and activities

Our vision

As a Trust, we strive to create an inclusive environment that values diversity and equality, where all beliefs are respected. We are committed to providing our children with an exceptional education, inspiring them to cultivate a love of learning and empowering them with a strong foundation to thrive and accomplish their goals in life.

Moral Purpose

Orchard Community Trust is fully committed to improving the life chances of all children, wherever they may be. This moral obligation, our mission, does not end at the school gates, within our own Local Authorities, or even within our own country. Where we have the capacity to make a difference, we are morally bound to do so.

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Trustees' Report (continued)
For the Year Ended 31 August 2025

Objectives and activities (continued)

a. Objects and aims

Orchard Community Trust exists to provide high-quality, inclusive education to all children and young people within its schools. The vision reflects our commitment to enabling every child to achieve their full potential academically, socially, and personally. The Trust's moral purpose is to improve life chances for all pupils, guided by values of **trust, respect, integrity, learning, openness, diversity, cooperation, and achievement**.

The Trust aims to:

- Provide an exceptional education that inspires curiosity, ambition, and a lifelong love of learning.
- Promote inclusion, equality, and respect for diversity across all its schools.
- Support the holistic development of pupils through cultural, spiritual, sporting, and creative experiences.
- Work collaboratively with staff, parents, governors, and the wider community to enhance educational provision

We continue to work in partnership as a group of schools in order to ensure that all of the learning needs of the diverse range of children and young people we serve are effectively met via high quality provision, great leadership and outward facing developments.

We expect all members of Orchard Community Trust to respect and model all of the above vision and values at all times.

These values form the basis of initial discussions with all prospective Orchard Community Trust schools and with potential employees of Orchard Community Trust.

All staff, members, trustees, governors, volunteers, parents and carers have a duty and responsibility to be encouraging and supportive of each other. All our schools have a "can do" culture and fully collaborative ethos.

Everyone associated with the Trust and its schools is expected to aim for excellence in their individual professional roles.

In the best traditions of the profession all staff are prepared to go the extra mile to provide the best possible education for their pupils. The interests, opinions and voices of the children are paramount and guide all that we seek to do and achieve.

We have a responsibility to ensure that every moment a child is in an Orchard Community Trust school that they enjoy learning and strive hard to achieve well and fulfil their maximum potential.

Staff at our academies have the opportunity to participate in our full range of training programmes and to work with each other via networks and groups across the MAT. These are effectively led by both Headteachers, Deputy Headteachers and Assistant Headteachers from our schools. Opportunities are given to all staff to engage in a range of high quality CPD and career development programmes. We also fully recognise the talents and skills of staff and volunteers in our schools and are fully committed to the development of all staff in the MAT. Our range of staff expertise is shared across our schools via collaborative working to ensure best practice is celebrated and made available to all. The philosophy of schooltooschool support, challenge and collaboration is at the heart of the way the Orchard Community Trust operates and improves.

Working in partnership with Orchard Community Trust has a number of key benefits for children, staff, governors and school communities and these are shared on our Trust website so that potential new schools can see the benefits of

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Trustees' Report (continued)
For the Year Ended 31 August 2025

Objectives and activities (continued)

joining our Trust.

Orchard Community Trust continues to believe that education is a preparation for life and, in the spirit of inclusion, respect and safeguarding, we seek to prepare each child to face life beyond the school with confidence, skill and ability to be resilient, to cope and thus to succeed.

Within our Trust Primary and Special Schools:

- We aim to set high standards for personal behaviour and selfregulation, and to promote courtesy, cooperation, consideration and respect for other people of all ages, gender, races, cultures, abilities and backgrounds.
- We aspire to deliver exciting and quality learning experiences in safe, secure and happy environments.
- We endeavour to achieve the very highest standards in every aspect of school life, by making the most efficient use of all the resources available.

b. Objectives, strategies and activities

The Trust's objectives are implemented through coordinated strategies and detailed action plans aligned with the **Trust Strategic Development Plan**, School Improvement Strategies, Business Plan, People Strategy, SEND Strategy, and Staff Charter. Key priorities for 2024/25 include:

1. Strengthening the Trust's vision and values across all schools.
2. Improving pupil progress, attainment, and closing gaps in learning.
3. Promoting social mobility, aspiration, and well-being for pupils and staff.
4. Supporting inclusion, SEND provision, and safeguarding across the Trust.

Activities to deliver these objectives include:

- Monitoring and supporting school development plans to ensure progress against educational priorities.
- Using Trust-wide networks and CPD programmes to share best practice and foster professional development.
- Engaging with pupils, parents, and the local community to inform decision-making and strengthen partnerships.
- Allocating funding, including Pupil Premium and catch-up/recovery grants, to maximise impact on pupil outcomes.
- Implementing initiatives such as the Peacemakers and Peacekeepers programmes to develop personal skills, resilience, and positive community engagement.

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Trustees' Report (continued)
For the Year Ended 31 August 2025

Objectives and activities (continued)

c. Public benefit

In planning its activities, the Trustees have had regard to the Charity Commission's guidance on public benefit. The Trust's activities provide clear benefits to the public by:

- Ensuring all pupils receive a high-quality education tailored to their needs.
- Promoting personal development, wellbeing, and social responsibility.
- Offering access to extra-curricular, cultural, and community-focused learning experiences.
- Sharing resources, expertise, and best practice across schools to enhance education provision Trust-wide.

By delivering these activities, Orchard Community Trust ensures that its objectives are met in a manner that provides demonstrable benefit to pupils, families, staff, and the wider community, in line with its charitable purpose.

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Trustees' Report (continued)
For the Year Ended 31 August 2025

Strategic report

Achievements and performance

Orchard Community Trust is a multi-academy trust established to provide high-quality, inclusive education across its primary and special schools. Our vision reflects our commitment to enabling all pupils to reach their full potential academically, socially, and personally. The Trust operates for the public benefit in line with its charitable objects and the guidance published by the Charity Commission. The Trustees confirm that they have had due regard to this guidance in exercising their powers and duties.

The Trust's principal object, as set out in its governing document, is to advance education for children and young people to:

- Deliver high-quality education tailored to individual pupil needs.
- Promote inclusion, respect, and equality across all schools.
- Support pupils' personal, social, and emotional development alongside academic attainment.
- Strengthen communities through engagement, collaboration, and shared learning.

In 2024/25, the Trust focused on:

1. Strengthening the Trust vision and values across all schools.
2. Improving pupil progress, attainment, and closing learning gaps.
3. Enhancing pupil and staff wellbeing and fostering social mobility.
4. Developing inclusive practice, SEND provision, and safeguarding.

Strategies and Activities

To achieve these objectives, the Trust:

- Monitored and supported school development plans aligned to Trust-wide priorities.
- Delivered professional development and leadership programmes across all schools.
- Allocated Pupil Premium, catch-up/recovery, and other funding to maximise impact.
- Implemented initiatives such as Peacemakers and Peacekeepers to enhance personal development and community engagement.
- Engaged parents, local communities, and partners in shaping school provision and strategic priorities.

Achievements and Key Performance Indicators

Orchard Community Trust measures success using a range of academic, operational, and wellbeing indicators:

- Educational outcomes: Progress and attainment at key stages in reading, writing, and mathematics; closing attainment gaps.
- Ofsted outcomes: Inspections and internal reviews demonstrating quality of education and school improvement.
- Pupil engagement: Attendance rates, engagement in enrichment activities, and inclusion of SEND pupils.
- Staff development: Participation in CPD, leadership training, and cross-school collaboration.
- Financial performance: Effective use of resources, value for money, and adherence to the Business Plan and ESFA guidance.
- Community impact: Engagement with local partners, parents, and stakeholders through projects and initiatives.

Public Benefit

All activities undertaken are designed to provide clear public benefit by:

- Delivering high-quality education that meets diverse pupil needs.
- Supporting personal development, wellbeing, and social responsibility.
- Enabling pupils to become confident, resilient, and prepared for life beyond school.

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Trustees' Report (continued)
For the Year Ended 31 August 2025

Strategic report (continued)

Achievements and performance (continued)

a. Key performance indicators

Pupil outcomes in each of our primary schools in 2025 are as follows:

2025 Pupil Outcomes - Unvalidated

	Abbey Hutor Primary			Etruscan Primary			Forest Park Primary			Oakhill Primary			St Mark's CE Primary		
	2023	2024	2025	2023	2024	2025	2023	2024	2025	2023	2024	2025	2023	2024	2025
EYF5 GLD	50	41	53	47	45	59	46	45	52	52	55	64	45	53	51
Y1 Phonics Wa	39	53	71	55	55	61	25	75	63	81	64	63	50	64	70
Y2 Phonics Wa	69	77	90	100	76	61	89	90	87	91	93	95	70	84	84
Average Score - Y4 MTC	22	19.5	21	18.6	19.5	16.9	18.9	20.2	20.4	22.6	22.6	22.5	19.8	16.7	20.4
KS2 Reading Exp	47	55	59	60	60	60	61	69	67	75	65	72	45	35	43
KS2 Writing Exp	57	61	65	43	55	37	71	69	75	67	64	69	55	53	56
KS2 Maths Exp	47	55	67	67	50	45	61	64	77	75	79	75	29	45	62
KS2 GPS Exp	57	55	70	74	62	55	71	64	70	70	73	81	57	62	66
KS2 RW/V Exp	40	45	48	40	43	30	47	55	60	62	61	58	22	30	44
KS2 Reading GD	10	18	20	14	14	12	12	17	15	20	20	23	2	12	13
KS2 Writing GD	3	6	5	17	5	5	7	7	8	3	15	14	5	5	5
KS2 Maths GD	3	6	10	12	10	5	5	15	20	15	31	19	5	10	16
KS2 GPS GD	23	26	17	40	22	10	24	26	30	31	37	30	5	16	33
KS2 RW/V GD	3	0	0	5	3	3	0	0	2	5	12	5	2	2	2

The 2025 outcomes for pupils reflect some pleasing results where the dark green boxes show improvements over the past 12 month period with the light green showing the comparisons over a 2-year trend. There remains much work to do to maintain the forward trajectory of outcomes.

Orchard Community Trust faces many contextual challenges including high pupil mobility, with some schools once again experiencing over 100 pupils coming and going each year. There remains no formal assessments to national data for our 2 Special Schools. Trustees have access to a range of internal data for all 7 schools which they discuss and challenge at the OCT Curriculum, Standards and Quality Committee. The OCT data group has also continued its work this year regarding data tracking, moderation and system consistency. Termly data on pupil performance remains available for trustees to scrutinise and challenge.

Attendance in each school for academic year 2024/25 was as follows:

	Abbey Hutor Primary		Etruscan Primary		Forest Park Primary		Oakhill Primary		St Mark's CE Primary		Kumball School		Watermill School	
	2024	2025	2024	2025	2024	2025	2024	2025	2024	2025	2024	2025	2024	2025
Attendance	92.60%	91.84%	92.95%	91.63%	93.05%	92.41%	93.71%	94.21	93.30%	93.65%	86.59%	87.10%	87.56%	88.13%
Authorised Attendance	3.59%	4.20%	4.01%	4.50%	4.64%	4.90%	4.38%	4.20%	4.42%	3.70%	11.22%	11.10%	9.45%	9.70%
Unauthorised Attendance	3.31%	3.90%	3.03%	3.90%	2.32%	2.70%	1.91%	1.60%	2.28%	2.40%	2.19%	1.80%	2.99%	2.20%

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Trustees' Report (continued)
For the Year Ended 31 August 2025

Strategic report (continued)

Achievements and performance (continued)

School	Attendance	Authorised absence	Unauthorised absence
St Marks CofE Primary School (376)	93.3%	4.42%	2.28%
Kemball School (188)	86.59%	11.22%	2.19%
Etruscan Primary School (376)	92.95%	4.01%	3.03%
Abbey Hulton Primary School (181)	92.8%	3.89%	3.31%
Watermill School (211)	87.56%	9.45%	2.99%
Forest Park Primary School (386)	93.05%	4.64%	2.31%
Oakhill Primary School (380)	93.71%	4.38%	1.91%

Our Trust used a range of successful strategies and in 2024/25 included access to the Education Welfare Officer Service, 1st day calling, attendance reviews, attendance rewards, letters to parents, working with pupils on the importance of attendance, collecting pupils from home, use of schoolbased welfare and attendance teams the issuing of fines for absence.

The Trust recognises that improving pupil attendance in our schools is a key priority for all our academies. Updated and developed plans are in place, with timescales for those academies where attendance has historically fallen below the national average and where persistent absence is high. Schools monitor attendance rigorously to ensure that all pupils continue to attend school regularly. The MAT has also begun work with external attendance specialists (inclusive attendance) and will be monitored from September 2025 for the duration of the academic year.

The Trust Board Committee allocates a designated trustee as the link for safeguarding. As part of the Trustee meetings, safeguarding is reported.

The MAT continues to oversee the procedures in place for safeguarding and inclusion through designated senior leaders at the centre.

All 7 schools are safe and accessible to all pupils during the year and have detailed plans and risk assessments in place, details of which are shared with staff, Governors and Trustees. There will be a continued major focus on ensuring that the needs of all pupils are fully met and that the curriculum is fit for purpose, exciting and challenging. The introduction of the OCT Curriculum principles and curriculum audits have ensured consistency in approaches to teaching and learning, and subject leadership expectations.

Schools continue to ensure learning has been challenging for all pupils and extends their embedded knowledge and understanding. Our schools have worked relentlessly on this and this can be seen in some of the outcomes for 2025 in

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Trustees' Report (continued)
For the Year Ended 31 August 2025

Strategic report (continued)

Achievements and performance (continued)

terms of progress.

Orchard Community Trust is fully aware of the continued challenges it faces in its schools with improving outcomes for children and young people and continues to put in place strategies to accelerate progress. We continue to have a strong and focused school improvement strategy with monitoring, evaluation and support offerings in place. The schools have shown some improvements in performance in 2025 but raising standards via high quality leadership in schools and the provision of a high quality education remain the main priorities for the Trust into the new academic year. The focus on raising standards is clearly linked to the MAT development plan and is at the heart of the work all our schools do.

The use of technology and the integration of AI and digital devices has been a particular success with migration of school data to cloud-based solutions being completed fully and the strategy of moving to individual devices to support teaching and learning is progressing well. This will remain a high focus area to align across the MAT.

Ofsted inspections:

Both St Mark's Primary and Etruscan Primary received Ofsted Inspections during the Academic Year, with positive outcomes in both and that which reflected the accurate self-evaluations made of the schools and by the executives of the MAT.

All schools continue to receive internal and external reviews of provision as part of the OCT offer. Significant developments have been seen particularly in CPD and staff development. Schools updated SEFs and SDPs reflect the areas of focus and development well, with clear costed action plans with KPIs to measure progress and success.

School reviews are followed with clear reports produced by internal/external reviewers and an action plan produced by school leaders then address any identified areas for improvement.

Internal subject peer reviews continued to be very effective and have led to sharing of expertise and ideas, as have the internal Headteacher peer to peer reviews, focusing on aspects of school provision. From this, talent mapping has been completed across the MAP and "Boundary Spanning Partners" have been identified.

Network opportunities continued through the course of the year inclusive of: Headteacher networks and drop in sessions, Deputy and Assistant Headteachers working groups, safeguarding leads, SENCOs, RE leaders and subject leader CPD sessions. This year we have also seen new opportunities for Christian distinctiveness networking, sustainability groups, health and wellbeing, EYFS leaders and site staff CPD. These are strong groups and continue to help to shape Trust wide activity and policies.

The Trust has also continued with the commitment of looking to external trainer led development sessions along with engagement in attending regional and National conferences from EYFS, Leadership development, contracts and procurement and teaching and learning.

Our detailed analysis of pupil data, test outcomes, attendance data and any relevant Ofsted and external review outcomes show that funds have been used in our schools to appropriately meet the needs of the children and young people during this reporting period. These include pupil premium, sport premium funding, catch up and recovery

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Trustees' Report (continued)
For the Year Ended 31 August 2025

Strategic report (continued)

Achievements and performance (continued)

funding. School improvement plans in each school have had an appropriate allocation of funds to support each priority within them. All the agreed and approved Trust financial policies and procedures have been adopted by each academy and adhered to. The Central Team supports and challenges the schools in relation to governance and compliance, financial planning, HR, estates management, health and safety and school improvement and safeguarding.

SIAMS Inspection:

There have been no Siams Inspections for this reporting period. However St Mark's Primary did join a local Church Network of Primary schools linked to a local MAT. The diocese have been informed of this amazing opportunity and the children are actively engaged in the child led worship groups linked to this.

b. 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, they continue to adopt the going concern basis in preparing the financial statements. Further details regarding the adoption of the going concern basis can be found in the accounting policies.

The Chief Executive Officer, together with Trustees, has monitored and evaluated the implementation and impact of each school's development plan for the academic year. This includes an evaluation of the impact of the work done against each priority and progress each school has made towards their targets and KPI's.

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Trustees' Report (continued)
For the Year Ended 31 August 2025

Strategic report (continued)

Achievements and performance (continued)

c. Promoting the success of the company

In accordance with section 172(1) of the Companies Act 2006, the directors of Orchard Community Trust have acted in a way that they consider most likely to promote the success of the company, in line with the charity's objectives and in the best interests of its members. In doing so, the directors have had regard to the factors set out in section 172(1)(a)-(f), which are considered of strategic importance to the Trust.

In particular, the directors have considered:

Long-term consequences: Considered the likely impact of decisions on the Trust's long-term sustainability, including educational outcomes, financial stability, and strategic growth.

Employee interests: Ensured that the wellbeing, development, and engagement of staff are taken into account in key operational and strategic decisions.

Business relationships: Maintained constructive and effective relationships with suppliers, partners, and other stakeholders to support the delivery of the Trust's objectives.

Community and environmental impact: Taken into account the broader impact of the Trust's operations on the local community and the environment, supporting initiatives that enhance social and environmental outcomes.

Reputation for high standards: Ensured that decisions uphold the Trust's reputation for integrity, transparency, and high standards of governance and conduct and have acted on guidance and advice throughout the year.

Fairness between members: Acted fairly and consistently between members, maintaining an inclusive approach to decision-making and oversight.

As a result the Trust continues to be active in introducing measures to promote the success of the organisation, both with internal and external stakeholders.

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Trustees' Report (continued)
For the Year Ended 31 August 2025

Strategic report (continued)

Achievements and performance (continued)

d. Community and the environment

Orchard Community Trust schools operate at the heart of several local communities within the City of Stoke on Trent. Our commitment to improve the life chances of children goes beyond education in the classroom. Trust schools actively work with families to support them in a wide variety of matters, to include:

- facilitating food vouchers for families during holiday
- donations to food banks
- charity fundraising
- access to parental classes
- welfare support for families
- signposting families to support agencies

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Trustees' Report (continued)
For the Year Ended 31 August 2025

Strategic report (continued)

Financial review

The main streams of funding during the year were grants from the DfE and the Local Authority (LA). All grants received from the DfE and the LA during the period and the associated expenditure are shown as restricted general funds in the Statement of Financial Activities. During the year ended 31 August 2025, the Academy Trust has restricted general funds income of £25,016,528 (excluding LGPS pension movements and capital grants) and associated expenditure of £25,596,145 (excluding LGPS pension movements and depreciation charge).

The Academy Trust has unrestricted income totals £556,923 for the year and related expenditure of £229,969.

At 31 August 2025 the net book value of fixed assets was £34,356,049 and the movement in tangible fixed assets are shown in the Financial Statements. The assets were used exclusively for providing education and the associated support services to the students of the Academy Trust.

The Local Government Pension Scheme (LGPS) liability at the 31 August 2025 totalled £nil.

At 31 August 2025 the funds of the Academy Trust were as follows: £1,026,479 included in general restricted funds, £34,883,607 included in restricted fixed assets funds, balance of £nil included in the restricted pension reserve and £353,240 included in unrestricted fund.

a. Reserves policy

The Academy Trust has a Reserves Policy which states that the Trust target is to have one month's operating costs held in reserves. The purpose of the reserves is to ensure financial stability and allow the Trust to adjust quickly to changing financial circumstances when necessary. The total value of funds held by the Trust at the end of the financial year is £36,263,326.

The value of free reserves held (unrestricted funds) as at the 31 August 2025 is £353,240.

The value of restricted general funds as at the 31 August 2025 is £1,026,479.

At 31 August 2025 the restricted fixed asset fund amounted to £34,883,607, which included the net book value of fixed assets of £34,356,049 and £527,558 of unspent capital grant income.

The Local Government Pensions Scheme (LGPS) reserve at 31 August 2025 totalled £nil.

b. Investment policy

Investments will be made in accordance with the Financial Regulations policy. Currently, there are no investments.

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Trustees' Report (continued)
For the Year Ended 31 August 2025

c. Principal risks and uncertainties

The trustees of Orchard Community Trust have identified and assessed the principal risks and uncertainties that could affect the charity's ability to deliver its objectives and maintain its long-term viability. These risks are reviewed regularly and are managed through the Trust's robust risk management framework, which is overseen by the Board of Trustees.

The Board Assurance Framework and Corporate Risk Register remain a central point of reference for Trustees to gain assurances of Executive leaders working well to mitigate risks in the key identified areas.

These include:

Operational and Educational Risks:

Risks relating to the quality of education, safeguarding, and operational continuity are monitored through regular internal reviews, performance monitoring, and compliance checks. The Trust has policies and procedures in place to ensure that staff are adequately trained and that all statutory requirements are met. Cyber security has been a high focus of risk analysis and mitigations throughout this academic year.

Financial Risks:

The Trust faces financial risks including budgetary pressures and particularly around SEND funding. Risks to future changes in government funding, and cost fluctuations. These are managed through careful financial planning, monitoring of cash flow, and maintaining appropriate reserves.

Estate and Compliance Risks:

Trustees are responsible for ensuring that the Trust's estate is safe, well maintained, and compliant with all relevant regulations. Regular inspections, maintenance programmes, and statutory compliance checks are conducted to mitigate risks relating to health and safety, environmental regulations, and property management. The development of Asset Management Plans started during this reporting period. The risk of the Estate has been highlighted due to the 25-Year-old PFI contract coming to an end in the first term of the next academic year.

Reputational Risks:

Decisions made by the Trust may affect its reputation and stakeholder confidence. The Board seeks to maintain high standards of governance, transparency, and conduct to safeguard the Trust's standing in the community and with regulatory bodies.

Pension Liabilities:

The Trust participates in defined benefit pension schemes. This is monitored regularly, and actuarial assessments are reviewed to ensure the Trust can meet its long-term obligations.

The Trust's risk management process includes regular review of risk registers, reporting to the Board, and the implementation of mitigating actions. This approach ensures that significant risks are identified early and managed effectively, supporting the Trust's long-term sustainability and strategic objectives.

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Trustees' Report (continued)
For the Year Ended 31 August 2025

Fundraising

Orchard Community Trust is committed to ensuring that all fundraising activities are conducted in an ethical, transparent, and responsible manner, in accordance with the Charities (Protection and Social Investment) Act 2016 and relevant Charity Commission guidance (CC20).

The Trust's approach to fundraising includes:

Approach to fundraising: Fundraising is carried out primarily by the Trust itself (the Schools) and focuses on supporting educational activities, capital projects, and other charitable objectives.

Oversight of professional fundraisers: The Trust does not use any external professional fundraisers or commercial participators.

Standards and compliance: All fundraising activities conform to recognised standards, including relevant guidance from the Charity Commission and other sector best practice.

Monitoring and accountability: Trustees oversee all fundraising initiatives to ensure transparency, compliance, and that activities are aligned with the Trust's charitable objectives.

Fundraising complaints: No complaints regarding fundraising were received during the year. Any concerns raised would be addressed promptly and thoroughly in line with the Trust's policies.

Protection of the public: The Trust ensures that all fundraising is conducted respectfully, avoiding unreasonably intrusive or persistent approaches and preventing undue pressure on potential donors, including vulnerable individuals.

Streamlined energy and carbon reporting

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

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Trustees' Report (continued)
For the Year Ended 31 August 2025

Plans for future periods

Following the retirement of the previous Senior Executive Leader and the appointment of a new Chief Executive Officer in September 2024, Orchard Community Trust is entering a new phase of strategic development. Under the leadership of the new CEO, the Trust is embarking on a period of renewal focused on refreshing its vision, values, and culture to ensure that all staff and stakeholders share a clear and consistent understanding of the Trust's direction and purpose.

This next phase of Orchard Community Trust is that growth will place a strong emphasis on distributed leadership, collaboration, and shared accountability across all schools within the Trust. The strategic plan will prioritise:

Embedding a revised vision and set of values that reflect inclusivity, ambition, and excellence for all pupils and staff.

Building leadership capacity at all levels to empower staff, reduce dependency on central figures, and develop sustainable leadership pipelines across schools.

Enhancing collaboration and reducing duplication through the centralisation of key MAT functions, improving efficiency and consistency in areas such as HR, finance, estates, governance, and compliance.

Investing in digital infrastructure to support high-quality teaching, effective communication, data-driven decision-making, and streamlined operational systems.

Strengthening organisational culture through the promotion of professional learning communities, cross-school collaboration, and shared resources.

The Trustees' vision for the next planning period builds upon the Trust's successes to date but recognises the need for renewed strategic focus to ensure sustainability, consistency, and continued improvement in pupil outcomes. Lessons learned from the past six years—particularly in developing effective governance, improving standards, and supporting school leadership—have shaped the Trust's new direction and priorities.

The **Trust's strategic objectives** will therefore centre on:

Vision, Values and Culture: Embed the revised vision and values across all schools to create a unified, collaborative Trust culture built on integrity, inclusion, and excellence.

Leadership and Governance and Capacity Building: Develop leadership and Governance capacity at all levels through professional development, distributed leadership models, and shared expertise that acts on advice and seeks opportunities to improve and share practice.

Educational Excellence: Continue to raise standards through a rich and inclusive curriculum, high-quality teaching, and targeted school improvement support.

Operational Efficiency and Sustainability: Centralise key MAT functions, share resources, and streamline processes to achieve greater consistency, cost-efficiency, and long-term sustainability.

Digital Innovation: Upgrade and enhance digital infrastructure to improve access to technology, support blended learning, and ensure efficient Trust-wide communication and data management.

Staff and Pupil Wellbeing: Strengthen wellbeing strategies for all stakeholders, ensuring that every school fosters an

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Trustees' Report (continued)
For the Year Ended 31 August 2025

Plans for future periods (continued)

environment where people feel valued, supported, and able to thrive.

The Trustees are confident that the new leadership, refreshed vision, and strategic priorities will position the Trust strongly for the future, ensuring that all schools deliver high-quality education and that the Trust continues to have a positive impact on the children, families, and communities it serves.

Funds held as custodian on behalf of others

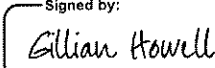
The Trust and its Trustees did not act as a custodian trustee during the period.

Disclosure of information to auditors

Insofar as the Trustees are aware:

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

The Trustees' Report, incorporating a strategic report, was approved by order of the Board of Trustees, as the company directors, on 11 December 2025 and signed on its behalf by:

Signed by:

1908BBB57FC8489...
Mrs G Howell
Chair of Trustees

Orchard Community Trust
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Governance Statement

Scope of responsibility

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

The Board of Trustees are also responsible for keeping proper accounts for the Trust which disclose, with reasonable accuracy at any time, the financial position of the Trust and which enable the Trust's financial statements to be compliant with the Companies Act in internal control.

As Trustees, we have reviewed and taken account of the guidance in DfE's Governance Guide.

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

Governance

The information on governance included here supplements that described in the Trustees' Report and in the Statement of Trustees' Responsibilities. The Board of Trustees has formally met 6 times during the year.

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

Trustee	Meetings attended	Out of a possible
Mr S Thomson, Accounting Officer	6	6
Ms S Thomas, Vice Chair	5	6
Mrs M A S Tatton	5	6
Mrs L E Maden	5	6
Mr N C Carter	5	6
Ms R Fagan	5	6
Ms G Howell, Chair of Trustees	6	6
Mr S Lawley	4	6
Ms C Higgs	5	6
Mrs R Vaughan-Calkin	5	6
Mr C Sheeran	3	6

Orchard Community Trust Board of Trustees are accountable to the DfE for its outcomes and successes and the achievement of its aims and objectives and as such has ultimate decision making. The Board of Trustees delegates its management of the Trust to the Chief Executive Officer and the Chief Finance Officer on a day-to-day basis. They oversee the strategic direction of the Trust and its academies to ensure that all academies in the Trust are run effectively via the agreed scheme of delegation and to anticipate and manage risk to the Trust. The CEO is a key bridge between the Trust Board, the Headteachers' Executive Board and each of the academies.

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Governance Statement (continued)

Governance (continued)

The Trust has in place a scheme of delegation and each academy has its own Local Governing Board. The LGB is responsible for key aspects of the scheme of delegation including: school improvement planning, monitoring and evaluating performance of staff and pupils, safeguarding, health and safety, budget planning and oversight. The LGB delegates these and other key responsibilities on a day-to-day basis to the Headteacher of the academy, who has control and responsibility regarding ensuring that all legal and statutory requirements are met.

The Board of Trustees and each LGB have completed an annual skills audit to ensure that the skill and knowledge set on each board is complete and appropriate to the ends of the Trust and its academies. The Trust Board have once again undertaken an internal annual review of effectiveness and are measuring themselves against the key indicators of high performing MATs and is looking at ways in which it can further develop and improve in the future. An action plan has been produced by the Trust Board in response to the internal self-review and is monitored and evaluated regularly. The action plan governs the work of the Trustees and is helping to strengthen governance across the MAT.

Key activities currently for the Central Team continue as follows:

- Ensuring that the Trust Board have all the necessary information to monitor the work of the Trust and its academies effectively
- Supporting the Headteachers Executive Board, which meets every month
- Implementing with schools the agreed MAT development plans, policies and strategies which support the efficient and effective running of our schools and improved outcomes for all pupils
- Ensuring compliance with relevant policies
- Meet with each Headteacher at least twice each term to review the progress of the Academy and provide support and challenge, including lesson observations, learning walks, book and planning scrutinies and to organise the Academy annual review and Headteachers' performance management with members of each LGB
- Collecting pupil progress data each term and analyse it to track progress against agreed targets
- Brokering appropriate leadership development training for the academies as needed
- Support the planning and delivery of joint Trust INSET days for all schools
- Supporting schools with their business management. Including HR, finance, estates, health and safety
- Working alongside school leaders and teachers in subject developments linked to teaching and learning.

Governance reviews:

As outlined, the Trust board monitors and evaluates its progress and performance on an ongoing basis throughout the year and involves an internal evaluation of progress against its development plan, its key performance indicators and a review carried out through the trustee impact statements introduced this year. The Trust Board may now commission an external review of its effectiveness to ensure objectivity of judgements. The Board has and will continue to look at best practice governance models from other successful Trusts and use this to further develop its effectiveness. Each Local Governing Board carries out an annual skills audit and internal selfreview in the Summer Term, with an overview of this developed by the Central Team and action plans put in place at each LGB with support from our Governance Professional.

The Trust Board and its committees:

The Trust Board consists of 11 Trustees. The Trust Board has met 6 times in this reporting period and focused on

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Governance Statement (continued)

Governance (continued)

continuing to ensure that appropriate Trust-wide policies and procedures are in place. These have focused on Governance structures, school improvement planning and strategies, financial policies and regulation and the monitoring and evaluation of the work of each academy. The committees of the Trust have also met 6 times this year covering items delegated to the committee by the Trust Board. An annual plan of activities is in place for the Trust Board and its committees and these govern the agenda and work completed at each meeting.

The Trust continues to work hard to ensure that all Trustees fully understand the nature of their role, the challenges our academies face and how they can effectively and efficiently carry out their roles and responsibilities as Trustees. The Trust Board have received a range of data related to each academy in the Trust and used this to challenge and support the work of the Executive Leaders and its academies.

Data streams to the Trustees this year were tailored to the needs of the Trust and its priorities were linked to the key Trust priorities and our agreed MAT KPI's.

The Audit, Risk and Resources Committee is a subcommittee of the main Board of Trustees. Its purpose is to advise the Board on matters relating to the Trust's finance and audit arrangements, systems of internal control and to advise and aid the Board's responsibility to ensure sound management of the Trust's finances and resources, including proper planning, monitoring and probity, risk management and matters related to the Trust estate.

Attendance during the year at meetings was as follows - ARR committee :

Trustee	Meetings attended	Out of a possible
Stephen Lawley	7	7
Mr S Thomson	5	7
Rosemary Vaughan-Calkin	7	7
Lorna Maden	6	7
Rosalyn Fagan	7	7
Gill Howell	6	7
Sue Thomas	6	7
Nick Carter	7	7
Cameron Sheeran	1	1

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Governance Statement (continued)

Governance (continued)

The Curriculum Standards Quality Committee is also a sub-committee of the main Board of Trustees and is where educational outcomes, school performance, attendance, progress and staff HR data is shared and scrutinised, challenged and interpreted.

Attendance during the year at meetings was as follows:

Trustee	Meetings attended	Out of a possible
Mr S Thomson	5	6
Margaret Tatton	5	6
Rosemary Vaughan	5	6
Sue Thomas	2	6
Gill Howell	6	6
Carolyn Higgs	4	6
Nick Carter	6	6
Cameron Sheeran	6	6

Review of value for money

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

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 where appropriate. The accounting officer for the Academy Trust has delivered improved value for money during the period by:

Strengthening operational efficiency through centralisation of key MAT functions, including finance, estates, compliance, contracts and procurement and school improvement systems, to reduce duplication, standardise processes, and achieve economies of scale.

Investing in enhanced digital infrastructure and technology, enabling improved data management, streamlined communication, and more effective use of staff time across schools, and through the commitment of 1.5% of funds allocated to technological advancements in schools.

Introducing a distributed leadership model to build capacity across all levels of the organisation, reducing reliance on external consultancy and increasing internal expertise.

Implementing robust procurement and benchmarking processes, ensuring best value when sourcing goods and services while maintaining high standards of quality and compliance.

Prioritising health, safety, and estate compliance, ensuring all Trust sites are safe, well maintained, and aligned with statutory and regulatory frameworks.

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Governance Statement (continued)

Review of value for money (continued)

Improving workforce efficiency and wellbeing through targeted professional development, improved systems for workload management, and greater collaboration across schools.

Enhancing curriculum and pupil outcomes by directing funding towards evidence-based teaching strategies, targeted intervention, and enrichment opportunities that improve both educational and social outcomes for pupils.

The Trust continues to use financial and performance benchmarking to compare costs and outcomes across schools, identifying opportunities to improve efficiency and effectiveness. Oversight by the Board of Trustees and Audit, Risk and Resources Committee ensures accountability and transparency in all financial decision-making.

Through these measures, the Trust has continued to deliver improved value for money while maintaining high educational standards.

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 Orchard Community Trust for the period 01 September 2024 to 31 August 2025 and up to the date of approval of the annual report and financial statements.

Capacity to handle risk

The Board of Trustees has reviewed the key risks to which the 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 2024 to 31 August 2025 and up to the date of approval of the annual report and financial statements. This process is regularly reviewed by the Board of Trustees. The Board of Trustees has in place a detailed board assurance and risk assessment process and this is reported on at each Board meeting. The embedding of the Board Assurance Framework and associated corporate risk register has been pivotal in overseeing risks in the following areas.

1. Governance and Leadership
2. Efficient and effective Business and Operation Functions
3. High Quality and Inclusive Education
4. School Improvement, Partnerships and Growth
5. Workforce, resilience and wellbeing.

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:

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Governance Statement (continued)

The risk and control framework (continued)

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

The Board of Trustees has decided to employ TIAA as internal auditor and Dains Audit Limited as their external auditor in order to achieve best value for money.

The internal auditors' role includes giving advice on financial matters and performing a range of checks on the Academy Trust's financial systems. In particular the checks carried out include:

- Testing on Payroll processes
- Testing on HR processes
- Testing on Cyber Security

On a termly basis, the internal auditor reports to the Board of Trustees, through the audit, risk and resources committee on the operation of the systems of control and on the discharge of the board of trustees' financial responsibilities. On and annual basis the auditors prepare a summary report to the committee outlining the areas reviewed, key findings, recommendations and conclusions to help the committee consider actions and assess year on year progress.

The Board of Trustees confirm that TIAA has delivered their schedule of work as planned during the financial year ending 31 August 2025 and issued detailed reports including recommendations.

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Governance Statement (continued)

Review of effectiveness

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

- the work of the
- the financial management and governance self-assessment process
- 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 auditors

The accounting officer has been advised of the implications of the result of their review of the system of internal control by the Audit, Risk and Resources committee and a plan to address weaknesses and ensure continuous improvement of the system is in place.

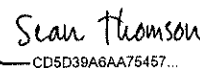
Conclusion

Based on the advice of the audit and risk 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.

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

Signed by:

1908BBB57FC6489...
Mrs G Howell
Chair of Trustees
Date: 11 December 2025

Signed by:

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Mr S Thomson
Accounting Officer

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Statement on Regularity, Propriety and Compliance

As accounting officer of Orchard Community Trust, I confirm that I have had due regard to the framework of authorities governing regularity, propriety and compliance, including the trust's funding agreement with DfE, and the requirements of the Academy Trust Handbook, including responsibilities for estates safety and management. I have also considered my responsibility to notify the academy trust board of trustees and DfE of material irregularity, impropriety and non-compliance with terms and conditions of all funding, including for estates safety and management.

I confirm that I and the Academy Trust Board of Trustees are able to identify any material irregular or improper use of all funds by the Academy Trust, or material non-compliance with the framework of authorities.

I confirm that no instances of material irregularity, impropriety or 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 DfE.

Signed by:

CD5D39A6AA75457...
Mr S Thomson
Accounting Officer
Date: 11 December 2025

Orchard Community Trust
(A Company Limited by Guarantee)

Statement of Trustees' responsibilities
For the Year Ended 31 August 2025

The Trustees (who are also the directors of the charitable company for the purposes of company law) are responsible for preparing the Trustees' Report and the financial statements in accordance with the Academies Accounts Direction published by the Department for Education, United Kingdom Accounting Standards (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice) and applicable law and regulations.

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

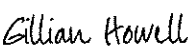
- select suitable accounting policies and then apply them consistently;
- observe the methods and principles of the Charities SORP 2019 and the Academies Accounts Direction 2024 to 2025;
- make judgments and accounting estimates that are reasonable and prudent;
- state whether applicable UK Accounting Standards have been followed, subject to any material departures disclosed and explained in the financial statements;
- prepare the financial statements on the going concern basis unless it is inappropriate to presume that the charitable company will continue in business.

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

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

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

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

Signed by:

1908BBB57FC6489...

Mrs G Howell

Chair of Trustees

Date: 11 December 2025

Orchard Community Trust
(A Company Limited by Guarantee)

Independent Auditors' Report on the financial statements to the Members of Orchard Community Trust

Opinion

We have audited the financial statements of Orchard Community Trust (the 'academy trust') for the year ended 31 August 2025 which comprise the Statement of Financial Activities, the Balance Sheet, the Statement of Cash Flows and the related notes, including a summary of significant accounting policies. The financial reporting framework that has been applied in their preparation is applicable law, United Kingdom Accounting Standards (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice), including Financial Reporting Standard 102 'The Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland', the Charities SORP 2019 and the Academies Accounts Direction 2024 to 2025 issued by the Department for Education.

In our opinion the financial statements:

- give a true and fair view of the state of the Academy Trust's affairs as at 31 August 2025 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; and
- have been prepared in accordance with the requirements of the Companies Act 2006, the Charities SORP 2019 and the Academies Accounts Direction 2024 to 2025 issued by the Department for Education.

Basis for opinion

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

Conclusions relating to going concern

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

Based on the work we have performed, we have not identified any material uncertainties relating to events or conditions that, individually or collectively, may cast significant doubt on the Academy 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.

Orchard Community Trust
(A Company Limited by Guarantee)

Independent Auditors' Report on the financial statements to the Members of Orchard Community Trust
(continued)

Other information

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

We have nothing to report in this regard.

Opinion on other matters prescribed by the Companies Act 2006

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

- the information given in the Trustees' Report including the Strategic Report for the financial year for which the financial statements are prepared is consistent with the financial statements.
- the Trustees' Report and the Strategic Report have been prepared in accordance with applicable legal requirements.

Matters on which we are required to report by exception

In the light of our knowledge and understanding of the Academy Trust and its environment obtained in the course of the audit, we have not identified material misstatements in the Trustees' Report including the 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 financial statements are not in agreement with the accounting records and returns; or
- certain disclosures of Trustees' remuneration specified by law are not made; or
- we have not received all the information and explanations we require for our audit.

Orchard Community Trust
(A Company Limited by Guarantee)

Independent Auditors' Report on the financial statements to the Members of Orchard Community Trust
(continued)

Responsibilities of trustees

As explained more fully in the Statement of Trustees' Responsibilities, the Trustees (who are also the directors of the Academy Trust for the purposes of company law) are responsible for the preparation of the financial statements and for being satisfied that they give a true and fair view, and for such internal control as the Trustees determine is necessary to enable the preparation of financial statements that are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

In preparing the financial statements, the Trustees are responsible for assessing the 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 Academy Trust or to cease operations, or have no realistic alternative but to do so.

Auditors' responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements

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

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

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

- the senior statutory auditor ensured that the engagement team collectively had the appropriate competence, capabilities and skills to identify or recognise non-compliance with applicable laws and regulations;
- we identified the laws and regulations applicable to the academy trust through discussions with directors and other management, and from our commercial knowledge and experience of the Academy sector;
- we focused on specific laws and regulations which we considered may have a direct material effect on the financial statements or the operations of the academy trust, including the financial reporting legislation, Companies Act 2006, taxation legislation, anti-bribery, employment, and environmental and health and safety legislation;
- we assessed the extent of compliance with the laws and regulations identified above through making enquiries of management and inspecting legal correspondence; and
- identified laws and regulations were communicated within the audit team regularly and the team remained alert to instances of non-compliance throughout the audit.

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

Orchard Community Trust
(A Company Limited by Guarantee)

Independent Auditors' Report on the financial statements to the Members of Orchard Community Trust
(continued)

- making enquiries of management as to where they considered there was susceptibility to fraud, their knowledge of actual, suspected and alleged fraud;
- considering the internal controls in place to mitigate risks of fraud and non-compliance with laws and regulations.

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

- performed analytical procedures to identify any unusual or unexpected relationships;
- tested journal entries to identify unusual transactions;
- assessed whether judgements and assumptions made in determining the accounting estimates set out in note 2 were indicative of potential bias;
- investigated the rationale behind significant or unusual transactions.

In response to the risk of irregularities and non-compliance with laws and regulations, we designed procedures which included, but were not limited to:

- agreeing financial statement disclosures to underlying supporting documentation;
- reading the minutes of meetings of those charged with governance;
- enquiring of management as to actual and potential litigation and claims;
- reviewing correspondence with HMRC, relevant regulators and the academy trust's legal advisors.

Because of the inherent limitations of an audit, there is a risk that we will not detect all irregularities, including those leading to a material misstatement in the financial statements or non-compliance with regulation. This risk increases the more that compliance with a law or regulation is removed from the events and transactions reflected in the financial statements, as we will be less likely to become aware of instances of non-compliance. The risk is also greater regarding irregularities occurring due to fraud rather than error, as fraud involves intentional concealment, forgery, collusion, omission or misrepresentation.

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

Orchard Community Trust
(A Company Limited by Guarantee)

Independent Auditors' Report on the financial statements to the Members of Orchard Community Trust
(continued)

Use of our report

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



Simon Hawkins (Senior Statutory Auditor)

for and on behalf of

Dains Audit Limited

Statutory Auditor
Chartered Accountants

Suite 2, Albion House
2 Etruria Office Village
Forge Lane
Stoke on Trent
ST1 5RQ

11 December 2025

Orchard Community Trust
(A Company Limited by Guarantee)

Independent Reporting Accountant's Assurance Report on Regularity to Orchard Community Trust and the Department for Education

In accordance with the terms of our engagement letter dated 5 November 2025 and further to the requirements of the Department for Education (DfE) as included in the extant Framework and Guide for External Auditors and Reporting Accountants of Academy Trusts 2024 to 2025, we have carried out an engagement to obtain limited assurance about whether anything has come to our attention that would suggest, in all material respects, the expenditure disbursed and income received by Orchard Community Trust during the year 1 September 2024 to 31 August 2025 have not been applied to the purposes identified by Parliament and that the financial transactions do not conform to the authorities which govern them.

This report is made solely to Orchard Community Trust and the Secretary of State for Education in accordance with the terms of our engagement letter. Our work has been undertaken so that we might state to Orchard Community Trust and the Secretary of State for Education 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 Orchard Community Trust and the Secretary of State for Education, for our work, for this report, or for the conclusion we have formed.

Respective responsibilities of Orchard Community Trust's accounting officer and the reporting accountant

The accounting officer is responsible, under the requirements of Orchard Community Trust's funding agreement with the Secretary of State for Education dated 30 April 2019 and the Academy Trust Handbook, extant from 1 September 2024, 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 extant Framework and Guide for External Auditors and Reporting Accountants of Academy Trusts 2024 to 2025. We report to you whether anything has come to our attention in carrying out our work which suggests that in all material respects, expenditure disbursed and income received during the year 1 September 2024 to 31 August 2025 have not been applied for the 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 DfE. 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.

Orchard Community Trust
(A Company Limited by Guarantee)

**Independent Reporting Accountant's Assurance Report on Regularity to Orchard Community Trust and the
Department for Education (continued)**

Conclusion

In the course of our work, nothing has come to our attention which suggest in all material respects the expenditure disbursed and income received during the year 1 September 2024 to 31 August 2025 has not been applied to purposes intended by Parliament and the financial transactions do not conform to the authorities which govern them.



Dains Audit Limited

Chartered Accountants
Suite 2, Albion House
2 Etruria Office Village
Forge Lane
Stoke on Trent
ST1 5RQ

Date: 11 December 2025

Orchard Community Trust
(A Company Limited by Guarantee)

Statement of financial activities (incorporating income and expenditure account)
For the Year Ended 31 August 2025

		Unrestricted funds 2025 £	Restricted funds 2025 £	Restricted fixed asset funds 2025 £	Total funds 2025 £	Total funds 2024 £
	Note					
Income from:						
Donations and capital grants	3	43,613	-	512,754	556,367	536,723
Other trading activities	5	206,581	10,046	-	216,627	251,026
Investments	6	19,046	187,000	-	206,046	81,458
Charitable activities	4	287,683	25,006,482	-	25,294,165	23,917,771
Total income		556,923	25,203,528	512,754	26,273,205	24,786,978
Expenditure on:						
Raising funds	7	186,356	9,554	-	195,910	223,579
Charitable activities	8	43,613	25,021,591	1,197,164	26,262,368	24,128,545
Total expenditure		229,969	25,031,145	1,197,164	26,458,278	24,352,124
Net income/(expenditure)		326,954	172,383	(684,410)	(185,073)	434,854
Transfers between funds	17	(654,272)	-	654,272	-	-
Net movement in funds before other recognised gains/(losses)		(327,318)	172,383	(30,138)	(185,073)	434,854
Other recognised gains/(losses):						
Actuarial gains on defined benefit pension schemes	23	-	5,533,000	-	5,533,000	1,572,000
Pension surplus not recognised	23	-	(6,285,000)	-	(6,285,000)	(2,189,000)
Net movement in funds		(327,318)	(579,617)	(30,138)	(937,073)	(182,146)

Orchard Community Trust
(A Company Limited by Guarantee)

Statement of financial activities (incorporating income and expenditure account) (continued)
For the Year Ended 31 August 2025

	Unrestricted funds 2025 £	Restricted funds 2025 £	Restricted funds - class ii 2025 £	Total funds 2025 £	Total funds 2024 £
Reconciliation of funds:					
Total funds brought forward	680,558	1,606,096	34,913,745	37,200,399	37,382,545
Net movement in funds	(327,318)	(579,617)	(30,138)	(937,073)	(182,146)
Total funds carried forward	353,240	1,026,479	34,883,607	36,263,326	37,200,399

The Statement of Financial Activities includes all gains and losses recognised in the year.

The notes on pages 48 to 85 form part of these financial statements.

Orchard Community Trust
(A Company Limited by Guarantee)
Registered number: 11620282

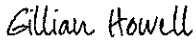
Balance Sheet
As at 31 August 2025

	Note	2025 £	2024 £
Fixed assets			
Tangible assets	14	34,356,049	34,534,518
		<u>34,356,049</u>	<u>34,534,518</u>
Current assets			
Debtors	15	1,318,765	1,536,166
Cash at bank and in hand		4,119,213	3,195,018
		<u>5,437,978</u>	<u>4,731,184</u>
Current liabilities			
Creditors: amounts falling due within one year	16	(3,530,701)	(2,065,303)
Net current assets		<u>1,907,277</u>	<u>2,665,881</u>
Total assets less current liabilities		<u>36,263,326</u>	<u>37,200,399</u>
Defined benefit pension scheme asset	23	-	-
Total net assets		<u><u>36,263,326</u></u>	<u><u>37,200,399</u></u>
Funds of the Academy Trust			
Restricted funds:			
Fixed asset funds	17	34,883,607	34,913,745
Restricted income funds	17	1,026,479	1,606,096
Total restricted funds	17	<u>35,910,086</u>	<u>36,519,841</u>
Unrestricted income funds	17	<u>353,240</u>	<u>680,558</u>
Total funds		<u><u>36,263,326</u></u>	<u><u>37,200,399</u></u>

Orchard Community Trust
(A Company Limited by Guarantee)
Registered number: 11620282

Balance Sheet (continued)
As at 31 August 2025

The financial statements on pages 43 to 85 were approved and authorised for issue by the Trustees and are signed on their behalf, by:

Signed by:

1908BBB57FC6489 ..

Mrs G Howell
Chair of Trustees
Date: 11 December 2025

The notes on pages 48 to 85 form part of these financial statements.

Orchard Community Trust
(A Company Limited by Guarantee)

Statement of Cash Flows
For the Year Ended 31 August 2025

	Note	2025 £	2024 £
Cash flows from operating activities			
Net cash provided by/(used in) operating activities	19	1,411,090	(539,197)
Cash flows from investing activities			
	20	(486,895)	(610,230)
Change in cash and cash equivalents in the year		924,195	(1,149,427)
Cash and cash equivalents at the beginning of the year		3,195,018	4,344,445
Cash and cash equivalents at the end of the year	21, 22	4,119,213	3,195,018

The notes on pages 48 to 85 form part of these financial statements

Orchard Community Trust
(A Company Limited by Guarantee)

Notes to the Financial Statements
For the Year Ended 31 August 2025

1. Accounting policies

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

1.1 Basis of preparation of financial statements

The financial statements of the Academy Trust, which is a public benefit entity under FRS 102, have been prepared under the historic cost convention in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard Applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102), the Accounting and Reporting by Charities: Statement of Recommended Practice applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102) (Charities SORP (FRS 102)), the Academies Accounts Direction 2024 to 2025 issued by DfE, the Charities Act 2011 and the Companies Act 2006.

Orchard Community Trust meets the definition of a public benefit entity under FRS 102.

1.2 Going concern

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

Orchard Community Trust
(A Company Limited by Guarantee)

Notes to the Financial Statements
For the Year Ended 31 August 2025

1. Accounting policies (continued)

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 year for which it is receivable and any abatement in respect of the year 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.

• **Donations**

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

• **Other income**

Other income, including the hire of facilities, is recognised in the year it is receivable and to the extent the Academy Trust has provided the goods or services.

• **Transfer on conversion**

Where assets and liabilities are received by the Academy Trust on conversion to an academy, the transferred assets are measured at fair value and recognised in the Balance Sheet at the point when the risks and rewards of ownership pass to the Academy Trust. An equal amount of income is recognised as a transfer on conversion within 'Income from Donations and Capital Grants' to the net assets received.

Orchard Community Trust
(A Company Limited by Guarantee)

Notes to the Financial Statements
For the Year Ended 31 August 2025

1. Accounting policies (continued)

1.4 Expenditure

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

- **Expenditure on raising funds**

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

- **Charitable activities**

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

All resources expended are inclusive of irrecoverable VAT.

1.5 Interest receivable

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

1.6 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 Part 11, chapter 3 of the Corporation Tax Act 2010 or Section 256 of the Taxation of Chargeable Gains Act 1992, to the extent that such income or gains are applied exclusively to charitable purposes.

Orchard Community Trust
(A Company Limited by Guarantee)

Notes to the Financial Statements
For the Year Ended 31 August 2025

1. Accounting policies (continued)

1.7 Tangible fixed assets

Assets costing £2,500 or more are capitalised as tangible fixed assets and are carried at cost, net of depreciation and any provision for impairment.

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

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

Depreciation is provided on the following bases:

Freehold Land	- Not depreciated
Freehold property & Improvements	- 2-7% straight line
Long-term Leasehold Land	- 0.8% straight line
Long-term Leasehold Property	- 2% straight line
Leasehold Improvements	- 7% straight line
Furniture and equipment	- 20% straight line
Computer equipment	- 33% straight line
Motor vehicles	- 20% straight line

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.

1.8 Debtors

Trade and other debtors are recognised at the settlement amount after any trade discount offered. Prepayments are valued at the amount prepaid net of any trade discounts due.

1.9 Cash at bank and in hand

Cash at bank and in hand includes cash and short-term highly liquid investments with a short maturity of three months or less from the date of acquisition or opening of the deposit or similar account.

Orchard Community Trust
(A Company Limited by Guarantee)

Notes to the Financial Statements
For the Year Ended 31 August 2025

1. Accounting policies (continued)

1.10 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.

1.11 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 bases are as follows:

Financial assets - trade and other debtors are basic financial instruments and are debt instruments measured at amortised cost as detailed in note 15. Prepayments are not financial instruments.

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

Financial liabilities - trade creditors, accruals and other creditors are financial instruments, and are measured at amortised cost as detailed in note 16. 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.

Orchard Community Trust
(A Company Limited by Guarantee)

Notes to the Financial Statements
For the Year Ended 31 August 2025

1. Accounting policies (continued)

1.12 Pensions

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

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

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

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

1.13 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 the funders where the asset acquired or created is held for a specific purpose.

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

Investment income, gains and losses are allocated to the appropriate fund.

Orchard Community Trust
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For the Year Ended 31 August 2025

2. Critical accounting estimates and areas of judgment

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

Critical accounting estimates and assumptions:

The 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.

Local Government Pension Scheme:

The present value of the Local Government Pension Scheme defined benefit liability depends on a number of factors that are determined on an actuarial basis using a variety of assumptions. The assumptions used in determining the net cost or income for pensions include the discount rate. Any changes in these assumptions, which are disclosed in note 23, will impact the carrying amount of the pension liability. Furthermore a roll forward approach which projects results from the latest full actuarial valuation performed at 31 March 2022 has been used by the actuary in valuing the pensions liability at 31 August 2025. Any differences between the figures derived from the roll forward approach and a full actuarial valuation would impact on the carrying amount of the pension liability.

An entity shall recognise a plan surplus as a defined benefit plan asset only to the extent that it is able to recover the surplus either through reduced contributions in the future or through refunds from the plan. The trust is expected to participate in the LGPS indefinitely and therefore do not believe there is any entitlement to a refund. The trust has also instructed the pension actuary to calculate an asset ceiling report to calculate the estimated economic benefit available as a reduction in future contributions, which shows a £Nil value. Management have therefore not recognised the total pension surplus of £9,759,000 in the financial statements, and the movement in the pension surplus of £6,285,000 has not been recognised in the year.

Land and Buildings Valuation

The freehold land and buildings within the financial statements relates to the academy premises which were donated to the trust on conversion from Stoke on Trent City Council. The freehold properties were valued using the Stoke on Trent City Council's valuation. These are being depreciated in accordance with the depreciation policies set out in note 1.7.

The long term leasehold land and buildings within the accounts relates to the academy premises which were donated to the academy on conversion on a 125 year lease from Stoke on Trent City Council. The leasehold land and buildings were valued using the Stoke on Trent City Council's valuation. These are being depreciation in accordance with the depreciation policies set out in note 1.7. No annual charge is made for the use of the land and buildings under the terms of the lease, based on management not being able to reliably measure the open market rate.

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Notes to the Financial Statements
For the Year Ended 31 August 2025

3. Income from donations and capital grants

	Unrestricted funds 2025 £	Restricted fixed asset funds 2025 £	Total funds 2025 £	Total funds 2024 £
Donations	43,613	-	43,613	27,041
Capital Grants	-	512,754	512,754	509,682
	<u>43,613</u>	<u>512,754</u>	<u>556,367</u>	<u>536,723</u>
Total 2024	<u>27,041</u>	<u>509,682</u>	<u>536,723</u>	

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Notes to the Financial Statements
For the Year Ended 31 August 2025

4. Funding for the Academy Trust's charitable activities

	Unrestricted funds 2025 £	Restricted funds 2025 £	Total funds 2025 £	Total funds 2024 £
DfE grants				
General annual grant	-	14,589,106	14,589,106	13,935,053
Other DfE grants				
DfE/ESFA Pupil Premium	-	1,706,926	1,706,926	1,803,536
UFSM	-	193,326	193,326	178,665
Teachers' pension and pay grants	-	382,409	382,409	341,535
Other DfE grants	-	271,711	271,711	83,485
	-	17,143,478	17,143,478	16,342,274
Other Government grants				
Special Educational Needs income	-	5,365,711	5,365,711	5,641,517
Early years income	-	685,444	685,444	679,136
Other LA income	-	1,132,255	1,132,255	575,234
Other government grants	-	6,031	6,031	939
Core schools budget grant	-	607,620	607,620	-
	-	7,797,061	7,797,061	6,896,826
Other income from the Academy Trust's educational operations	287,683	65,943	353,626	368,693
COVID-19 additional funding (DfE)				
Recovery premium	-	-	-	309,978
	287,683	25,006,482	25,294,165	23,917,771
Total 2024	281,879	23,635,892	23,917,771	

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Notes to the Financial Statements
For the Year Ended 31 August 2025

5. Income from other trading activities

	Unrestricted funds 2025 £	Restricted funds 2025 £	Total funds 2025 £	Total funds 2024 £
Supply teacher insurance income	81,697	-	81,697	64,020
Sale of goods and services	808	-	808	61,781
Other trading income	53,897	-	53,897	53,239
Sale of uniforms	-	10,046	10,046	9,319
Lettings income	8,835	-	8,835	10,270
Wrap around care provision	60,349	-	60,349	52,397
Income from clubs	995	-	995	-
	<u>206,581</u>	<u>10,046</u>	<u>216,627</u>	<u>251,026</u>
Total 2024	<u>241,707</u>	<u>9,319</u>	<u>251,026</u>	

6. Investment income

	Unrestricted funds 2025 £	Restricted funds 2025 £	Total funds 2025 £	Total funds 2024 £
Investment income	19,046	-	19,046	458
Pension income	-	187,000	187,000	81,000
	<u>19,046</u>	<u>187,000</u>	<u>206,046</u>	<u>81,458</u>
Total 2024	<u>458</u>	<u>81,000</u>	<u>81,458</u>	

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Notes to the Financial Statements
For the Year Ended 31 August 2025

7. Expenditure

	Staff Costs	Premises	Other	Total	Total
	2025	2025	2025	2025	2024
	£	£	£	£	£
Expenditure on fundraising and trading activities:					
Direct costs	28,544	-	-	28,544	155,664
Support costs	144,184	9,293	13,889	167,366	67,915
Academy's educational operations:					
Direct costs	17,417,193	-	1,038,997	18,456,190	16,010,752
Allocated support costs	2,000,792	1,335,653	4,469,733	7,806,178	8,117,793
	<u>19,590,713</u>	<u>1,344,946</u>	<u>5,522,619</u>	<u>26,458,278</u>	<u>24,352,124</u>
Total 2024	<u>18,676,699</u>	<u>1,387,092</u>	<u>4,288,333</u>	<u>24,352,124</u>	

8. Analysis of expenditure by activities

	Activities	Support	Total	Total
	undertaken	costs	funds	funds
	directly	2025	2025	2024
	2025	£	£	£
Educational operations	18,456,190	7,806,178	26,262,368	24,128,545
	<u>18,456,190</u>	<u>7,806,178</u>	<u>26,262,368</u>	<u>24,128,545</u>
Total 2024	<u>16,010,752</u>	<u>8,117,793</u>	<u>24,128,545</u>	

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Notes to the Financial Statements
For the Year Ended 31 August 2025

8. Analysis of expenditure by activities (continued)

Analysis of direct costs

	Total funds 2025 £	Total funds 2024 £
Staff costs	17,417,193	15,329,413
Educational supplies	305,981	57,442
Examination fees	12,407	12,932
Staff development and other staff costs	139,187	-
Technology costs	90,013	45,700
Consultancy costs	303,185	281,959
Other direct costs	183,794	248,636
Recruitment and other staff expenses	4,430	34,670
	18,456,190	16,010,752

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Notes to the Financial Statements
For the Year Ended 31 August 2025

8. Analysis of expenditure by activities (continued)

Analysis of support costs

	Total funds 2025 £	Total funds 2024 £
Staff costs	2,000,792	3,171,907
Depreciation	1,197,164	969,798
Catering	982,233	810,837
Recruitment and other staff expenses	4,119	3,310
Staff development and other staff costs	1,220	-
Technology costs	324,117	118,165
Consultancy costs	277,676	-
Professional Services	230,259	243,411
Other support costs	131,055	569,664
Insurance	142,528	-
Repairs and maintenance	994,198	1,176,825
Cleaning and caretaking	464,304	264,251
Rental costs	23,908	26,994
Rates	21,763	45,715
Security	13,901	6,874
Energy costs	589,850	523,546
Legal and professional	30,575	27,900
Transport	35,061	42,782
Other premises costs	341,455	115,814
	7,806,178	8,117,793

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Notes to the Financial Statements
For the Year Ended 31 August 2025

9. Net income/(expenditure)

Net income/(expenditure) for the year includes:

	2025	2024
	£	£
Operating lease rentals	17,775	18,911
Depreciation of tangible fixed assets	1,197,164	969,798
PFI charges	1,621,365	1,427,459
Fees paid to auditors for:		
- audit	29,050	24,600
- other services	4,475	4,630
	<u> </u>	<u> </u>

Orchard Community Trust
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Notes to the Financial Statements
For the Year Ended 31 August 2025

10. Staff

a. Staff costs and employee benefits

Staff costs during the year were as follows:

	2025	2024
	£	£
Wages and salaries	13,790,959	13,513,448
Social security costs	1,465,446	1,184,798
Pension costs	3,121,125	2,861,861
	<u>18,377,530</u>	<u>17,560,107</u>
Supply/Agency staff costs	1,125,360	1,074,592
Staff restructuring costs	87,823	42,000
	<u>19,590,713</u>	<u>18,676,699</u>

Staff restructuring costs comprise:

	2025	2024
	£	£
Redundancy payments	23,450	42,000
Severance payments	64,373	-
	<u>87,823</u>	<u>42,000</u>

b. Severance payments

The Academy Trust paid 2 severance payments in the year (2024 --), disclosed in the following bands:

	2025	2024
	No.	No.
£0 - £25,000	1	-
£25,001 - £50,000	1	-
	<u>2</u>	<u>-</u>

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Notes to the Financial Statements
For the Year Ended 31 August 2025

10. Staff (continued)

c. Special staff severance payments

During the year, special staff severance payments totalling £39,767 were paid to 2 individuals. Individually, the payments were £24,606 and £15,161.

d. Staff numbers

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

	2025	2024
	No.	No.
Management	26	23
Teachers	127	122
Admin and Support	367	354
	520	499

e. Higher paid staff

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

	2025	2024
	No.	No.
In the band £60,001 - £70,000	9	7
In the band £70,001 - £80,000	7	3
In the band £80,001 - £90,000	2	3
In the band £90,001 - £100,000	2	-
In the band £100,001 - £110,000	1	3
In the band £110,001 - £120,000	1	-
In the band £120,001 - £130,000	-	1

f. 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 £1,342,357 (2024 - £1,412,599).

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Notes to the Financial Statements
For the Year Ended 31 August 2025

11. Central services

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

- Payroll & HR Services and support
- Financial systems and support
- GDPR Compliance
- Health and Safety Compliance
- Governance Services
- Internal Audit
- External Audit
- School Improvement
- Others as arising

The Academy Trust charges for these services on the following basis:

6% of GAG, with the exception of Kemball School and Watermill School where the charge is 11% of GAG.

The actual amounts charged during the year were as follows:

	2025	2024
	£	£
Abbey Hulton Primary School	76,204	65,036
Forest Park Primary School	148,143	128,936
Kemball School	203,500	187,440
Oakhill Primary School	126,373	125,528
Watermill School	220,000	201,924
St Mark's CE Primary School	146,201	127,232
Etruscan Primary School	142,618	125,812
Total	1,063,039	961,908

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Notes to the Financial Statements
For the Year Ended 31 August 2025

12. Trustees' remuneration and expenses

One or more Trustees has been paid remuneration or has received other benefits from an employment with the Academy Trust. The principal and other staff Trustees only receive remuneration in respect of services they provide undertaking the roles of principal and staff members under their contracts of employment. The value of Trustees' remuneration and other benefits was as follows:

		2025	2024
		£	£
Mr R W Johnstone, Accounting Officer (to 31 August 2024)	Remuneration	N/A	120,000 - 125,000
	Pension contributions paid	N/A	40,000 - 45,000
Mr S Thomson, Accounting Officer (from 1 September 2024)	Remuneration	115,000 - 120,000	N/A
	Pension contributions paid	30,000 - 35,000	N/A

During the year ended 31 August 2025, expenses totalling £108 were reimbursed or paid directly to 1 Trustee (2024 - £Nil). The expenses related to a reimbursement of travel and incidental costs associated with attending a conference, in the trustee's role as Accounting Office of the Trust.

13. 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 business. The insurance provides cover up to £10,000,000. It is not possible to quantify the trustees and officers indemnity element from the overall cost of the RPA scheme membership.

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Notes to the Financial Statements
For the Year Ended 31 August 2025

14. Tangible fixed assets

	Freehold property & improvement £	Long-term leasehold property £	Leasehold Property Improvements £	Furniture and equipment £	Computer equipment £	Motor vehicles £	Total £
Cost or valuation							
At 1 September 2024	6,190,463	30,293,132	528,920	562,424	980,433	62,118	38,617,490
Additions	13,079	-	371,250	44,620	540,102	49,644	1,018,695
At 31 August 2025	6,203,542	30,293,132	900,170	607,044	1,520,535	111,762	39,636,185
Depreciation							
At 1 September 2024	571,279	2,839,384	23,202	103,821	528,312	16,974	4,082,972
Charge for the year	135,801	570,144	49,472	116,232	312,539	12,976	1,197,164
At 31 August 2025	707,080	3,409,528	72,674	220,053	840,851	29,950	5,280,136

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Notes to the Financial Statements
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14. Tangible fixed assets (continued)

	Freehold property & improvement £	Long-term leasehold property £	Leasehold Property improve- ments £	Furniture and equipment £	Computer equipment £	Motor vehicles £	Total £
Net book value							
At 31 August 2025	<u>5,496,462</u>	<u>26,883,604</u>	<u>827,496</u>	<u>386,991</u>	<u>679,684</u>	<u>81,812</u>	<u>34,356,049</u>
At 31 August 2024	<u>5,619,184</u>	<u>27,453,748</u>	<u>505,718</u>	<u>458,603</u>	<u>452,121</u>	<u>45,144</u>	<u>34,534,518</u>

Included in freehold land and property is £919,000 (2024 - £919,000) of freehold land which is not depreciated.

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Notes to the Financial Statements
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15. Debtors

	2025	2024
	£	£
Due within one year		
Trade debtors	428,713	122,605
VAT repayable	187,408	696,490
Prepayments and accrued income	702,644	717,071
	<u>1,318,765</u>	<u>1,536,166</u>

16. Creditors: Amounts falling due within one year

	2025	2024
	£	£
Trade creditors	1,591,658	246,896
Other taxation and social security	320,521	263,041
Other creditors	210	3,383
Accruals and deferred income	1,618,312	1,551,983
	<u>3,530,701</u>	<u>2,065,303</u>

	2025	2024
	£	£
Deferred income at 1 September 2024	699,995	458,549
Resources deferred during the year	994,328	699,995
Amounts released from previous periods	(699,995)	(458,549)
	<u>994,328</u>	<u>699,995</u>

Deferred income relates to grant income which relates to the 2025/26 academic year.

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Notes to the Financial Statements
For the Year Ended 31 August 2025

17. Statement of funds

	Balance at 1 September 2024 £	Income £	Expenditure £	Transfers in/out £	Gains/ (Losses) £	Balance at 31 August 2025 £
Unrestricted funds						
General Funds	680,558	556,923	(229,969)	(654,272)	-	353,240
Restricted general funds						
General Annual Grant	1,606,096	14,589,106	(15,168,723)	-	-	1,026,479
Pupil Premium	-	1,706,926	(1,706,926)	-	-	-
SEN funding	-	5,365,711	(5,365,711)	-	-	-
Early years income	-	685,444	(685,444)	-	-	-
Other LA/other government grants	-	1,745,906	(1,745,906)	-	-	-
Universal free school meals	-	193,326	(193,326)	-	-	-
Other restricted income	-	75,989	(75,989)	-	-	-
Teachers Pay and Pension Grants	-	382,409	(382,409)	-	-	-
Other DfE Grants	-	271,711	(271,711)	-	-	-
Pension reserve	-	187,000	565,000	-	(752,000)	-
	1,606,096	25,203,528	(25,031,145)	-	(752,000)	1,026,479

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17. Statement of funds (continued)

	Balance at 1 September 2024 £	Income £	Expenditure £	Transfers in/out £	Gains/ (Losses) £	Balance at 31 August 2025 £
Restricted fixed asset funds						
Transferred grants	32,504,827	-	(663,428)	-	-	31,841,399
Devolved formula capital	276,717	-	(66,909)	-	-	209,808
Capital expenditure from GAG	464,482	-	(77,772)	-	-	386,710
School Condition Allocation	827,852	353,997	(74,341)	-	-	1,107,508
Capital expenditure from unrestricted funds	537,689	-	(195,702)	654,272	-	996,259
Other DfE Grants	302,178	158,757	(119,012)	-	-	341,923
	<u>34,913,745</u>	<u>512,754</u>	<u>(1,197,164)</u>	<u>654,272</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>34,883,607</u>
Total Restricted funds	<u>36,519,841</u>	<u>25,716,282</u>	<u>(26,228,309)</u>	<u>654,272</u>	<u>(752,000)</u>	<u>35,910,086</u>
Total funds	<u><u>37,200,399</u></u>	<u><u>26,273,205</u></u>	<u><u>(26,458,278)</u></u>	<u><u>-</u></u>	<u><u>(752,000)</u></u>	<u><u>36,263,326</u></u>

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17. Statement of funds (continued)

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

Unrestricted funds

These funds represent those resources which may be used towards meeting the charitable activities and objectives of the academy trust.

Restricted funds

These funds represent grants received for the operational activities and objectives of the academy trust.

Pension reserve

This fund represents the academy trust's share of the LGPS pension deficit.

Restricted fixed asset fund

This fund relates to the donation of Freehold and Leasehold land and buildings from Stoke on Trent City Council.

The devolved formula capital relates to grants received from the DfE for works of a capital nature.

Under the funding agreement with the Secretary of State, the Academy Trust was not subject to a limit on the amount of GAG it could carry forward at 31 August 2025.

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Notes to the Financial Statements
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17. Statement of funds (continued)

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

	Balance at 1 September 2023 £	Income £	Expenditure £	Transfers in/out £	Gains/ (Losses) £	Balance at 31 August 2024 £
Unrestricted funds						
General Funds	1,154,426	551,085	(523,438)	(501,515)	-	680,558
Restricted general funds						
General Annual Grant	1,355,773	13,935,053	(13,684,730)	-	-	1,606,096
Pupil Premium	-	1,803,536	(1,803,536)	-	-	-
SEN funding	-	5,641,517	(5,641,517)	-	-	-
Other government grants	-	1,255,309	(1,255,309)	-	-	-
Universal free school meals	-	178,665	(178,665)	-	-	-
Other restricted income	-	96,133	(96,133)	-	-	-
Teachers pension grant	-	341,535	(341,535)	-	-	-
Other DfE grants	-	393,463	(393,463)	-	-	-
Pension reserve	-	81,000	536,000	-	(617,000)	-
	1,355,773	23,726,211	(22,858,888)	-	(617,000)	1,606,096

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17. Statement of funds (continued)

	Balance at 1 September 2023 £	Income £	Expenditure £	Transfers in/out £	Gains/ (Losses) £	Balance at 31 August 2024 £
Restricted fixed asset funds						
Transferred grants	33,168,534	-	(663,707)	-	-	32,504,827
Devolved formula capital	270,703	72,848	(66,834)	-	-	276,717
Capital expenditure from GAG	539,000	-	(74,518)	-	-	464,482
School Condition Allocation	647,361	225,895	(45,404)	-	-	827,852
Capital expenditure from unrestricted funds	93,869	-	(57,695)	501,515	-	537,689
Other DfE Grants	152,879	210,939	(61,640)	-	-	302,178
	<u>34,872,346</u>	<u>509,682</u>	<u>(969,798)</u>	<u>501,515</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>34,913,745</u>
Total Restricted funds	<u>36,228,119</u>	<u>24,235,893</u>	<u>(23,828,686)</u>	<u>501,515</u>	<u>(617,000)</u>	<u>36,519,841</u>
Total funds	<u><u>37,382,545</u></u>	<u><u>24,786,978</u></u>	<u><u>(24,352,124)</u></u>	<u><u>-</u></u>	<u><u>(617,000)</u></u>	<u><u>37,200,399</u></u>

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Notes to the Financial Statements
For the Year Ended 31 August 2025

17. Statement of funds (continued)

Total funds analysis by academy

Fund balances at 31 August 2025 were allocated as follows:

	2025	2024
	£	£
Abbey Hulton Primary School	(173,515)	(38,941)
Forest Park Primary School	258,632	279,224
Kemball School	316,018	629,772
Oakhill Primary School	(115,357)	16,788
Watermill School	916,510	1,060,625
Etruscan Primary School	115,680	159,158
Saint Mark's CE Primary School	264,617	332,504
Central Services	(202,866)	(152,476)
	<hr/>	<hr/>
Total before fixed asset funds and pension reserve	1,379,719	2,286,654
Restricted fixed asset fund	34,883,607	34,913,745
	<hr/>	<hr/>
Total	36,263,326	37,200,399
	<hr/> <hr/>	<hr/> <hr/>

The following academies are carrying a net deficit on their portion of the funds as follows:

	Deficit
	£
Abbey Hulton Primary School	173,515
Oakhill Primary School	115,357
Central Services	202,866

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17. Statement of funds (continued)

The Academy Trust is taking the following action to return the academies to surplus:

Abbey Hulton Primary School is carrying a net deficit of £174k on these funds. Abbey Hulton has seen a tumultuous year during 2024-25. Due to whole school concerns, the Headteacher & Deputy Headteacher ended their employment with Orchard Community Trust which incurred legal and agreement costs. Staffing structure decisions were made during the previous academic year based on needs of the school which had a significant negative impact on the school's finances. During summer term of 24-25, an Executive Headship model was implemented to stabilise and drive forward the school which is having a positive impact. There remains issues at Abbey Hulton Primary School, however Orchard Community Trust is committed to supporting the school on its journey of improvement, which involves both educational and financial data.

Oakhill Primary School is carrying a net deficit of £115k on these funds. A lot of movement has incurred at Oakhill this year, with the Headteacher stepping into Strategic Lead for School Improvement role within Central from January, staff off long term sick where agency costs have been incurred throughout the year. SEN funding was lower than anticipated as was educational visit income also. Oakhill have started 2025/26 very well and are already performing better than submitted budget YTD. Staffing costs are higher at Oakhill, not due to the number of staff but due to the value of having experienced teachers who have been at the school for a number of years. Income & Expenditure is being monitored very closely during 2025-26 and has been since the start of the year - we do not expect another year of movement as we have done during 2024/25.

Central services is carrying a net deficit of £203k on these funds. Central deficit is made up of one off costs in relation to legal and consultancy fees with regards to exiting the Trust wide cleaning contract early due to a breach of contract, and the implementation of a new cleaning contractor. In addition to this, the increase to National Insurance costs impacted from April 24 has been absorbed by central with no additional funding from schools through their central contribution.

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17. Statement of funds (continued)

Total cost analysis by academy

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

	Teaching and educational support staff costs £	Other support staff costs £	Educational supplies £	Other costs excluding depreciation £	Total 2025 £	Total 2024 £
Abbey Hulton Primary School	1,113,789	213,637	29,864	426,153	1,783,443	1,693,485
Forest Park Primary School	2,124,751	378,304	55,403	568,009	3,126,467	2,926,856
Kemball School	4,027,661	327,432	32,338	1,021,839	5,409,270	4,875,056
Oakhill Primary School	1,984,221	310,690	34,934	600,585	2,930,430	2,822,929
Watermill School	3,964,877	238,537	77,125	894,560	5,175,099	4,676,379
Etruscan Primary School	2,126,322	161,257	56,064	675,038	3,018,681	2,873,342
Saint Mark's CE Primary School	2,218,986	212,691	35,885	684,203	3,151,765	2,902,653
Central Services	421,586	330,972	894	477,507	1,230,959	1,147,626
Academy Trust	17,982,193	2,173,520	322,507	5,347,894	25,826,114	23,918,326

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18. Analysis of net assets between funds

Analysis of net assets between funds - current year

	Unrestricted funds 2025 £	Restricted funds 2025 £	Restricted fixed asset funds 2025 £	Total funds 2025 £
Tangible fixed assets	-	-	34,356,049	34,356,049
Current assets	353,240	4,557,180	527,558	5,437,978
Creditors due within one year	-	(3,530,701)	-	(3,530,701)
Total	353,240	1,026,479	34,883,607	36,263,326

Analysis of net assets between funds - prior year

	Unrestricted funds 2024 £	Restricted funds 2024 £	Restricted fixed asset funds 2024 £	Total funds 2024 £
Tangible fixed assets	-	-	34,534,518	34,534,518
Current assets	680,558	3,671,399	379,227	4,731,184
Creditors due within one year	-	(2,065,303)	-	(2,065,303)
Total	680,558	1,606,096	34,913,745	37,200,399

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

	2025	2024
	£	£
Net (expenditure)/income for the year (as per Statement of Financial Activities)	(185,073)	434,854
Adjustments for:		
Dividends, Interest and rents from investments	(19,046)	(458)
Depreciation	1,197,164	969,798
Capital grants from DfE and other capital income	(512,754)	(509,682)
Defined benefit pension scheme cost less contributions payable	(565,000)	(536,000)
Defined benefit pension scheme finance cost	(187,000)	(81,000)
Decrease/(increase) in debtors	217,401	(900,827)
Increase in creditors	1,465,398	84,118
Net cash provided by/(used in) operating activities	1,411,090	(539,197)

20. Cash flows from investing activities

	2025	2024
	£	£
Dividends, interest and rents from investments	19,046	458
Purchase of tangible assets	(1,018,695)	(1,120,370)
Capital grants from DfE Group	512,754	509,682
Net cash used in investing activities	(486,895)	(610,230)

21. Analysis of cash and cash equivalents

	2025	2024
	£	£
Cash in hand and at bank	4,119,213	3,195,018
Total cash and cash equivalents	4,119,213	3,195,018

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Notes to the Financial Statements
 For the Year Ended 31 August 2025

22. Analysis of changes in net debt

	At 1 September 2024 £	Cash flows £	At 31 August 2025 £
Cash at bank and in hand	3,195,018	924,195	4,119,213
	<u>3,195,018</u>	<u>924,195</u>	<u>4,119,213</u>

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23. Pension commitments

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 Staffordshire County Council. Both are multi-employer defined benefit schemes.

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

Contributions amounting to £Nil were payable to the schemes at 31 August 2025 (2024 - £ -) and are included within creditors.

Teachers' Pension Scheme

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

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

Valuation of the Teachers' Pension Scheme

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

Actuarial scheme valuations are dependent on assumptions about the value of future costs, design of benefits and many other factors. The latest actuarial valuation of the TPS was carried out as at 31 March 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 23.68% 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 will be implemented from 1 April 2024. The next valuation result is due to be implemented from 1 April 2027.

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Notes to the Financial Statements
For the Year Ended 31 August 2025

23. Pension commitments (continued)

The employer's pension costs paid to TPS in the year amounted to £1,947,000 (2024 - £1,772,000).

A copy of the valuation report and supporting documentation is on the Teachers' Pensions website (<https://www.teacherspensions.co.uk/news/employers/2019/04/teachers-pensions-valuation-report.aspx>).

Under the definitions set out in FRS 102, the TPS is an unfunded multi-employer pension scheme. The Academy 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 FRS102 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 contribution made for the year ended 31 August 2025 was £2,113,000 (2024 - £1,991,000), of which employer's contributions totalled £1,711,000 (2024 - £1,626,000) and employees' contributions totalled £402,000 (2024 - £365,000). The agreed contribution rates for future years are 21.2 per cent for employers and 5.5 - 12.5 per cent for employees.

Parliament has agreed, at the request of the Secretary of State for Education, to a guarantee that, in the event of 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](https://www.gov.uk).

Principal actuarial assumptions

	2025	2024
	%	%
Rate of increase in salaries	3.2	3.15
Rate of increase for pensions in payment/inflation	2.7	2.65
Discount rate for scheme liabilities	6.1	5.0
Inflation assumption (CPI)	2.7	2.65
Commutation of pensions to lump sums	65	65

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23. Pension commitments (continued)

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

	2025	2024
	Years	Years
Retiring today		
Males	17.5	17.3
Females	23.2	23.2
Retiring in 20 years		
Males	20.3	20.1
Females	24.3	24.3

Sensitivity analysis on defined benefit obligations

	2025	2024
	£000	£000
Discount rate +0.1%	(432)	(534)
Discount rate -0.1%	432	534
CPI rate +0.1%	426	522
CPI rate -0.1%	(426)	(522)
Salary rate +0.1%	19	24
Salary rate -0.1%	(19)	(24)
1 year increase in member life expectancy	710	823
1 year decrease in member life expectancy	(710)	(823)

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23. Pension commitments (continued)

Share of scheme assets

The Academy Trust's share of the assets in the scheme was:

	At 31 August 2025 £000	At 31 August 2024 £000
Equities	16,778	15,397
Bond	7,977	6,496
Property	2,200	1,684
Cash and other liquid assets	550	481
	<u>27,505</u>	<u>24,058</u>
Total market value of assets	<u>27,505</u>	<u>24,058</u>

The actual return on scheme assets was £814,000 (2024 - £2,920,000).

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

	2025 £	2024 £
Current service cost	(1,146,000)	(1,090,000)
Interest income	1,246,000	1,069,000
Interest cost	(1,059,000)	(988,000)
	<u>(959,000)</u>	<u>(1,009,000)</u>
Total amount recognised in the Statement of Financial Activities	<u>(959,000)</u>	<u>(1,009,000)</u>

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

	2025 £	2024 £
At 1 September	20,584,000	18,426,000
Current service cost	1,146,000	1,090,000
Interest cost	1,059,000	988,000
Employee contributions	402,000	365,000
Actuarial gains	(5,123,000)	(8,000)
Benefits paid	(322,000)	(277,000)
	<u>17,746,000</u>	<u>20,584,000</u>
At 31 August	<u>17,746,000</u>	<u>20,584,000</u>

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23. Pension commitments (continued)

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

	2025	2024
	£	£
At 1 September	24,058,000	19,711,000
Interest income	1,246,000	1,069,000
Actuarial gains	410,000	1,564,000
Employer contributions	1,711,000	1,626,000
Employee contributions	402,000	365,000
Benefits paid	(322,000)	(277,000)
At 31 August	27,505,000	24,058,000

As detailed in note 2, the surplus asset of £9,759,000 (2024- £3,474,000) has not been recognised in the financial statements and the movement in surplus of £6,285,000 (2024 - £2,189,000) has also not been recognised during the year.

24. Operating lease commitments

At 31 August 2025 the Academy Trust had commitments to make future minimum lease payments under non-cancellable operating leases as follows:

	2025	2024
	£	£
Not later than 1 year	18,200	8,148
Later than 1 year and not later than 5 years	19,696	6,878
	37,896	15,026

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25. Other financial commitments

	2025	2024
	£	£
Within 1 year	258,206	926,194
Later than 1 year and not later than 5 years	-	-
Later than 5 years	-	-
	<u>258,206</u>	<u>926,194</u>

26. 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/she is a member, or within one year after he/she ceases to be a member, such amount as may be required, not exceeding £10 for the debts and liabilities contracted before he/she ceases to be a member.

27. 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. All transactions involving such organisations are conducted in accordance with the requirements of the Academy Trust Handbook, including notifying the DfE of all transactions made on or after 1 April 2019 and obtaining their approval where required, and with the Academy Trust's financial regulations and normal procurement procedures relating to connected and related party transactions.

No related party transactions took place in the period of accounts, other than certain trustees' remuneration and expenses already disclosed in the notes to the financial statements.

E Buttery, daughter of Mr C Sheeran, trustee, is employed by the Academy Trust as an Assistant Headteacher at Kemball School. E Buttery is paid within the normal pay scale for her role and received no special treatment as a result of her relationship to a Trustee.

