

Holy Cross Catholic Multi Academy Company

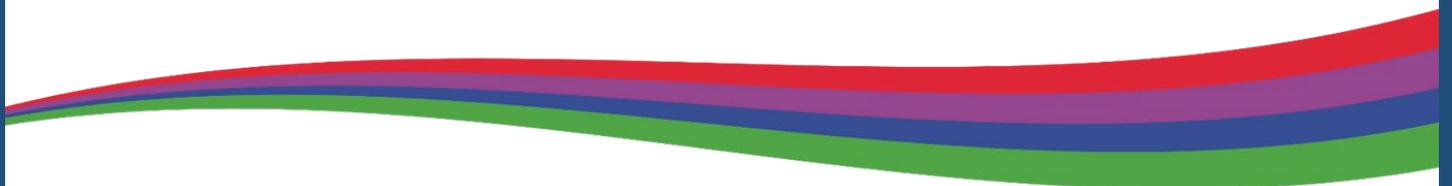
(A Company Limited by Gaurantee)

ANNUAL REPORT AND FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2023



Achieving together in faith





HOLY CROSS CATHOLIC MULTI ACADEMY COMPANY
(A Company Limited by Guarantee)

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REFERENCE AND ADMINISTRATIVE DETAILS

Members

Father J Veasey
E Kirwan
J Francis
P Vella
C Loughran

Directors

K Ainsworth
AJ Cawley
MJ Gallagher (resigned 13/05/23)
K Marston
LP Moore
R Ridley (resigned 31/08/23)
J Teahan

Company registered number

12084073

Company name

Holy Cross Catholic Multi Academy Company

Principal and registered office

Heathcote Street
Coventry
CV6 3BL

Company secretary

M Alcott

Chief executive officer

M Kelly

Senior management team

M Kelly,	Catholic Senior Executive Leader
M Alcott,	Chief Finance and Operating Officer
C Billings,	Headteacher Bishop Ullathorne Catholic Secondary School
E O'Connor,	Headteacher Cardinal Newman Catholic Secondary School
V McDonald,	Headteacher St Augustine's Catholic Primary School
M Doyle,	Headteacher St Elizabeth's Catholic Primary School
V Gosling,	Headteacher St John Vianney Catholic Primary School
S Collins,	Headteacher St Thomas More Catholic Primary School
J Riach,	Headteacher, Christ the King Catholic Primary School (appointed 1 September 2022)



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REFERENCE AND ADMINISTRATIVE DETAILS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2023

Independent auditor	Cooper Parry Group Limited Statutory Auditor Cubo Birmingham Two Chamberlain Square B3 3AX
Bankers	Lloyds Bank 30 High Street Coventry CV1 5RE
Solicitors	Holy Cross Catholic Multi Academy Company had no requirement for legal services during the year ended 31 August 2023 and did not, therefore, appointed any solicitors. The MAC's schools have a pay-as-you-go contract with Coventry City Council for legal services.
Actuary	Hymans Robertson LLP 45 Church Street Birmingham B3 2RT
Other Person with Significant Control	Most Reverend Bernard Longley, Archbishop of Birmingham Has significant control as he has the right to appoint and remove Directors



HOLY CROSS CATHOLIC MULTI ACADEMY COMPANY

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DIRECTORS' REPORT FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2023

The Directors present their annual report together with the financial statements and auditor's report of the charitable company for the period from 1 September 2022 to 31 August 2023. The annual report serves the purposes of both a Trustees' report under charity law and a Directors' report, including a strategic report, under company law.

Holy Cross Catholic Multi Academy Company (the 'Company') commenced operation in Coventry on 1 September 2019 and comprises of 5 Primary Academies and 2 Secondary Academies with a combined pupil total of 4,225 currently enrolled across the Academies (November 2023). The schools are:

- Bishop Ullathorne Catholic Secondary School
- Cardinal Newman Catholic Secondary School
- Christ the King Catholic Primary School
- St Augustine's Catholic Primary School
- St Elizabeth's Catholic Primary School
- St John Vianney Catholic Primary School
- St Thomas More Catholic Primary School

Structure, governance and management

a. Constitution

The Company is a company limited by guarantee and an exempt charity.

The Company's Memorandum and Articles of Association are its primary governing documents.

The Directors of the Company are also Trustees for the purposes of Charity law.

Details of the Directors who served throughout the year and to the date the approval of this report and the financial statements are included in the Reference and Administrative Details on page 1.

b. Members' liability

The liability of the Members of the Company is limited. Every Member of the Company undertakes to contribute such amount as may be required (not exceeding £10) to the Company's assets if it should be wound up while he or she is a Member or within one year after he or she ceases to be a member, for payment of the Company's debts and liabilities before he or she ceases to be a Member, and of the costs, charges and expenses of winding up, and for the adjustment of the rights of the contributories among themselves.

c. Directors' indemnities

The Directors benefit from indemnity insurance purchased by the Company to cover the liability of the Directors arising from negligent acts, errors or commissions occurring whilst on the Company's business. The limit of this indemnity is £5,000,000.

d. Method of recruitment and appointment or election of Directors

The Company shall have the following Directors, as set out in its Articles of Association and funding agreement:

- i. Foundation Directors appointed under Article 50; a minimum of 2 Parent Directors appointed by the Directors whether after election or otherwise under Articles 53-56 in the event that no provision is made under Article 101, or is planned, for at least 2 Parent Local Governors on each Local Governing Body established under Article 100(a) (the Board of Directors resolved to have two parent local governors on each Local Governing Body);
- ii. Co-opted Directors appointed under Article 58

The first Directors shall be those persons named, with the written consent of the Diocesan Bishop, in the statement delivered pursuant to sections 9 and 12 of the Companies Act 2006.



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The Diocesan Bishop shall appoint such number of Foundation Directors as shall ensure that at all times the number of Foundation Directors exceeds the other Directors (including any Co-opted Directors) by at least two. During 2022-23 there were no Co-opted Directors.

An employee of the Company cannot be appointed as a Director.

In any circumstances where the Secretary of State is entitled to serve a warning notice under the Relevant Funding Agreement or in the opinion of the Diocesan Bishop standards or the Catholic life of the school at any Academy have fallen unacceptably low then the Diocesan Bishop may stipulate that one or more of the following shall be appointed as a Director for such term as the Diocesan Bishop shall provide up to four individuals, each of whom is either a Diocesan Education Service Associate or an officer of the Diocesan Education Service; who shall serve on the board of Directors in an ex officio capacity.

The term of office for any Director of the Company shall be 4 years or a shorter period if specified at the time of appointment by the person or body appointing, save that this time limit shall not apply to the Co-opted Directors or to any post which is held ex officio. Co-opted Directors shall be appointed for a period of one year. Subject to remaining eligible to be a particular type of Director, any Director may be re-appointed or re-elected.

When appointing new Directors, the Board of Directors will give consideration to the skills and experience mix of existing Directors in order to ensure the Board of Directors has the necessary skills to contribute fully to the Company's ongoing development.

e. Policies adopted for the induction and training of Directors

The training and induction provided for new Directors will depend upon their existing experience but will always include a tour of the schools and a chance to meet staff and pupils. All Directors are provided with copies of policies, procedures, minutes, accounts, budgets, plans and other documents they will need to undertake their role as Directors. All new Directors also have the opportunity to undertake National Governor Association training and all Directors receive regular National Governor Association updates and National Governor Association Learning Links. As there has only been one new Director since the Company was formed, induction has been carried out informally and is tailored specifically to the individual. Advantage is taken of specific courses offered by various external organisations, including Birmingham Diocesan Education Service and Coventry Local Authority, as appropriate.

Directors are regularly updated on relevant developments impacting on their roles and responsibilities. Their skills and experience enable them to contribute to the strategic leadership and direction of the Company.

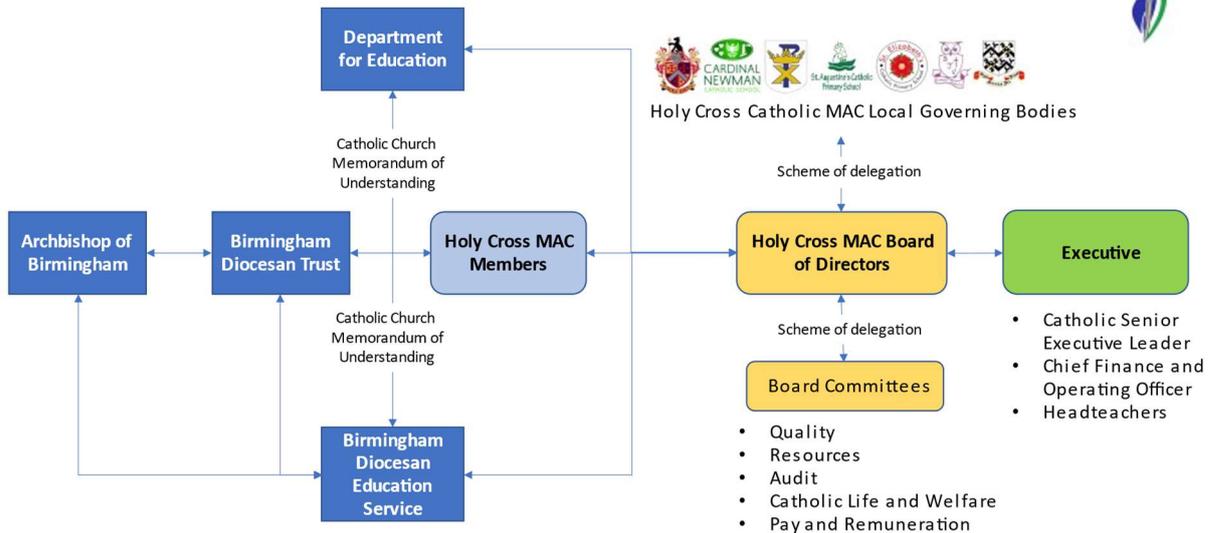


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DIRECTORS' REPORT (CONTINUED) FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2023

Holy Cross Catholic MAC Governance Model



f. Organisational structure

At 31 August 2023, the Company comprised the following individual academies:

- Bishop Ullathorne Catholic Secondary School
- Cardinal Newman Catholic Secondary School
- Christ the King Catholic Primary School
- St Augustine's Catholic Primary School
- St Elizabeth's Catholic Primary School
- St John Vianney Catholic Primary School
- St Thomas More Catholic Primary School

The Directors are responsible for setting general policy, adopting an annual improvement plan and budget, approving the annual statutory accounts, monitoring the Company by the use of budgets and other data, and making the major decisions about the direction of the Company, capital expenditure and staff appointments.

In 2022-23 the Board of Directors met 7 times, 6 scheduled meetings and an additional extraordinary meeting. In addition, the Board attended informal Strategy/Planning days. For the academic year 2022-23 the standards agenda was considered by a separate Quality Committee (formerly called 'Standards Committee'). The Board of Directors establishes an overall framework for the governance of the Company and determines membership, terms of reference and procedures of Committees of the Board of Directors and other groups. It receives reports including policies from its Committees for ratification. It monitors the activities of the Committees through the minutes of their meetings and through direct reporting from the elected Chair of each Committee. The Board of Directors may from time to time establish working groups to perform specific tasks over a limited timescale.

There are 12 Standing Committees of the Board of Directors as follows:

Quality Committee – meets half termly and is responsible for monitoring, evaluating and reviewing teaching and learning and outcomes in schools.

Resources Committee – meets half termly and is responsible for monitoring, evaluating and reviewing policy and performance in relation to financial management, compliance with reporting and regulatory requirements and reporting, and drafting the annual budget including setting staffing levels. In 2022-23 the work of the former



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Estates Sub-Committee was subsumed into the terms of reference for the Resources Committee.

Audit Committee – meets at least three times per year and receive termly reports from internal quality assurance visits.

Catholic Life and Welfare Committee – meets half termly and is responsible for the mission and catholic life of the multi academy company as pastoral and welfare and attendance of staff and pupils.

Pay and Remuneration Committee – meets annually to review and ratify performance management of the Headteachers and to oversee salary reviews.

7 Local Governing Bodies which act as Committees of the Board.

Each Committee (other than the Local Governing Bodies) has its own terms of reference detailing the responsibilities discharged to it.

The following decisions are reserved to the full Board of Directors:

- to consider any proposals for changes to the status or constitution of the Company and its committee structure;
- to appoint or remove the Chair and / or Vice Chair;
- to appoint and / or consider the performance management of Headteachers and the Catholic Senior Executive Leader;
- to approve the annual improvement plan and overall budget; and
- to appoint or remove the clerk to the Directors.

The Directors have devolved the day-to-day management of the Company to its Leadership Team which is led by the Catholic Senior Executive Leader. The Company's Leadership Team comprises of the Catholic Senior Executive Leader (CSEL), the Chief Finance and Operations Officer (CFOO) and the Headteachers of the seven Company schools. The Leadership Team is responsible for implementing the policies laid down by the Directors and reporting back to them through the various committees and their Local Governing Bodies. The CSEL is the Company's Accounting Officer and has overall responsibility for its day-to-day financial management. The Chief Financial Operating Officer has the responsibility for the Company's detailed financial procedures. Some spending control is devolved to designated budget holders with a hierarchy of limits and in accordance with the approved financial regulations, Financial Scheme of Delegation and the Academies Trust Handbook.

The Board of Directors delegates a number of functions to the Local Governing Bodies ('LGB') for each of the Company's Schools. These functions and the respective levels of delegation are clearly laid out in the Company's Combined Scheme of Delegation and Financial Scheme of Delegation, which is reviewed annually. Each Local Governing Body monitors budget spending, progress against targets and OFSTED standards, pupil welfare and behaviour and oversees parent and community liaison. Chairs of Local Governing Bodies meet half termly with the Chair of the Board of Directors to ensure clear channels of communication, improve governance, share information and provide updates on key issues.

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

The Directors consider the Board of Directors and the Leadership Team to comprise the key management personnel of the Company in charge of directing and controlling, running and operating the Company on a day-to-day basis. All Directors give of their time freely and no Director received any remuneration in the current or prior year.

The pay and remuneration of the Leadership Team is reviewed during the annual appraisal and performance management process by the Board of Directors in line with the Company's Pay Policy.

This is carried out with reference to published pay scales for both teaching and administrative support staff and by reference to available information on similar roles in other similar Companies and elsewhere. The Headteachers each have their performance management process carried out with a Committee made up of two Local Governing Body members, the Catholic Senior Executive Leader and an independent external education advisor. The Catholic Senior Executive Leader is performance managed with two Directors and an independent



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external education advisor. The performance management of the Chief Finance and Operating Officer is undertaken by a Director and Catholic Senior Executive Leader.

Following the performance management review process any proposed pay progression for all staff across the Company is presented to the Pay and Remuneration Committee for approval after being recommended by the Local Governing Body Pay and Remuneration Committees or otherwise, as applicable.

h. Trade union facility time

Relevant union officials

Number of employees who were relevant union officials during the year	2
Full-time equivalent employee number	-

Percentage of time spent on facility time

Percentage of time	Number of employees
0%	2
1%-50%	-
51%-99%	-
100%	-

Percentage of pay bill spent on facility time

Total cost of facility time	£000
Total pay bill	-
Percentage of total pay bill spent on facility time (%)	18,619
	-

Paid trade union activities

Time spent on paid trade union activities as a percentage of total paid facility time hours (%)	-
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i. Related parties and other connected charities and organisations

There are no related parties or connected organisations which either control or significantly influence the decisions and operations of the Company.

Birmingham Roman Catholic Diocesan Trustees / Birmingham Diocesan Education Service is regarded as a related party of the Company for the purposes of the financial statements with respect to:

- The annual charge made by Birmingham Diocesan Education Service;
- An inherited loan of £175,000 made by Birmingham Diocesan Education Service to Bishop Ullathorne Catholic School before the Company was formed; and
- A one-off construction access / demolition agreement to aid the building of St Elizabeth's Catholic Primary School's new hall extension (£13,000).

St John Wall Catholic School is regarded as a related party due to the provision of a School Improvement Consultant. (The Headteacher of St John Wall Catholic School is also a Director of the MAC.)



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j. Engagement with employees (including disabled persons)

The Company engages with all employees on a regular basis, including disabled persons. The Company ensures that this engagement includes:

- Providing employees with information on matters of concern to them. This is via staff meetings information bulletins, reports and meetings, regular training sessions, email and line management meetings.
- Consulting employees or their representatives regularly so that the views of employees are considered in making decisions which are likely to affect their interests including policy consultation.
- Seeking the views of employees through regular surveys and offering exit interviews for staff leaving the organisation.
- Employees are encouraged to get involved with the Company's performance through departmental meetings, staff meetings, line management meetings, collaborative MAC-wide meetings and Continuing Professional Development meetings.

These all seek to achieve a common awareness on the part of all employees of the academic and financial standards and economic factors affecting the Company's performance.

The Company is committed to ensuring that existing members of staff and volunteers are treated fairly in an environment which is free from any form of discrimination regarding the protected characteristics as outlined by the Equality Act 2010.

During employment, the Company seeks to work with employees, taking into account their personal circumstances, to ensure appropriate training, development and advanced employment opportunities are available to enable them to reach their full potential.

Applications for employment by disabled persons are always fully considered, bearing in mind the aptitudes of the applicant concerned. In the event of members of staff becoming disabled, every effort is made to ensure that their employment within the Company continues and that the appropriate training is arranged. It is the Company's policy that the training, career development and promotion of disabled persons should, as far as possible, be identical to that of other employees.

Objectives and activities

a. Objects and aims

The Company is restricted in its principal objectives and in its aims through funding agreements with the ESFA and agreements including leases with the Catholic Church. The principal objects of the Company, as set out in its Articles of Association, are:

- i) the advancement of the Catholic religion in the Diocese by such means as the Diocesan Bishop may think fit and proper by, but without prejudice to the generality of the foregoing the establishing, maintaining, carrying on, managing and developing of Catholic schools in the United Kingdom conducted in accordance with the principles, and subject to the regulations and discipline of the Catholic Church;
- ii) Subject to the approval of the Diocesan Bishop, during the period that the objects in (a) are being fulfilled and form the majority of the activities of the Company, the advancement of education by the establishing, maintaining, carrying on, managing and developing of schools which are not Catholic in the United Kingdom.

The aims of the Company during the year ended 31 August 2023 are summarised in its mission statement, aims and motto.

The motto of the Company is: "*Achieving together in faith.*"



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The agreed Mission of Holy Cross Catholic Company is:

“Our school communities are united as the family of God to provide an outstanding Catholic education for all our pupils. With Christ at the centre of all we do, we will inspire every child to be the best person they can be by developing their God-given gifts and talents.”

The Company's main strategy is rooted in the mission of the Catholic Church; its aims are:

- High aspirations for all
- Outstanding education - creating an ethos of collective responsibility, through which the Company will promote achievement and improve pupil performance
- Living out Gospel values instilling a Catholic ethos in all our schools, with reconciliation and peace at the heart of all we do
- Young people – developing our young people to be resilient and to make positive contributions to their parishes and our diverse and ever-changing communities
- Community - strengthening and nurturing the Catholic life of our schools
- Realising talent - developing pupils, staff and all other members of our academy for the benefit of the Holy Cross community and society generally
- Optimising resources - realising best value by sharing assets, gaining economies of scale and making the most of what we have
- Service to God - serving others in our school and local communities and in national and international communities in need
- Standards - maintaining the highest quality of Catholic education by ensuring accountability at all levels

b. Objectives, strategies and activities

- The key priorities for the period are contained in the Company's Improvement Plan which is available from the Catholic Senior Executive Leader.

The key activities of the Company for the year ended 31 August 2023 were as follows:

Company Priorities 2022-2023

1. Catholic Life, Ethos and Educational Vision

- Schools to deliver their action plans for their key element of the Way of the Cross.
- MAC mission and vision to be shared with the wider school community with a particular focus on links with parishes.
- Understand the new Catholic Schools Inspectorate inspection framework and develop a MAC peer to peer review process.
- Pupils having a clear understanding of vocation in life and have appropriate advice and guidance to support their future employment choices.
- Analysis of 2022 external outcomes identifies key priorities for each school and areas for collaborative work.
- A consistent and relentless approach to ensuring that excellent attendance supports achievement including Governor Attendance Panels.
- Review use of CPOMS and continue to monitor the SCR and safeguarding practice. Ensure that all training for all key stakeholders is up to date and current.



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2. Quality of Education, Teaching and Learning, Assessment and Curriculum

- Quality assure curriculum planning and ensure training for middle leadership.
- Share CrossNet across all schools and ensure that it is an effective tool to facilitate collaborative working and shared resources.
- Review Pupil Premium and other catch-up funding spend and ensure it is appropriately targeted on underperforming pupils and groups of pupils.
- Implementation and embedding of the new Power Maths curriculum to ensure outstanding provision, teaching and learning and outcomes for mathematics.
- Review Reading, Writing and Spelling across all schools, identify best practice and share it.
- Review assessment processes in the secondary schools, share practice and identify a common approach.
- Embed Arbor programme to ensure effective data analysis and assessment processes.
- Review provision and practice and develop a common approach to EYFS tracking.
- External review sixth form provision and outcomes and identify collaborative opportunities.
- Development of reflective practitioners and networks to support shared professional learning and development

3. People, Partners and Personal Development

- Provide opportunities for outstanding practitioners to work across MAC schools to support identified key areas for development.
- Embed MH and WB action plans and ensure they support staff to manage work/life balance.
- Programme of professional development opportunities for staff.
- Review school cultural capital offers and identify collaborative opportunities and ensure that all schools are tracking pupil uptake.
- Review school compliance with Gatsby benchmarks on good career guidance and identify key actions for schools.
- Continue to develop external partnerships to support school improvement including:
 - 6th Form
 - EYFS (Early Years Foundation Stage)

4. Leadership and Management

- Continue to investigate opportunities for MAC growth in line with BDES Academies Strategy and the Archbishop's vision.



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- Ensure appropriate response to the Governance review to support outstanding governance in all schools.
- Develop professional training guidance for staff including identifying opportunities for future leaders.
- Ensure new performance management process is embedded across the MAC.
- Embedding the education staff wellbeing charter to ensure that all staff are supported in their roles.
- Develop and share a plan for MAC growth including plans for building governance, leadership development and school improvement capacity.

5. Resources

- Annual review of The Estates Strategy Plan, amended to reflect issues such as the CN and BU new-builds under the national School Rebuilding Programme.
- Review school risk registers and link to the MAC Risk Register and to MAC and School Improvement Plans.
- Further develop the marketing plan and strategy.
- Further develop collaborative working.
- Ongoing development of the ICT Strategic to support communication, teaching and learning across the MAC.
- Embed Integrated Curriculum Financial Planning across all of our schools to ensure best value for money.
- Develop and embed new MIS (Management Information System) (Arbor) across the MAC, implementing new ways of working to streamline school administration.
- Improve GDPR reporting and collection of GDPR evidence of compliance.
- Manage schools with forecasted future deficits past the 22/23 financial year.
- Review nursery provision at St Augustine's.
- Review Human Resources policies and practice across the MAC.

c. Public benefit

The Company aims to advance for the public benefit education in Coventry and the surrounding area, offering a broad curriculum and an excellent Catholic education environment for its pupils. The Company also allows use of its facilities for recreational and other leisure time occupation for the community at large in the interests of social welfare and with the interest of improving the life of that community.

The Directors confirm that they have complied with the duty in the Charities Act 2011 to have due regard to the Charity Commission general guidance on public benefit in exercising their powers or duties.



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DIRECTORS' REPORT (CONTINUED) FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2023

Strategic report

Achievements and performance

The Company will continue to strive to provide an outstanding catholic education and improve and build on the good education outcomes for all pupils from 4 – 19. The Company aims to attract and retain high quality teachers and support staff to deliver its objectives.

In the academic year 2022/2023 we have made the following progress towards the outcomes we want to have achieved by 2025:

Priority 1: Catholic Life, Ethos and Educational Vision

- All schools at the Company continue to provide a securely good Catholic education for all pupils. Currently 4 out of 7 schools are judged outstanding for their Catholic Schools Inspection and all schools are at least good with some outstanding features. In addition, all schools were judged to be good in their most recent Ofsted inspection.
- All the work that we do continues to embed our core values of peace, justice and reconciliation and we continue to provide opportunities for staff to reflect on their role as educators within a Catholic setting. The annual Feast Day at Coventry Cathedral is a special celebration and a reminder of our mission and vision for our whole community.
- All schools, by December 2023 will have achieved ICON status, peace award and established a peace prayer garden. Most schools have now achieved the ECO status at bronze level and some schools are working towards gold.
- Stakeholder surveys have been completed for staff and parents. Analysis of the data has been completed and results shared with relevant stakeholders. In future surveys are calendared and will include pupil surveys. Actions arising from the surveys have been included in future planning and impact will be reported Board members.
- Links with the Parishes are growing stronger and all schools plan and lead the liturgy in their feeder parishes.
- The MAC has worked very hard with its external safeguarding SIP (Safeguarding in Partnership) to establish a strong culture of safeguarding across the MAC. The use of CPOMs has been reviewed across all schools and a common and consistent reporting system for safeguarding is in place for September 2023. An annual staff, governor and Director self-declaration confirms that DBS information is up to date. In addition, the MAC SEND team have benefitted from working with a national SEND leader to ensure that provision for SEND pupils reflects current best practice.
- All pupils at Key Stage 4 and 5 have a strong careers programme which supports them in their choice of future destinations and 100% of pupils move to positive destinations.
- The Person in Charge of Catholic Life (PICCL) at Cardinal Newman school meets termly with school charity leads to plan charity and fundraising events across the MAC. In 2022 to 2023 schools across the MAC raised £10,574 for the chosen charities.



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- RE outcomes for GCSE are well above national and diocesan averages at both secondary schools for percentage 4+ and 7+.
- At A level (in RE) uptake has been low at Bishop Ullathorne but outcomes are well above diocesan averages and above national averages. Uptake is good at Cardinal Newman but outcomes for percentage A*-B are well below diocesan and national averages.
- Attendance across all schools is at least in line with national averages with most schools being well above them. In addition, persistent absence is low and all schools are at least in line with national and most significantly better than national averages.
- Behaviour data indicates that the vast majority of behaviour in schools is very good but suspension rates are increasing in both primary and secondary schools.
- All schools continue to offer an extensive wider curriculum and a range of trips and visits to enhance and support curriculum delivery and this has returned to pre-Covid levels.

Priority 2: Quality of Education, Teaching and Learning, Assessment and Curriculum

- Outcomes 2023 continue to show positive progress for the majority of key performance indicators at KS 1,2,4 and 5. In particular, maths and reading outcomes provision and outcomes is a strength at KS2, 4 and 5 where all data is above national. We are delighted that both secondary schools achieved their best ever Progress 8 score in 2023 and both were well above national averages for the majority of the key stage 4 indicators.
- Areas for further development include writing in primary schools at Expected Standard (ES) and Greater Depth (GD). At KS1, only 1/5 schools is above national average for ES and GD. At KS2 3/5 schools above national average for ES and only 1/5 above average for GD.
- Early Years - nearly all schools in line with national Good Level Development and 4/5 above national. The EYFS team have significantly benefitted from working with the external EYFS School Improvement Partner and this had led to improved curriculum assessment and outcomes in all schools.
- At KS2 there has been outstanding reading data at expected standards and greater depth and all schools are above national for both.
- Outstanding maths data at KS2 following the introduction of Power Maths in all of our primary schools. All schools well above national at ES and 3/5 well above national for greater depth.
- There are now common primary assessments and following a review of the assessment calendar, assessments will be streamlined in 2023/24 to reduce workload.
- The Company continued to focus on developing the use of the Arbor system to ensure better efficiency and use of staff time.
- Collaborative working is well-established across primary schools and strong and supportive relationships are developing with subject leaders. This will be further supported by the appointment of seconded School Improvement and Teaching and Learning Leaders from all our schools.



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- Outcomes at KS4 were well above national averages for Progress 8, Attainment 8, APS for EBACC subjects, %5+ English and Maths.
- At Key Stage 5 outcomes were strong in many subjects and increasing the percentage of grades at A* - B to above national averages remains a priority.

Priority 3: People, Partners and Personal Development

- Analysis of surveys from staff and parents have identified strengths and areas for development in all schools. The vast majority of parents are positive about provision of education for their children but communication was a common area for improvement.
- Staff survey highlighted that the vast majority of staff feel behaviour and standards in schools are very good but workload, work/life balance, staffing levels and resources were identified as key areas of concern.
- Staff retention is high and turnover of staff, low, in most schools.
- The Board have agreed to implement Thrive at Work accreditation and this work has started linked to support from Coventry University.
- There has been an increase in the uptake of apprenticeship training and staff have been made aware of the wide range of opportunities for training using the Apprenticeship Levy. The MAC has been asked to become a lead partner of the BTCSA which will provide further opportunities for training and staff development. In addition, we will be training our first teacher using the apprenticeship route in 2023/24.
- A review of CPD opportunities in schools is planned for the start of the next academic year but there is clearly a need to ensure that there are more opportunities for support staff CPD.
- School improvement leaders have been appointed from across the MAC to support the development of teaching and learning, peer review processes and improved outcomes across the MAC.
- School enrichment programmes are accessible to all, and opportunities have returned to pre-Covid levels and tracking of uptake will be further developed this academic year.
- DfE and MAC staff wellbeing charters have been launched across all schools and implementation next year will be supported by the Staff Liaison Group and the Senior Mental Health and Wellbeing leads that have been appointed in all schools.

Priority 4: Leadership and Management

- An analysis of the annual MAC Board and LGB Governor skills audit confirmed the strong skills coverage across all schools and the MAC Board. The external review of governance has resulted in a framework for governors to understand their roles and responsibilities with clearly identified expectations for lead governors and how they execute their lead role.
- All schools continued to be judged at least good under the Ofsted framework. The MAC School Improvement Framework and quality assurance processes, supported by peer reviews and the teaching and learning team ensure the early identification of improvement priorities. These processes have led to improvements in Early Years teaching and learning and outcomes, phonics outcomes, significant improvement in mathematics progress at KS2 and improvements in secondary reading.



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- The One MAC development continues and the Company has fully engaged in the process to date to ensure that there is no detrimental impact on our pupils and staff.
- Every member of staff is effectively line managed with professional development and career progression supported through this process.
- In 2022 – 2023 the Board approved the appointment of an equivalent FTE School Improvement Lead to work across all schools developing teaching and learning. As a result 5 members of staff have been appointed internally, on secondment, to lead school improvement for 0.2 FTE in the following key areas: developing teaching and learning model across the MAC; improving writing from 4 – 19; embedding mastery in mathematics; developing assessment policy and practice; improving transition from KS2 to KS3 and developing secondary collaborative approaches.
- There has been a focus on work/life balance as well as improving mental health and wellbeing of staff. Mental health leads have been appointed for all schools and the MAC Central Team.
- HR processes have been reviewed resulting in a new MAC recruitment policy to ensure consistent and correct processes are followed by all schools.
- The MAC has invested in a new Single Central Record tracker across all schools which has resulted in consistency in monitoring and checking safeguarding practice and processes, ensuring that these are implemented and reviewed regularly by both Headteachers and Governors.
- The externally appointed Safeguarding Improvement Lead works closely with school DSLs, Headteachers and lead Governors on safeguarding to ensure that the MAC is compliant with KCSIE guidance and safeguarding practice and culture is exemplary across the organisation.
- The MAC has been approached by the Bishop Challoner Teaching School Alliance to be a strategic partner. The maths lead for the MAC is also a Maths Hub Leader.

Priority 5: Use of Resources

- Financial probity. There were no red flags in the external audit management letter for 2021/22 and none have been identified for 2022/23. Internal refresher training and monitoring has continued for school-based processes and the Company's Internal Financial Procedures Manual is updated annually.
- In common with almost all trusts budgeting is a concern at present. All schools finished 2022/23 academic year with an in-year revenue surplus or a deficit within their current existing school reserves. However, in line with most other schools and trusts nationally, projections are causing some concerns and further work is needed.
- Benchmarking is being used across the MAC to identify further efficiencies in schools including IT.
- All schools to have revenue reserves of at least 3% of total income except BU who are working towards a budgeted plan to reach that target as funds will be required as part of their new build programme.
- All schools are compliant with Diocesan statutory building requirements and this is continually monitored using the Every software system.
- All MAC websites meet the DFE and ESFA website compliance audits for documents and information and are checked to ensure these standards are met throughout the year.

The Company which is now in its fifth year of operation continues to evolve and to adapt to the ever-changing educational environment. The total number of pupils in November 2023 was 4,251 as opposed to 4,123 in the



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October 2022 census (+3.1%). However, whilst we are continuing to see growth in pupil numbers at secondary schools, the number of pupils within the primary age group continues to decrease. These lower primary numbers will eventually feed through into the secondary stages in line with local and national trends.

The Company continues to be committed to Catholic social teaching supported by the "Way of the Cross". In particular, at the beginning of the academic year 2022/23 we were delighted to celebrate our Feast Day at Coventry Cathedral where over 1,000 pupils and staff gathered together to celebrate Mass.

The Company is committed to continual improvement, which has been achieved in a number of ways, including improvement planning, review meetings, school and MAC continual professional development, governor training, lesson observations, performance management, self-evaluation, peer to peer reviews, reviews by external partners, data analysis and action planning.

The particular achievements and performance of the Company during the year ended 31 August 2023 were as follows:

- One school within the Company had a Diocesan Section 48 inspection during the academic year 2022/23 under the new Catholic Schools Inspection (CSI) Framework resulting in an "Outstanding" judgement in all areas.

The following comments are taken from the report on St John Vianney Catholic School Inspection December 2022:

"Pupils demonstrate a deep sense of belonging to this welcoming, inclusive community. They behave exceptionally well, are polite and appreciate all the school offers them." (St John Vianney CSI report December 2022).

"High-quality teaching in religious education enthuses and engages pupils, enabling them to be confident, successful learners."

- All Primary schools continue to be at least "Good" and two are "Outstanding" under the CSI framework and both Secondary schools are judged to be "Outstanding". One of the Company's 2025 ambitions is for all schools to be judged outstanding in their next CSI (Section 48).
- The Company has three national Catholic Schools Inspectors successfully appointed under the new framework who will also support work within our schools on Catholic Life and Mission, Collective Worship and Religious Education.
- In 2022 – 2023 one Primary School had an ungraded Ofsted Inspection where it was confirmed that the school continues to deliver a "Good" education to its pupils. All schools within the Company continue to be rated "Good" by Ofsted at the time of their last inspection and many had features that were judged "Outstanding."

The following comments are taken from the report on St Augustine's Ofsted Ungraded Inspection, June 2023:

"St Augustine's Catholic Primary School is a friendly, inclusive school. Pupils come from diverse backgrounds and faiths, and all are welcomed. Leaders, staff, governors and members of the multi-academy company want the very best for every pupil. Pupils enjoy school and live up to leaders' expectations."

"Some pupils benefit from a highly personalised approach to learning. They are supported by skilled staff and, as a result, make good progress through the curriculum."

"Staff feel well supported by leaders, governors and the multi-academy company. They know that their well-being is considered, and staff welcome being included in making decisions about changes."



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- Outcomes in 2023 (see tables below) were above national outcomes in the majority Key Performance Indicators for EYFS, KS2 and KS4. At KS2, progress in reading and mathematics at 4 out of the 5 Primary schools was well above national averages and the fifth school was in line with national averages. KS2 attainment in reading and mathematics was well-above national average for all schools. A key priority for the Company in the year ahead will be improving writing outcomes at Expected Standard and Greater Depth at KS2.
- At KS4 we were delighted that both secondary schools had their highest ever progress measures of 0.37 at Bishop Ullathorne and 0.51 at Cardinal Newman. In addition, GCSE outcomes in English and Maths were well above LA and national averages for percentage 4+, 5+ and 7+ and the percentage of pupils achieving 5+ in English and Mathematics was well-above LA and national averages.
- Attendance is above national averages for the majority of schools and in line with national for all schools. Persistent absence and severe persistent absence are low and better than national data for the majority of schools.
- An external review of Governance has led to the “Achieving Together” document which outlines expectations and supports governors in executing their duties. Lead governors appointed for all key areas with training planned for 2023-2024 to support them and to ensure that work consistently across the Company.
- Compliance tracking and reporting is completed monthly and the Every system is embedded to ensure that all schools are fully compliant with Diocesan and Health and Safety procedures.
- The Company successfully recruited School Improvement Leaders, on secondment from academy schools, to support the development of teaching and learning across the Trust.
- The Company successfully submitted an application for a further secondary school rebuild which has been approved and initial meetings with the DfE School Rebuild Team have now begun for both Secondary Schools.
- The Estates strategy successfully identified key areas for capital investment which has enhanced and extended the learning environment in all schools. In addition, funding as a result of support for the Local Authority Places Planning Strategy has been used to build a brand-new sports hall and significant classroom and canteen upgrades at Bishop Ullathorne that were completed in August 2023.
- The Company has successfully completed a revision of all websites to a common template.
- All schools have now returned a full and rich wider curriculum programme that benefits all pupils.



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External Outcomes 2023 - Summary

Primary Data 2023

School	CtK	SA	SE	SJV	STM	LA	NA
Early Years %GLD	75.0	69.0	63.3	69.0	66.7	63.9	67.2
Average number of Early Learning Goals at expected level	14.8	14.8	13.7	15.4	13.6	-	14.1
% Y1 ES Phonics	93.3	86.7	66.7	66.7	74.2	76.3	78.9
% End of KS1 ES Phonics	100.00	81.7	93.1	93.3	86.2	85.0	88.6
KS1 ES+ % Reading	78.3	61.7	51.7	86.7	54.2	64.3	68.3
KS1 ES+ % Writing	60.0	56.7	34.5	73.3	42.4	55.4	60.1
KS1 ES+ % Maths	76.7	66.7	48.3	83.3	57.6	67.3	70.4
KS1 % RWM ES	55.0	45.0	24.0	70.0	42.0	51.8	56.0
KS2 ES+ % Reading	85.0	81.4	80.0	86.2	78.9	68.2	72.6
KS2 ES+ % Writing	85.0	52.5	56.7	93.1	71.9	69.5	71.5
KS2 ES+ % Maths	78.3	79.7	86.7	93.1	84.2	71.0	72.9
KS2 ES+ % Combined	76.7	49.2	56.7	82.8	68.4	55.9	59.4
PP KS2 ES+ Combined	57	8	46	67	59	42	43
KS2 Reading Progress	+0.03	+2.31	+4.46	+1.09	+0.66	-0.49	0
KS2 Writing Progress	-0.14	-3.4	-1.94	+1.82	-2.19	-0.35	0
KS2 Maths Progress	-1.1	+2.48	+3.03	+4.78	+1.94	+0.17	0

Secondary Data

KS4

School	BU	CN	LA	Diocese	NA
Basics - % achieving Grade 5 or better in Eng and Maths	48.9	58.5	40.8	45.4	45.1
% 5+ Maths	53.4	60.7	45.3	-	50.6
%5+ English	72.4	77.7	58.2	-	60.5
%5+ Religious Education	72.9	65.0	-	-	61.3
Attainment 8	50.3	52.2	43.7	47.9	46.3
Progress 8	0.37	0.51	-0.05	-	-0.03
% EBacc Entries	27.0	36.2	33.8	-	39.2
EBacc APS	4.31	4.46	-	-	4.05

KS5

School	BU	CN	LA	Diocese	NA
No of Entries	185	211	-	-	-
%A*-A	20.0	16.6	16.7	17.3	27.2
%A*-B	48.1	39.8	41.8	41.8	53.5

Pupil Absence Data

Schools	BU	CN	CtK	SA	SE	SJV	STM
Absence rates 2022/23 Autumn/Spring	6.8%	8.2%	5.1%	5.9%	6.1%	4.5%	5.7%
National Average	8.7%			6.0%			
Persistent Absence 2022/23 Autumn/Spring	22.2%	25.3%	11.0%	17.4%	18.5%	8.2%	15.0%
National Average	25.4%			17.5%			
Severe Persistent Absence 2022/23 Autumn/Spring	1.2%	2.9%	0.5%	1.2%	0.0%	1.1%	0.3%
National Average	3.1%			0.7%			



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Most Recent Inspection Outcomes

Schools	BU	CN	CtK	SA	SE	SJV	STM
OFSTED	Good March 2019	Good April 2016	Good March 2019	Good July 2023	Good July 2019	Good May 2016	Good Jan 2018
Section 48	Outstanding June 2022	Outstanding March 2022	Outstanding June 2018	Good March 2022	Good March 2018	Outstanding Nov 2022	Good Nov 2021

Destinations

Schools	BU		CN	
	Year 11	Year 13	Year 11	Year 13
Number Pupils	176	64	224	85
% school 6 th Form	37.5		54	
Other Education or Training Provider	57.4	1.6	41	
% Apprenticeship	2.8	10.9	3.0	10
% NEET	1.7	-	1.8	0.5
% University		75		84
% Employment		-		5
% Gap Year		12.5		0.5

a. Key performance indicators

The Company uses a number of benchmarks or performance indicators to evaluate its financial performance and drive budgetary control and monitoring.

A key financial performance indicator for the Company is the level of reserves held at the balance sheet date and, in particular, the unrestricted reserves plus restricted income reserves held at year end. At 31 August 2023, the balance of the unrestricted and restricted income reserves was £3,244,000 (2022: £3,145,000). Further details on the level of reserves held by the Company are set out in the Reserves Policy section below.

As the majority of the Company's funding is based on pupil numbers, pupil numbers is also a key performance indicator. As noted earlier in this report, pupil numbers at the most recent census (Oct '23) were 4,225 which is an increase of 102 from the previous year (Oct '22 census).

Staffing costs are another key performance indicator for the Company and the percentage of total staff costs to total educational grant funding (being GAG funding plus other operating educational grants from the ESFA and / or Local Authority) for the year was 80.3% (2022: 85.3%), while the percentage of staff costs to total costs (excluding depreciation and LGPS FRS102 pension cost charges) was 77.7% (2022: 84.1%).

b. Going concern – see page 23

c. Promoting the success of the Company

The Directors have acted in the way which they consider, in good faith, promotes the success of the Company for the benefit of its pupils and their parents, the Department for Education and the Education and Skills Funding Agency as principal funders and regulators, its suppliers and local wider school community as a whole, and in doing so have given regard to all matters required under its constitution.

d. Our educational business relationships and community

With a highly committed and dedicated workforce, the Company takes great pride in listening to what our pupils,



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parents and local community want and continues to provide the level of education outcomes and results that they have come to expect. The Company continues to evolve and to adapt to the ever-changing educational environment, leading to the continued increase in the awareness of the Company's overall activities and educational performance.

As an educational focused charitable organisation, public benefit is also at the heart of all we do. The details in the "Objectives and Activities" and "Achievements and Performance" section of the Directors' report above provide full details of the impact of our activities and our achievements for the year.

With respect to suppliers, the Company's policy for the payment of suppliers is to agree to terms of payment in advance in line with normal commercial practices and, provided a supplier performs in accordance with the agreement, to abide by such terms.

The Company is also committed to contributing towards combating the threat of global warming by using energy efficient measures to reduce CO2 emissions throughout its buildings, facilities and operations.

e. Our stakeholders

In addition to our pupils, parents, suppliers and wider local community, the Directors also recognise the importance of their relationship with the Department for Education (DfE) and the Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA), as principal funders, regulators and stakeholders. The Directors are committed to effective engagement with the DfE and the ESFA (and their representatives) and recognise that its success depends on the Directors and senior management's ability to engage with them effectively and to work with them constructively, taking into account their guidance and best practice initiatives, whilst also working in line with the specific requirements of the Company's funding agreement and the Academies Trust Handbook.

f. Our people

The Company's key asset is its people. It employs over 500 staff, including agency workers, and it is only through the combined effort of this workforce, together with our supporters and volunteers, that we can change the lives of the children under our care. The Company encourages the involvement of all employees in decision making processes that impact on them directly and further details on our engagement with our people is detailed in the "Engagement with Employees (including Disabled Persons)" section of the Directors' report above.

g. Our Members

The Members (through their representatives) are actively engaged in understanding our strategy and vision for the future, our culture and ethos, our people and our educational performance and standards.

h. Maintaining a reputation for high standards

The Company has been in operation for four years, and is committed to continual improvement, which it achieves in a number of ways, including improvement planning, review meetings, school and MAC continual professional development, lesson observations, performance management, self-evaluation, peer to peer reviews, reviews by external partners, data analysis and action planning.

The Company also continually develops strategies to maintain and grow its pupil base, including significant engagement with other local Companies and schools.

The information in the "Achievements and Performance" section of the Directors' report above provides full details of our achievements during the year and the standards of educational performance we have achieved for all our stakeholders.

One of the Company's schools, Cardinal Newman Catholic School, has been selected for a re-build under the new DfE School Building Programme which is scheduled to open in September 2025. The Coventry City Council Pupil Placement Expansion Programme funding has also built a new Sports Hall for Bishop Ullathorne Catholic School which opened in September 2023. This was supported by Company capital funding which is providing improved sports changing facilities and a new music suite.



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Financial review

The majority of the Company's income is received from ESFA in the form of recurrent grants, the use of which is restricted to particular purposes. The grants received from ESFA during the period ended 31 August 2023 and the associated expenditure of these grants are shown as restricted funds in the Statement of Financial Activities.

The Company also receives grants for fixed assets from the ESFA and other organisations / funders and these are shown as restricted fixed asset funds in the Statement of Financial Activities. The balance of the restricted fixed asset fund is reduced by the depreciation charges on the assets acquired using these funds.

For the year ended 31 August 2023, the Company's total income (excluding capital grants) was £25,790,000 (2022: £23,882,000) while the total expenditure (excluding depreciation and LGPS FRS102 pension cost charges) was £25,691,000 (2022: £23,561,000), resulting in a net surplus for the year of £99,000 (2022: £312,000).

The balance of reserves at 31 August 2023, excluding the restricted fixed asset funds and LGPS liability fund was £3,244,000 (2022: £3,145,000).

The net book value of fixed assets at 31 August 2023 was £1,963,000 (2022: £1,606,000). The fixed assets held by the Company are used exclusively for providing education and associated support services to the pupils of the Company. The ownership of the buildings, and the land they stand on, remains with the Archdiocese of Birmingham.

Included within the Company's balance sheet at year end is a defined benefit pension scheme liability of £896,000 (2022: £3,270,000), which arises from the deficit in the Local Government Pension Scheme ('LGPS') that is attributable to the schools pre-academisation. Further details regarding the deficit in the LGPS at 31 August 2023 are set out in note 26 to the financial statements.

The key financial policies reviewed and adopted during the period included the Financial Procedures, Policies and Manual, which lay out the framework for the Company's financial management, including financial responsibilities of the Board of Directors, Catholic Senior Executive Leader, Chief Financial Operating Officer, Headteachers, Business and office managers, budget holders and other staff, as well as the delegated authorities for spending. The other financial policies reviewed and adopted during the period included Charges and Lettings, Asset Management and Insurance.

a. Reserves policy

The Directors review the reserve levels of the Company annually. This review encompasses the nature of the income and expenditure streams, the need to match income with commitments and the nature of reserves. The Directors also take into consideration the future plans of the Company, the uncertainty over future income streams and other key risks identified during the risk review.

The Directors have determined that the appropriate level of free cash reserves should be approximately 3-5% of total incoming resources (£820,000 - £1,365,000). The reason for this is to provide sufficient working capital to cover delays between spending and receipts of grants and to provide a cushion to deal with unexpected emergencies such as urgent maintenance, long term staff absences etc.

The Company's current level of reserves at 31 August 2023 is £4,299,000 (2022: (£1,893,000)), of which £3,244,000 (2022: £3,145,000) is free reserves (that is, total funds less the amount held in fixed asset and pension restricted funds).

Although the current level of free reserves is above the target level identified above, the Directors expectation is that these reserves will be utilised over the next few years to fund ongoing development, including contributions towards the FF&E and loose ICT of the secondary school rebuilds, and the need to retain key staff in light of the increasing cost pressures in future years.

The value of the restricted fixed asset fund at 31 August 2023 is £1,951,000 (2022: £2,018,000), which is represented by the fixed assets that are used exclusively for providing education and associated support services



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to the pupils of the Company. Unspent capital grants and capital loans are also reflected within this fund balance. These funds can only be realised by disposing of the associated tangible fixed assets.

The pension reserve fund has a deficit balance at 31 August 2023 of £896,000 (2022: £3,270,000), which represents the deficit in the LGPS at the balance sheet date. The effect of the LGPS deficit is that the Company is required to make additional pension contributions over a number of years in order to fund the deficit. Those additional contributions are determined by the pension scheme trustees, who use different assumptions to those utilised in calculating the deficit balance of £896,000 (2022: £3,270,000). These pension contributions will be funded from the Company's annual recurring income, which could adversely impact its ability to continue to deliver its educational outcomes with the available public funding it receives if the current basis for determining the level of additional contributions were to change detrimentally at any point.

The fund has been revalued in 2023 and the pension deficit has dropped considerably in the last 2 years from £11,657,000 in 2021 to £896,000 in 2023. The Directors have noted that the Government has provided a confirmation that in the event of a Multi Academy Company's insolvent dissolution, any outstanding LGPS liabilities would be met by the DfE.

b. Investment policy

All funds surplus to immediate requirements are considered for investment to optimal effect by the Company with the objective of ensuring maximum return on assets invested but with minimal risk. At the Company's Resources Committee meeting in October 2022 the Directors considered market rates of return on investments and resolved that, as the rates have now risen appreciably above previous lows then surplus fund /investments will commence in the very short term. Following the next Bank of England and subsequent Lloyds Bank investment rates in November 2022, £1,500,000 has been invested with Lloyds in 3 and 6 month fixed deposit rates terms since then.

c. Principal risks and uncertainties

The Directors have assessed the major risks to which the Company is exposed, especially in the operational areas, such as teaching, health & safety, safeguarding and school trips, and in relation to the control of finances and strategic development of the Company. They have introduced systems, including operational procedures and internal financial controls in order to minimise risk and have agreed a Risk Management Strategy and Risk Management Plan, which incorporates a Risk Register.

Where significant financial risk still remains, the Directors have ensured the Company has adequate insurance cover in place. The Risk Management Plan is constantly reviewed in light of any new information and formally reviewed annually.

d. Educational

The continuing success of the Company is dependent on continuing to attract pupil applicants in sufficient numbers by maintaining the highest educational standards across all key stages. To mitigate this risk, the Directors ensure that pupil success and achievement are closely monitored and reviewed, with corrective actions embedded at an early stage, and that relationships and partnerships with parents, the local community and other organisations and groups are maintained and are effective in producing a cohesive and supportive community.

e. Safeguarding and child protection

The Directors continue to ensure that the highest standards are maintained in the areas of selection and monitoring of staff, the operation of child protection policies and procedures, health & safety and discipline.

f. Financial

The Company has considerable reliance on continued Government funding through the ESFA. In the year, approximately 91.1% (2022: 92.5%) of the Company's income was ultimately Government funded. Whilst this level is expected to continue, there is no assurance that Government policy or practice will remain the same or that public funding will continue at the same levels or on the same terms, particularly in the light of continuing changes to the National Funding Formula for schools.



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Unfunded continuing increases in employment costs, including pension costs association with both the Teachers' Pension Scheme and the Local Government Pension Scheme, and premises costs will also continue to place significant pressure on the Company's financial position and its ability to deliver balanced budgets in the future. Similarly, whilst the Company enjoys some long-term protection due to some long-term contracts, the impact of very significant energy cost increases will start to be felt in the 2022/23 financial year.

The impact of the Harper Brazel employment law ruling is expected to be limited to permanent staff with irregular hours/pay who do not already qualify for the statutory minimum holiday pay. As such the impact on the Company is not thought to be significant.

The Directors examine the financial health of the Company formally at every half termly board meeting and regularly review performance against budgets and overall expenditure by means of regular update reports at all full Board and Resources Committee meetings. The Chair of the Resources Committee and Chair of the Board meet informally, monthly, with the CSEL, CFOO and Finance Manager to review performance against budgets and overall expenditure.

Going Concern

When the Company was formed, it inherited the LGPS WMPF Pension Deficit. However the value of the buildings, and the land under them, remained with the Diocese and so has not been included on the balance sheet.

Having regard to the Company's financial forecasts, and to the fact that the LGPS's contributions levels are fixed until 2025, the Directors have determined that there are sufficient cash reserves and working capital to ensure that the Company can continue operating for a period of at least 12 months. On this basis the Directors have prepared the accounts on a going concern basis.

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

Fundraising

The Company has promoted various fundraising activities during the year ended 31 August 2023 including support for Afghan and Ukrainian refugees, food banks and local charities.

Fundraising is primarily undertaken by school staff or parents, no professional fundraisers, commercial participators or third parties work with the Company currently. Any fundraising would be undertaken in line with the Fundraising Regulator's Code of Fundraising Practice and is monitored by the central finance function of the Company. The Company is mindful of the requirement to protect the public, particularly vulnerable people, from unreasonably intrusive or persistent fundraising approaches or undue pressure to donate. No complaints have been received in respect of fundraising activities; the general complaints policy of the Company would be applicable if so.

Plans for future periods

The Company strives to continually improve levels of attainment for all pupils, equipping them with the qualifications, skills and character to follow their chosen pathway, whether it is into further and higher education or employment, as well as promoting the continued professional development of its staff.

During 2022/23 the Company's Improvement Plan was reviewed and the Key Areas for 2022 to 2025 were revised to align them with the Department for Education Assurance Framework as well as the existing Ofsted Key Areas. The Key Areas for the 2022 to 25 Improvement Plan are:

1. Catholic Life, Ethos and Educational Vision



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2. Quality of Education, Teaching and Learning, Curriculum and Assessment
3. People, Partners and Personal Development
4. Leadership and Management
5. Use of Resources

Within the revised Key Areas, the Company's priorities for 2023/24 are:

1. Catholic Life, Ethos and Educational Vision

- Establish a pupil council.
- Deliver a programme of peer reviews for Catholic Life and Mission, Religious Education and Collective Worship.
- Further develop strategies to increase attendance and reduce persistent absence and severe persistent absence.
- Comprehensively track pupil trips and visits across all schools and analyse data to ensure that there is equality of opportunity for all pupils.
- Further embed the MAC mission vision and values.
- Undertake a staff census to support equalities objectives and recruitment strategies.
- Review A Level RE teaching.
- Reduce suspension rates.
- Develop training to support future Catholic leaders and succession planning.

2. Quality of Education, Teaching and Learning, Curriculum and Assessment

- Focus on teaching and assessing of writing from Early Years to end of KS2 to ensure pupils make outstanding progress in writing.
- Improve secondary science teaching.
- Improve A-level outcomes which are currently below national.
- Improve progress at all key stages.
- Establish a Teaching and Learning Team and ensure key priorities are identified and action plans produced to support underperforming areas across the MAC. Also, research and develop a Teaching and Learning Framework.
- Review the curriculum from 4 – 19 across all schools to ensure that it is ambitious, broad, well-sequenced and knowledge rich.
- Continue to create a culture of continuous improvement through, self-evaluation, peer review processes, external SIP feedback leading to appropriate actions.
- Continue to work with external SIP to ensure the curriculum is accessible to all and effectively teaches disadvantaged children and children with SEND.
- Comprehensively track progress for PP, SEND and all pupil sub-groups to ensure good outcomes for all pupils.
- Review Post 16 in the MAC's two secondary schools.
- Develop a subject leader network.
- Further develop CrossNet (MAC intranet) as a platform for shared resources and to reduce staff workload.
- Review Quality Assurance processes and ensure they are driven by the School Improvement Framework.
- Develop an assessment policy for primary and secondary schools.
- Use of Arbor MIS for data tracking and analysis.

3. People, Partners and Personal Development

- Thrive survey and staff census completed to support diversity and equalities and identify further opportunities to support flexible working, manage workload and prioritise their wellbeing, leading to greater staff retention.
- Continue to build on existing effective collaborations within the MAC.
- Embed the action plans from the School Improvement Leads and identify further opportunities for collaboration to support staff and their professional development.



HOLY CROSS CATHOLIC MULTI ACADEMY COMPANY

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DIRECTORS' REPORT (CONTINUED) FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2023

- Establish MAC ECO Champions and develop a sustainability policy
- Establish MAC Staff Liaison Group.
- Evaluate the CPD programme 2022-23 and identify priorities for 2023 – 2025, ensuring they are linked to new teaching and learning programme.
- Continue to contribute as a strategic partner for BCTSA and appoint Initial Teacher Trainees for 2024-25.
- Establish People Strategy and implementation plan.
- Review school compliance with Gatsby benchmarks to assess the development of pupils' employability skills.

4. Leadership and Management

- Deliver the planned programme of training for Governors for academic year 2023/24.
- Further develop the role of lead governors through termly training provided by internal and external leads.
- Identify emerging priorities for MAC CPD to support teaching and learning.
- Embed the People Strategy to support improved recruitment and retention.
- Develop a MAC succession plan and support future catholic leadership development.
- Develop a coaching model supported by School Improvement Leads.

5. Use of Resources

- Effectively use financial data and benchmarking to ensure the MAC has a stable, accurate and sustainable long term financial strategy which delivers value for money through effective budgeting and risk management.
- Continue to plan for projected changes in pupil numbers and any other significant changes in Coventry and Nationally which impact on the financial stability of MAC schools.
- Update the Estates Capital Strategy to include management of the capital programme. This will include working with the DfE on the new build programme for secondary schools, addressing design, ICT and buildings programmes. In addition, revise the capital spending programme to address issues identified in the updated Primary schools Condition Surveys and school Accessibility Plans to future proof the buildings and digital infrastructure and meet the needs of current and future pupils.
- Ensure that all key stakeholders understand their roles and responsibilities identified in the scheme of delegation and in MAC and school policies and procedures and are compliant with them.
- Continue to embed Integrated Curriculum Financial Planning to identify and help drive MAC efficiencies and monitor the efficient use of labour across the MAC.
- Ensure a strong culture of compliance across the MAC to ensure a safe and healthy environment.
- Explore the full potential of Arbor MIS modules to ensure that it is fully utilised across the MAC.
- Ensure that we communicate effectively with our workforce and support work life balance through the MAC Intranet – CrossNet.

Funds held as custodian on behalf of others

The Company and its Directors do not act as Custodian Trustees of any other charity

The Company does however hold Post 16 Bursary Funds on behalf of the ESFA, which are distributed to students as required and in line with the terms and conditions of the funds.



HOLY CROSS CATHOLIC MULTI ACADEMY COMPANY

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**DIRECTORS' REPORT (CONTINUED)
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2023**

Disclosure of information to auditor

Insofar as the Directors are aware:

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

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

J Teahan
Chair of Directors

Date:



HOLY CROSS CATHOLIC MULTI ACADEMY COMPANY

(A Company Limited by Guarantee)

GOVERNANCE STATEMENT

GOVERNANCE STATEMENT

Scope of responsibility

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

As Directors, we have reviewed and taken account of the guidance in DfE's Governance Handbook and competency framework for governance. During the academic year 2022/23 Directors commissioned an external review of governance which concluded that much of the governance of the Company was highly effective and identified a limited number of improvement priorities relating to the consistency and monitoring role of Local Governing Bodies.

The Board of Directors has delegated the day-to-day responsibility to the Catholic Senior Executive Leader (CSEL), 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 that Holy Cross Catholic Company and the Secretary of State for Education. They are also responsible for reporting to the Board of Directors any material weaknesses or breakdowns in internal control.

Governance

The information on governance included here supplements that information that is described in the Directors' Report and in the Statement of Directors' Responsibilities. The Board of Directors met formally 7 times during the year ended 31 August 2023, six scheduled meetings and an additional extraordinary meeting held on 20 September 2022. MJ Gallagher resigned during the course of the year and attendance is shown for the meetings prior to his resignation.

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

Director	Meetings attended	Out of a possible
K Ainsworth	7	7
AJ Cawley	7	7
MJ Gallagher	4	4
K Marston	6	7
LP Moore	7	7
R Ridley	4	7
J Teahan	7	7

The Board of Directors reviewed the Company's governance structure during the year to evaluate its impact and effectiveness and are satisfied that the current structure in place is appropriate and effective for the Company. The Board of Directors undertook a skills audit to inform future Board membership, training and succession planning, and concluded at the outcome of the review that, between them, they had a wide range of skills that contribute to the successful governance of the Company.

In Spring 2023 Directors conducted a further skills audit and review of governance structures which confirmed previous findings that the broad skills base and governance structures underpinned the successful governance of the Company. Directors were mindful of the fact that many Directors and Governors came to the end of their terms of office at the end of the academic year and considerable effort was directed to succession planning to ensure robust governance continued into the 2023/24 academic year.

The Board of Directors met more than six times during the year, they have maintained effective financial oversight and governance through the formal work undertaken by the Resources Committee and the Audit Committee as detailed further below. These are Committees of the Board of Directors and they met 6 and 3 times respectively



HOLY CROSS CATHOLIC MULTI ACADEMY COMPANY

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GOVERNANCE STATEMENT (continued)

during the year. The minutes of these Committee meetings are provided to the full Board of Directors and the Chairs of these Committees report to each full Board of Directors meeting on the key matters considered at their meetings and the impact for consideration by the full Board of Directors.

All planned meetings took place in 2022-2023.

The **Resources** Committee is a Committee of the Board of Directors. Its purpose is to provide oversight, guidance and assistance to the Board of Directors on all matters related to finance, resources, premises and Health & Safety of the Academy Company.

The key issue(s) dealt with by the Resources Committee during the year was the review of the Company's 3-year financial forecasts and the actions required to address the reduced funding expected over this period. MJ Gallagher resigned during the course of the year and attendance is shown for the meetings prior to his resignation.

Attendance during the year at meetings was as follows:

Director	Meetings attended	Out of a possible
K Ainsworth	5	6
T Cawley	5	6
M Gallagher	2	4
L Moore	6	6

The **Audit** Committee is also a Committee of the Board of Directors. Its purpose is to maintain an oversight of the Company's governance, risk management, internal control and value for money framework. It will report its findings annually to the Board of Directors and the Accounting Officer as a critical element of the Company's annual reporting requirements.

The key issue(s) dealt with by the Audit Committee during the year was the review of the report received from Lana Forrester, Head of Services, Schools Financial Services, Birmingham City Council, in relation to the Company's systems of internal control and the actions undertaken to address the limited control weaknesses identified. The Audit Committee also review the Risk Register at each meeting.

Attendance during the year at meetings was as follows:

Director	Meetings attended	Out of a possible
R Ridley	3	3
K Ainsworth	3	3
J Teahan	3	3

Review of value for money

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

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

- Achieving economies of scale by negotiating Company contracts rather than individual school contracts including Find A Tender (formerly OJEU) tenders where applicable.
- Completing Benchmarking exercises to review spending on curriculum and staffing.
- Clear strategic priorities were identified for the academic year to ensure that money was allocated to key improvement areas.



HOLY CROSS CATHOLIC MULTI ACADEMY COMPANY

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GOVERNANCE STATEMENT (continued)

- Central purchasing where beneficial to ensure best value for money.

The purpose of the system of internal control

The system of internal control is designed to manage risk to a reasonable level rather than to eliminate all risk of failure to achieve policies, aims and objectives; it can therefore only provide reasonable and not absolute assurance of effectiveness. The system of internal control is based on an ongoing process designed to identify and prioritise the risks to the achievement of the Company's policies, aims and objectives, to evaluate the likelihood of those risks being realised and the impact should they be realised, and to manage them efficiently, effectively and economically.

The system of internal control has been in place in the Company for the period from 1 September 2022 to 31 August 2023 and up to the date of approval of the annual report and financial statements.

Capacity to handle risk

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

The risk and control framework

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

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

The Board of Directors appointed Lana Forrester (the 'Internal Auditor'), Head of Services, Schools Financial Services, Birmingham City Council, to undertake the internal auditing of the above matters. For 2023/24 the Internal Audit will be undertaken by SAAF Education Ltd.

The Internal Auditor is totally independent of Cooper Parry Group Limited, which is the firm providing external audit.

The Internal Auditor's role includes giving advice on financial matters and performing a range of checks on the Company's financial systems. In particular, the checks carried out in the current year included:

- review of and testing of income recognition and recording systems and procedures
- review of and testing of payroll systems and procedures
- review of and testing of procurement systems and procedures
- review of and testing of bank control procedures
- Review of management information preparation procedures, including information prepared for and presented to the Board of Directors



HOLY CROSS CATHOLIC MULTI ACADEMY COMPANY

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GOVERNANCE STATEMENT (continued)

On a termly basis, the internal auditor reports to the Board of Directors through the Audit Committee on the operation of the systems of control and on the discharge of the Board of Directors' financial responsibilities and annually prepares an annual summary report to the committee outlining the areas reviewed, key findings, recommendations and conclusions to help the committee consider actions and assess year on year progress.

Whilst there were no significant internal control weaknesses identified from the work completed, the Directors and management plan to continue to strengthen and improve internal controls over the next 12 months.

Review of effectiveness

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

- the work of the Internal Auditor
- the work of the External Auditor
- the financial management and governance self-assessment process; including the School Resource Management Self-Assessment and VMFI Tools
- the work of the executive managers within the Company who have responsibility for the development and maintenance of the internal control framework.

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

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

J Teahan
Chair of Directors

Date:

M Kelly
Accounting Officer

Date:



HOLY CROSS CATHOLIC MULTI ACADEMY COMPANY

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STATEMENT ON REGULARITY, PROPRIETY AND COMPLIANCE

As Accounting Officer of the Holy Cross Catholic Multi Academy Company I have considered my responsibility to notify the Company's Board of Directors and ESFA of material irregularity, impropriety and non-compliance with ESFA terms and conditions of all funding, including for estates safety and management, under the funding agreement in place between the Company and the Secretary of State. As part of my consideration I have had due regard to the requirements of the Academies Trust Handbook 2022, including responsibilities for estates safety and management.

I confirm that I and the Company's Board of Directors are able to identify any material irregular or improper use of all funds by the Company, or material non-compliance with the terms and conditions of funding under the Company's funding agreement and the Academies Trust Handbook 2022.

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

.....
M Kelly
Accounting Officer
Date:



HOLY CROSS CATHOLIC MULTI ACADEMY COMPANY

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STATEMENT OF DIRECTORS' RESPONSIBILITIES FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2023

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

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

- select suitable accounting policies and then apply them consistently
- observe the methods and principles of the Charities SORP 2019 and the Academies Accounts Direction 2022 to 2023
- make judgements and accounting estimates that are reasonable and prudent
- state whether applicable UK Accounting Standards have been followed, subject to any material departures disclosed and explained in the 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 Directors are responsible for keeping adequate accounting records that are sufficient to show and explain the charitable company's transactions and disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time the financial position of the charitable company and enable them to ensure that the financial statements comply with the Companies Act 2006. They are also responsible for safeguarding the assets of the charitable company and hence for taking reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities.

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

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

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

J Teahan
Chair of Directors

Date:

HOLY CROSS CATHOLIC MULTI ACADEMY COMPANY
(A Company Limited by Guarantee)

**INDEPENDENT AUDITOR'S REPORT ON THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS TO THE MEMBERS OF HOLY
CROSS CATHOLIC MULTI ACADEMY COMPANY**

Opinion

We have audited the financial statements of Holy Cross Catholic Multi Academy Company (the 'Company') for the period ended 31 August 2023 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 2022 to 2023 issued by the Education and Skills Funding Agency.

In our opinion the financial statements:

- give a true and fair view of the state of the company's affairs as at 31 August 2023 and of its incoming resources and application of resources, including its income and expenditure for the period 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 2022 to 2023 issued by the Education and Skills Funding Agency.

Basis for opinion

We conducted our audit in accordance with International Standards on Auditing (UK) (ISAs (UK)) and applicable law. Our responsibilities under those standards are further described in the Auditor's responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements section of our report. We are independent of the company 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 Directors' use of the going concern basis of accounting in the preparation of the financial statements is appropriate.

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

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

HOLY CROSS CATHOLIC MULTI ACADEMY COMPANY
(A Company Limited by Guarantee)

**INDEPENDENT AUDITOR'S REPORT ON THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS TO THE MEMBERS OF HOLY
CROSS CATHOLIC MULTI ACADEMY COMPANY (CONTINUED)**

Other information

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

We have nothing to report in this regard.

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 Directors' Report including the Strategic Report for the financial year for which the financial statements are prepared is consistent with the financial statements.
- the Directors' 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 company and its environment obtained in the course of the audit, we have not identified material misstatements in the Directors' 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 Directors' remuneration specified by law are not made; or
- we have not received all the information and explanations we require for our audit.

Responsibilities of directors

As explained more fully in the Statement of Directors' Responsibilities, the Directors (who are also the directors of the company 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 Directors determine is necessary to enable the preparation of financial statements that are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

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

HOLY CROSS CATHOLIC MULTI ACADEMY COMPANY
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**INDEPENDENT AUDITOR'S REPORT ON THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS TO THE MEMBERS OF HOLY
CROSS CATHOLIC MULTI ACADEMY COMPANY (CONTINUED)**

Auditor's responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements

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

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 assessment focussed on key laws and regulations the Company has to comply with and areas of the financial statements we assessed as being more susceptible to misstatement. These key laws and regulations included but were not limited to compliance with the Companies Act 2006, Charities Act 2011, the Academies Trust Handbook 2022, the Academies Accounts Direction 2022 to 2023, taxation legislation, data protection, anti-bribery and employment legislation.

We are not responsible for preventing irregularities. Our approach to detecting irregularities included, but was not limited to, the following:

- obtaining an understanding of the legal and regulatory framework applicable to the company and how the company is complying with that framework, including agreement of financial statement disclosures to underlying documentation and other evidence;
- obtaining an understanding of the Company's control environment and how the Company has applied relevant control procedures, through discussions with Directors and other management and by reviewing the reports on the internal scrutiny work commissioned by the trust in relation to the year and by performing walkthrough testing over key areas;
- obtaining an understanding of the company's risk assessment process, including the risk of fraud;
- reviewing meeting minutes of those charged with governance throughout the year; and
- performing audit testing to address the risk of management override of controls, including testing journal entries and other adjustments for appropriateness, evaluating the business rationale of significant transactions outside the normal course of business and reviewing accounting estimates for bias.

Whilst considering how our audit work addressed the detection of irregularities, we also considered the likelihood of detection based on our approach. Irregularities arising from fraud are inherently more difficult to detect than those arising from error.

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 Auditor's Report.

HOLY CROSS CATHOLIC MULTI ACADEMY COMPANY
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**INDEPENDENT AUDITOR'S REPORT ON THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS TO THE MEMBERS OF HOLY
CROSS CATHOLIC MULTI ACADEMY COMPANY (CONTINUED)**

Use of our report

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

Glen Bott FCA (Senior Statutory Auditor)

for and on behalf of

Cooper Parry Group Limited

Statutory Auditor

Cubo Birmingham

Office 401, 3rd Floor

Two Chamberlain Square

Birmingham

B3 3AX

Date:

HOLY CROSS CATHOLIC MULTI ACADEMY COMPANY
(A Company Limited by Guarantee)

**INDEPENDENT REPORTING ACCOUNTANT'S ASSURANCE REPORT ON REGULARITY TO HOLY
CROSS CATHOLIC MULTI ACADEMY COMPANY AND THE EDUCATION AND SKILLS FUNDING
AGENCY**

In accordance with the terms of our engagement letter dated 2 November 2023 and further to the requirements of the Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA) as included in the Academies Accounts Direction 2022 to 2023, we have carried out an engagement to obtain limited assurance about whether the expenditure disbursed and income received by Holy Cross Catholic Multi Academy Company during the year 1 September 2022 to 31 August 2023 have been applied to the purposes identified by Parliament and the financial transactions conform to the authorities which govern them.

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

Respective responsibilities of Holy Cross Catholic Multi Academy Company's accounting officer and the reporting accountant

The accounting officer is responsible, under the requirements of Holy Cross Catholic Multi Academy Company's funding agreement with the Secretary of State for Education dated 30 August 2019 and the Academy Trust Handbook, extant from 1 September 2022, for ensuring that expenditure disbursed and income received is applied for the purposes intended by Parliament and the financial transactions conform to the authorities which govern them.

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

Approach

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

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

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

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

The work undertaken to draw our conclusions included:

- Reviewing the internal control policies and procedures implemented by the Company and evaluating their design and effectiveness to understand how the Company has complied with the framework of authorities;
- Reviewing the minutes of meetings of the Directors, relevant sub-committees and other evidence made available to us, relevant to our consideration of regularity;
- Enquiries of the Accounting Officer, including reviewing the work undertaken by the Accounting Officer in relation to their Statement on Regularity, Propriety and Compliance; and

HOLY CROSS CATHOLIC MULTI ACADEMY COMPANY
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**INDEPENDENT REPORTING ACCOUNTANT'S ASSURANCE REPORT ON REGULARITY TO HOLY
CROSS CATHOLIC MULTI ACADEMY COMPANY AND THE EDUCATION & SKILLS FUNDING AGENCY
(CONTINUED)**

- Detailed testing of the income and expenditure of the Company based on our assessment of the risk of material irregularity, impropriety and non-compliance. This work was integrated with our audit of the financial statements where appropriate and included analytical review and detailed substantive testing of transactions.

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 2022 to 31 August 2023 has not been applied to purposes intended by Parliament and the financial transactions do not conform to the authorities which govern them.

Reporting Accountant
Cooper Parry Group Limited
Statutory Auditor

Date:

HOLY CROSS CATHOLIC MULTI ACADEMY COMPANY
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**STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES (INCORPORATING INCOME AND EXPENDITURE ACCOUNT)
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2023**

	Unrestricted funds 2023 £000	Restricted funds 2023 £000	Restricted fixed asset funds 2023 £000	Total funds 2023 £000	Total funds 2022 £000
Note					
Income from:					
Donations and capital grants	3	28	-	1,520	1,238
Other trading activities	5	493	-	-	493
Investments	6	20	-	-	20
Charitable activities	4	375	24,874	-	25,249
Total income	<u>916</u>	<u>24,874</u>	<u>1,520</u>	<u>27,310</u>	<u>25,096</u>
Expenditure on:					
Charitable activities	7	953	25,171	1,587	27,711
Total expenditure	<u>953</u>	<u>25,171</u>	<u>1,587</u>	<u>27,711</u>	<u>26,385</u>
Net movement in funds before other recognised gains		(37)	(297)	(67)	(401)
Other recognised gains:					
Actuarial gains on defined benefit pension schemes	26	-	2,807	-	2,807
Net movement in funds		<u>(37)</u>	<u>2,510</u>	<u>(67)</u>	<u>2,406</u>
Reconciliation of funds:					
Total funds brought forward	18	1,352	(1,477)	2,018	1,893
Net movement in funds		(37)	2,510	(67)	2,406
Total funds carried forward		<u>1,315</u>	<u>1,033</u>	<u>1,951</u>	<u>1,893</u>

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

The notes on pages 42 to 70 form part of these financial statements.

HOLY CROSS CATHOLIC MULTI ACADEMY COMPANY

(A Company Limited by Guarantee)

REGISTERED NUMBER: 12084073

**BALANCE SHEET
AS AT 31 AUGUST 2023**

	Note	2023 £000	2022 £000
Fixed assets			
Tangible assets	14	1,963	1,606
Current assets			
Debtors	15	1,103	907
Cash at bank and in hand	23	4,782	5,899
		5,885	6,806
Creditors: amounts falling due within one year	16	(2,511)	(3,102)
Net current assets		3,374	3,704
Total assets less current liabilities		5,337	5,310
Creditors: amounts falling due after more than one year	17	(142)	(147)
Net assets excluding pension liability		5,195	5,163
Defined benefit pension scheme liability	26	(896)	(3,270)
Total net assets		4,299	1,893
Funds of the company			
Restricted funds:			
Fixed asset funds	18	1,951	2,018
Restricted income funds	18	1,929	1,793
		3,880	3,811
Restricted funds excluding pension asset	18	3,880	3,811
Pension reserve	18	(896)	(3,270)
Total restricted funds	18	2,984	541
Unrestricted income funds	18	1,315	1,352
Total funds		4,299	1,893

The financial statements on pages 39 to 70 were approved and authorised for issue by the Directors and are signed on their behalf, by:

J Teahan

Chair of Directors

Date:

The notes on pages 42 to 70 form part of these financial statements.

HOLY CROSS CATHOLIC MULTI ACADEMY COMPANY
(A Company Limited by Guarantee)

STATEMENT OF CASH FLOWS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2023

	Note	2023 £000	2022 £000
Cash flows from operating activities			
Net cash (used in)/provided by operating activities	20	(703)	1,423
Cash flows from investing activities	22	(404)	(636)
Cash flows from financing activities	21	(10)	-
		<hr/>	<hr/>
Change in cash and cash equivalents in the year		(1,117)	787
Cash and cash equivalents at the beginning of the year		5,899	5,112
Cash and cash equivalents at the end of the year	23, 24	<hr/> <hr/>	<hr/> <hr/>
		4,782	5,899

The notes on pages 42 to 70 form part of these financial statements

HOLY CROSS CATHOLIC MULTI ACADEMY COMPANY
(A Company Limited by Guarantee)

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2023

1. Accounting policies

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

1.1 Basis of preparation of financial statements

The financial statements of the company, 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 2022 to 2023 issued by ESFA, the Charities Act 2011 and the Companies Act 2006.

1.2 Going concern

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

The Directors consider that the net current assets balance provides a more accurate reflection of the financial health of the Company, which was recorded as £3,374,000 at the period end. Revenue reserves are held above the Company's target level.

1.3 Income

All incoming resources are recognised when the company 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.

HOLY CROSS CATHOLIC MULTI ACADEMY COMPANY
(A Company Limited by Guarantee)

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2023

1. Accounting policies (continued)

1.3 Income (continued)

- **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 company has provided the goods or services.

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 company 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 company's educational operations, including support costs and costs relating to the governance of the company apportioned to charitable activities.

All resources expended are inclusive of irrecoverable VAT.

1.5 Taxation

The company 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 company 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.

HOLY CROSS CATHOLIC MULTI ACADEMY COMPANY
(A Company Limited by Guarantee)

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2023

1. Accounting policies (continued)

1.6 Tangible fixed assets

Assets costing £2,000 or more are capitalised as tangible fixed assets and are carried at cost, net of depreciation and any provision for impairment.

Where tangible fixed assets have been acquired with the aid of specific grants, either from the government or from the private sector, they are included in the Balance Sheet at cost and depreciated over their expected useful economic life. Where there are specific conditions attached to the funding 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 basis:

Long-term leasehold property	-		
Furniture and equipment	-	33%	
Computer equipment	-	33%	
Motor vehicles	-	20%	reducing balance

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.

The Company occupies some land and buildings which are provided to it and owned by the Birmingham Roman Catholic Diocesan Trustees (the Site Trustees). The Company occupies this land and buildings under the terms of a Supplemental Agreement between the Birmingham Roman Catholic Diocesan Trustees and the Company. This Supplemental Agreement, which amounts to a mere licence, provides the Company with the right to use the land and buildings for an indefinite period, subject to a 2-year termination notice period. Having considered the fact that the Company occupies the land and buildings by a mere licence, which transfers to the Company no rights or control over the sites save that of occupying it at the will of the Site Trustees under the terms of the relevant site trust, the Directors have concluded that the value of the land and buildings occupied by the Company will not be recognised on the balance sheet of the Company.

1.7 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.

1.8 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.

HOLY CROSS CATHOLIC MULTI ACADEMY COMPANY
(A Company Limited by Guarantee)

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2023

1. Accounting policies (continued)

1.9 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 company 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.

1.10 Financial instruments

The company only holds basic financial instruments as defined in FRS 102. The financial assets and financial liabilities of the company 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 notes 16 and 17. Taxation and social security are not included in the financial instruments disclosure definition. Deferred income is not deemed to be a financial liability, as the cash settlement has already taken place and there is an obligation to deliver services rather than cash or another financial instrument.

1.11 Operating leases

Rentals paid under operating leases are charged to the Statement of Financial Activities on a straight line basis over the lease term.

HOLY CROSS CATHOLIC MULTI ACADEMY COMPANY
(A Company Limited by Guarantee)

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2023

1. Accounting policies (continued)

1.12 Pensions

Retirement benefits to employees of the company 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 company 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 company 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 Agency arrangements

The Company distributes 16 - 19 Bursary funds to students as an agent for the ESFA. Payments received from the ESFA and subsequent disbursements to students are excluded from the Statement of Financial Activities as the Company does not have control over the charitable application of the funds.

The Company can use up to 5% of the allocation towards its own administration costs and this is recognised in the Statement of Financial Activities. The funds received, paid and any balances held at the period end are disclosed in the notes to the accounts.

1.14 Fund accounting

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

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.

HOLY CROSS CATHOLIC MULTI ACADEMY COMPANY
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NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2023

2. Critical accounting estimates and areas of judgement

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

Critical accounting estimates and assumptions:

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

The present value of the Local Government Pension Scheme defined benefit liability depends on a number of factors that are determined on an actuarial basis using a variety of assumptions. The assumptions used in determining the net cost or income for pensions include the discount rate. Any changes in these assumptions, which are disclosed in note 26, 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 2023. Any differences between the figures derived from the roll forward approach and a full actuarial valuation would impact on the carrying amount of the pension liability.

Critical areas of judgement:

The classification of expenditure between restricted and unrestricted is deemed as a critical area of judgment as certain expenditure can be applied to both funds. Where this is the case and the amounts in question are considered material the expenditure is apportioned to both funding streams on an appropriate basis.

The Company occupies land and buildings which are provided to it and owned by the Birmingham Roman Catholic Diocesan Trustees (the Site Trustees). The Company occupies this land and buildings under the terms of a Supplemental Agreement between the Birmingham Roman Catholic Diocesan Trustees and the Company. This Supplemental Agreement, which amounts to a mere licence, provides the Company with the right to use the land and buildings for an indefinite period, subject to a 2-year termination notice period. Having considered the fact that the Company occupies the land and buildings by a mere licence, which transfers to the Company no rights or control over the sites save that of occupying it at the will of the Site Trustees under the terms of the relevant site trust, the Directors have concluded that the value of the land and buildings occupied by the Company will not be recognised on the balance sheet of the Company. Accordingly, improvements to property held under Church supplemental agreements are recorded as leasehold improvements when incurred.

The Directors have considered the nature of the donations relating the use of some of the Company's school playing fields and do not consider the value of the donation to be of material benefit to the users of the accounts. Therefore no cost has been recognised in the financial statements.

HOLY CROSS CATHOLIC MULTI ACADEMY COMPANY
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NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2023

3. Income from donations and capital grants

	Unrestricted funds 2023 £000	Restricted fixed asset funds 2023 £000	Total funds 2023 £000	Total funds 2022 £000
Donations	28	-	28	24
Capital Grants	-	1,520	1,520	1,214
Total 2023	28	1,520	1,548	1,238
Total 2022	24	1,214	1,238	

HOLY CROSS CATHOLIC MULTI ACADEMY COMPANY
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NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2023

4. Funding for the company's charitable activities

	Unrestricted funds 2023 £000	Restricted funds 2023 £000	Total funds 2023 £000	Total funds 2022 £000
Educational activities				
DfE/ESFA grants				
General Annual Grant	-	21,172	21,172	20,571
Other DfE/ESFA grants				
Pupil Premium	-	1,001	1,001	987
Teachers' Pension grant	-	76	76	84
Supplementary Grant	-	582	582	-
Other DfE Group grants	-	687	687	689
	-	23,518	23,518	22,331
Other Government grants				
Local Authority grants	-	1,021	1,021	628
Other income from the company's educational activities				
	375	-	375	259
COVID-19 additional funding (DfE/ESFA)				
National Tutoring Programme funding	-	135	135	-
Recovery Premium	-	200	200	125
School Led Tutoring grants	-	-	-	130
	-	335	335	255
Total 2023	375	24,874	25,249	23,473
Total 2022	259	23,214	23,473	

The Trust Company received £200,000 of funding for recovery premium and costs incurred in respect of this funding totalled £209,000 which utilised the previous year's carried forward balance.

The Trust also received £135,000 of National Tutoring Programme funding which was fully spent in the year.

HOLY CROSS CATHOLIC MULTI ACADEMY COMPANY
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NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2023

5. Income from other trading activities

	Unrestricted funds 2023 £000	Total funds 2023 £000	Total funds 2022 £000
Hire of facilities	41	41	46
Income from ancillary trading activities	452	452	338
Total 2023	493	493	384
Total 2022	384	384	

6. Investment income

	Unrestricted funds 2023 £000	Total funds 2023 £000	Total funds 2022 £000
Investment income	20	20	1
Total 2022	1	1	

7. Expenditure

	Staff Costs 2023 £000	Premises 2023 £000	Other 2023 £000	Total 2023 £000	Total 2022 £000
Educational activities:					
Direct costs	16,380	-	2,019	18,399	16,658
Allocated support costs	3,876	1,670	3,766	9,312	9,727
Total 2023	20,256	1,670	5,785	27,711	26,385
Total 2022	19,806	1,510	5,069	26,385	

HOLY CROSS CATHOLIC MULTI ACADEMY COMPANY
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NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2023

8. Analysis of expenditure by activities

	Activities undertaken directly 2023 £000	Support costs 2023 £000	Total funds 2023 £000	Total funds 2022 £000
Educational activities	18,399	9,312	27,711	26,385
Total 2022	16,658	9,727	26,385	

Analysis of support costs

	Total funds 2023 £000	Total funds 2022 £000
Pension finance costs	144	203
Staff costs	3,876	4,670
Depreciation	1,587	1,311
Catering	457	474
Recruitment and support	30	49
Maintenance of premises and equipment	498	644
Cleaning	539	531
Rent and rates	149	131
Energy costs	484	359
Insurance	90	89
Security and transport	162	151
Technology costs	335	303
Office overheads	184	178
Professional costs	345	351
Bank interest and charges	6	5
Other costs	426	278
	9,312	9,727

HOLY CROSS CATHOLIC MULTI ACADEMY COMPANY
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NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2023

9. Net expenditure

Net expenditure for the year includes:

	2023	2022
	£000	£000
Operating lease rentals	56	56
Depreciation of tangible fixed assets	1,587	1,311
Fees paid to auditor for:		
- audit	20	15
- other services	7	6
	1,670	1,393

10. Staff

a. Staff costs

Staff costs during the year were as follows:

	2023	2022
	£000	£000
Wages and salaries	14,189	13,369
Social security costs	1,488	1,370
Pension costs	3,672	4,525
	19,349	19,264
Agency staff costs	880	542
Staff restructuring costs	27	-
	20,256	19,806

b. Severance payments

The company paid £27,304 severance payments in the year (2022 - £Nil), disclosed in the following bands:

	2023	2022
	No.	No.
£0 - £25,000	2	-
	2	-

c. Special staff severance payments

Included in staff restructuring costs is one special severance payment of £3,450.

HOLY CROSS CATHOLIC MULTI ACADEMY COMPANY
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NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2023

10. Staff (continued)

d. Staff numbers

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

	2023	2022
	No.	No.
Teachers	198	228
Administration and support	300	382
Management	9	9
	<u>507</u>	<u>619</u>
	<u><u>507</u></u>	<u><u>619</u></u>

The average headcount expressed as full-time equivalents was:

	2023	2022
	No.	No.
Teachers	178	183
Administration and support	183	196
Management	9	9
	<u>370</u>	<u>388</u>
	<u><u>370</u></u>	<u><u>388</u></u>

e. Higher paid staff

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

	2023	2022
	No.	No.
In the band £60,001 - £70,000	9	8
In the band £70,001 - £80,000	6	3
In the band £80,001 - £90,000	1	2
In the band £90,001 - £100,000	1	1
In the band £100,001 - £100,000	1	-
In the band £110,001 - £120,000	-	1
In the band £120,001 - £130,000	1	-
	<u>1</u>	<u>-</u>
	<u><u>1</u></u>	<u><u>-</u></u>

f. Key management personnel

The key management personnel of the company comprise the Directors and the senior management team as listed on page 33. The total amount of employee benefits (including employer pension contributions and employer national insurance contributions) received by key management personnel for their services to the company was £1,047,004 (2022 - £987,401).

HOLY CROSS CATHOLIC MULTI ACADEMY COMPANY
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NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2023

11. Directors' remuneration and expenses

During the year, no Directors received any remuneration or other benefits (2022 - £NIL).

During the year ended 31 August 2023, no Director expenses have been incurred (2022 - £NIL).

12. Directors' and Officers' insurance

In accordance with normal commercial practice, the company has purchased insurance to protect Directors and officers from claims arising from negligent acts, errors or omissions occurring whilst on academy business. The insurance provides cover up to £5,000,000 on any one claim.

HOLY CROSS CATHOLIC MULTI ACADEMY COMPANY
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NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2023

13. Central services

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

- Support with the delivery of high-quality Christ-centered Catholic education;
- Employment of a full time Catholic Senior Executive Leader (CSEL) for Holy Cross Multi-Academy Company to work closely with the MAC Board of Directors;
- Employment of a full time Chief Finance and Operating Officer (CFOO) to act as Chief Financial Officer and provide financial support and advice to Headteachers, Governors and finance staff;
- Employment of a full time MAC Business Manager to oversee the business operations of the schools, including external/internal audit, workforce planning, HR support, and strategic budgeting;
- Employment of a full time MAC Finance Manager and other support staffing to oversee the finances of the MAC and its schools and to assist with financial control and forecasting;
- Central project management and policies (time limited);
- Provision of a central Financial IT system (PS Financials), central budgeting system (IRIS Financial Planner) and central asset/compliance tracking system (IRIS Assets);
- Provision of a MAC wide Health and Safety Consultant, including centralised Health and Safety RIDDOR reporting;
- School Improvement in areas such as PIXL leads, curriculum leads, HT performance management, support with external inspections and quality assurance;
- Co-ordination and support for schools with ICT systems and ICT strategic management;
- Centralised capital project management, including strategic estates planning, centralised capital funds management, statutory compliance monitoring and actions plans on school condition surveys;
- Statutory ESFA reporting;
- Safeguarding Audits;
- Centralised processing of VAT;
- MAC wide training including INSET days;
- Continuous improvement strategies;
- Stakeholder engagement on behalf of all schools with bodies such as the RSC, DFE, ESFA, DES, LA, Professional Associations etc;
- Training for Governors/finance staff during the year to ensure a full understanding of their new responsibilities as academy schools;
- To arrange the MAC end of year statutory accounts and liaise with external auditors;
- Provision of an internal audit service across the MAC at no direct cost to the member schools;
- An ongoing programme of procurement services to realise economies of scale across the Company including running MAC wide tenders for areas such as Catering, cleaning, MFDs/Photocopiers, Health and Safety, and Waste Disposal;
- Clerk to MAC Board and committees (including Local Governing Bodies);
- Communications and marketing to promote all schools within the MAC;
- Provision of PA to CSEL;
- ICT, Communications and Compliance Manager.

These services are costed on the following basis:

- flat percentage of 2.9% of the General Annual Grant (GAG).

HOLY CROSS CATHOLIC MULTI ACADEMY COMPANY
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NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2023

13. Central services (continued)

The actual amounts recharged to the schools during the year were as follows:

	2023 £000	2022 £000
St Elizabeth's Catholic Primary School	36	36
St John Vianney Catholic Primary School	35	29
St Augustine's Catholic Primary School	60	56
St Thomas More Catholic Primary School	48	50
Bishop Ullathorne Catholic School	186	171
Cardinal Newman Catholic School	245	234
Christ The King Catholic Primary School	74	59
Total	<u>684</u>	<u>635</u>

14. Tangible fixed assets

	Furniture and equipment £000	Computer equipment £000	Motor vehicles £000	Total £000
Cost or valuation				
At 1 September 2022	3,108	593	26	3,727
Additions	1,827	100	17	1,944
At 31 August 2023	<u>4,935</u>	<u>693</u>	<u>43</u>	<u>5,671</u>
Depreciation				
At 1 September 2022	1,621	487	13	2,121
Charge for the year	1,493	88	6	1,587
At 31 August 2023	<u>3,114</u>	<u>575</u>	<u>19</u>	<u>3,708</u>
Net book value				
At 31 August 2023	<u>1,821</u>	<u>118</u>	<u>24</u>	<u>1,963</u>
At 31 August 2022	<u>1,487</u>	<u>106</u>	<u>13</u>	<u>1,606</u>

HOLY CROSS CATHOLIC MULTI ACADEMY COMPANY
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**NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2023**

15. Debtors

	2023	2022
	£000	£000
Due within one year		
Trade debtors	46	39
Other debtors (including VAT recoverable)	618	454
Prepayments and accrued income	439	414
	1,103	907
	1,103	907

16. Creditors: Amounts falling due within one year

	2023	2022
	£000	£000
Other loans	5	10
Trade creditors	841	1,552
Other taxation and social security	318	333
Other creditors	387	403
Accruals and deferred income	960	804
	2,511	3,102
	2,511	3,102

	2023	2022
	£000	£000
Deferred income at 1 September 2022	279	201
Resources deferred during the year	196	279
Amounts released from previous periods	(279)	(201)
	196	279
	196	279

Deferred income at the balance sheet date is represented by Universal Infant Free School Meals income received in advance and other educational activities funds received in advance which relate to activities that will be undertaken during the year ending 31 August 2024.

17. Creditors: Amounts falling due after more than one year

	2023	2022
	£000	£000
Other loans	142	147
	142	147

Other loans of £147,000 (2022: £157,000) are represented by amounts owing to the Birmingham Diocesan Education Service which were inherited on conversion in relation to unpaid School contributions towards property works at Bishop Ullathorne Catholic School. The loan is free of interest, and will be repayable at a rate of £5,000 per year (the payments do not align with the company's year-end). An amount of £10,000 was repaid in 2022/23.

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18. Statement of funds

	Balance at 1 September 2022 £000	Income £000	Expenditure £000	Transfers in/out £000	Gains/ (Losses) £000	Balance at 31 August 2023 £000
Unrestricted funds						
General Funds	1,352	916	(953)	-	-	1,315
Restricted general funds						
General Annual Grant	1,675	21,172	(20,971)	-	-	1,876
Other DfE / ESFA grants	10	687	(689)	-	-	8
Teachers' pension grant	-	76	(76)	-	-	-
Pupil premium	72	1,001	(1,048)	-	-	25
Local authority grant	27	1,021	(1,028)	-	-	20
Recovery Premium	9	200	(209)	-	-	-
Supplementary grant	-	582	(582)	-	-	-
National Tutoring Programme	-	135	(135)	-	-	-
Pension reserve	(3,270)	-	(433)	-	2,807	(896)
	(1,477)	24,874	(25,171)	-	2,807	1,033
Restricted fixed asset funds						
Transfer on conversion	(157)	-	-	10	-	(147)
DfE / ESFA capital grants	2,175	1,520	(1,587)	(10)	-	2,098
	2,018	1,520	(1,587)	-	-	1,951
Total Restricted funds	541	26,394	(26,758)	-	2,807	2,984
Total funds	1,893	27,310	(27,711)	-	2,807	4,299

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18. Statement of funds (continued)

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

The General Annual Grant funding must be used for the normal running costs of the Company in line with the Company's charitable objects and the terms and conditions of the Company's funding agreement.

The pupil premium funding must be used to support children from families on low income or children in care.

Other grants and income, which include other ESFA / DfE grants (including Universal Infant Free School Meal grants, Teacher Pay grants and Teachers' Pension grants), Local Authority funding, and other restricted income, are all used in accordance with the specific restrictions of the individual grants and funding provided.

The Pension reserve represents the Local Government Pension Scheme deficit.

Restricted fixed asset funds represent the investment in fixed assets, net of accumulated depreciation, and includes the value of fixed assets transferred to the Company on conversion of the Schools within the Company and the value of fixed assets transferred from academies joining the Company in the current or previous years, together with any capital expenditure funded from restricted or unrestricted funds. Unspent capital grants and capital income are also held in this fund and their use is restricted to the capital projects for which the grant awarded.

Under the funding agreement with the Secretary of State, the company was not subject to a limit on the amount of GAG it could carry forward at 31 August 2023.

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18. Statement of funds (continued)

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

	Balance at 1 September 2021 £000	Income £000	Expenditure £000	Gains/ (Losses) £000	Balance at 31 August 2022 £000
Unrestricted funds					
General Funds	1,296	668	(612)	-	1,352
Restricted general funds					
General Annual Grant	1,212	20,572	(20,109)	-	1,675
Other DfE / ESFA grants	42	689	(721)	-	10
Teachers' pension grant	-	84	(84)	-	-
Pupil premium	101	986	(1,015)	-	72
Local authority grant	75	628	(676)	-	27
Covid catch up premium	99	-	(99)	-	-
Recovery Premium	-	125	(116)	-	9
School led premium	-	130	(130)	-	-
Pension reserve	(11,657)	-	(1,512)	9,899	(3,270)
	<u>(10,128)</u>	<u>23,214</u>	<u>(24,462)</u>	<u>9,899</u>	<u>(1,477)</u>
Restricted fixed asset funds					
Transfer on conversion	30	-	(187)	-	(157)
DfE / ESFA capital grants	2,085	1,214	(1,124)	-	2,175
	<u>2,115</u>	<u>1,214</u>	<u>(1,311)</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>2,018</u>
Total Restricted funds	<u>(8,013)</u>	<u>24,428</u>	<u>(25,773)</u>	<u>9,899</u>	<u>541</u>
Total funds	<u><u>(6,717)</u></u>	<u><u>25,096</u></u>	<u><u>(26,385)</u></u>	<u><u>9,899</u></u>	<u><u>1,893</u></u>

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18. Statement of funds (continued)

Total funds analysis by academy

Fund balances at 31 August 2023 were allocated as follows:

	2023	2022
	£000	£000
St Elizabeth Catholic Primary School	187	204
St John Vianney Catholic Primary School	86	57
St Augustine's Catholic Primary School	149	277
St Thomas More Catholic Primary School	248	297
Bishop Ullathome Catholic School	71	54
Cardinal Newman Catholic School	1,416	1,417
Christ the King Catholic Primary School	271	373
Central Services	816	466
	3,244	3,145
Total before fixed asset funds and pension reserve		
Restricted fixed asset fund	1,951	2,018
Pension reserve	(896)	(3,270)
	4,299	1,893
Total	4,299	1,893

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NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
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18. 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 £000	Other support staff costs £000	Educational supplies £000	Other costs excluding depreciation £000	Total 2023 £000	Total 2022 £000
St Elizabeth Catholic Primary School	924	158	102	196	1,380	1,263
St John Vianney Catholic Primary School	817	199	95	175	1,286	1,063
St Augustine's Catholic Primary School	1,511	197	172	251	2,131	2,080
St Thomas More Catholic Primary School	1,314	244	164	280	2,002	1,852
Bishop Ullathome Catholic School	4,377	1,026	362	1,293	7,058	6,382
Cardinal Newman Catholic School	5,714	1,078	904	1,091	8,787	8,151
Christ the King Catholic Primary School	1,534	267	183	289	2,273	2,108
Central Services	190	417	36	131	774	663
Company	16,381	3,586	2,018	3,706	25,691	23,562

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NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
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19. Analysis of net assets between funds

Analysis of net assets between funds - current year

	Unrestricted funds 2023 £000	Restricted funds 2023 £000	Restricted fixed asset funds 2023 £000	Total funds 2023 £000
Tangible fixed assets	-	-	1,963	1,963
Current assets	1,315	4,435	135	5,885
Creditors due within one year	-	(2,506)	(5)	(2,511)
Creditors due in more than one year	-	-	(142)	(142)
Provisions for liabilities and charges	-	(896)	-	(896)
Total	1,315	1,033	1,951	4,299

Analysis of net assets between funds - prior year

	Unrestricted funds 2022 £000	Restricted funds 2022 £000	Restricted fixed asset funds 2022 £000	Total funds 2022 £000
Tangible fixed assets	-	-	1,606	1,606
Current assets	1,352	4,885	569	6,806
Creditors due within one year	-	(3,092)	(10)	(3,102)
Creditors due in more than one year	-	-	(147)	(147)
Provisions for liabilities and charges	-	(3,270)	-	(3,270)
Total	1,352	(1,477)	2,018	1,893

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NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
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20. Reconciliation of net expenditure to net cash flow from operating activities

	2023	2022
	£000	£000
Net expenditure for the year (as per Statement of Financial Activities)	(401)	(1,289)
Adjustments for:		
Depreciation	1,587	1,311
Capital grants from DfE and other capital income	(1,520)	(1,214)
Interest receivable	(20)	(1)
Defined benefit pension scheme cost less contributions payable	289	1,309
Defined benefit pension scheme finance cost	144	203
Decrease / (Increase) in debtors	(196)	(36)
(Decrease)/increase in creditors	(586)	1,140
Net cash (used in)/provided by operating activities	(703)	1,423

21. Cash flows from financing activities

	2023	2022
	£000	£000
Repayments of borrowing	(10)	-

22. Cash flows from investing activities

	2023	2022
	£000	£000
Interest receivable	20	1
Purchase of tangible fixed assets	(1,944)	(1,851)
Capital grants from DfE Group	1,520	1,214
Net cash used in investing activities	(404)	(636)

23. Analysis of cash and cash equivalents

	2023	2022
	£000	£000
Cash in hand and at bank	3,282	5,899
Notice deposits (less than 6 months)	1,500	-
Total cash and cash equivalents	4,782	5,899

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NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
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24. Analysis of changes in net debt

	At 1 September 2022 £000	Cash flows £000	Other non- cash changes £000	At 31 August 2023 £000
Cash at bank and in hand	5,899	(1,117)	-	4,782
Debt due within 1 year	(10)	10	(5)	(5)
Debt due after 1 year	(147)	-	5	(142)
	<u>5,742</u>	<u>(1,107)</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>4,635</u>

25. Capital commitments

	2023 £000	2022 £000
Contracted for but not provided in these financial statements		
Acquisition of tangible fixed assets	-	158
	<u>-</u>	<u>158</u>

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NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
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26. Pension commitments

The company's employees belong to two principal pension schemes: the Teachers' Pension Scheme England and Wales (TPS) for academic and related staff; and the Local Government Pension Scheme (LGPS) for non-teaching staff, which is managed by West Midlands Pension Fund. 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 £370,000 were payable to the schemes at 31 August 2023 (2022 - £350,000) 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 2023 published by HM Treasury. The aim of the review is to specify the level of future contributions. Actuarial scheme valuations are dependent on assumptions about the value of future costs, design of benefits and many other factors. The latest actuarial valuation of the TPS was carried out as at 31 March 2020. The valuation report was published by the Government Actuary's Department on 27 October 2023. The key elements of the valuation and subsequent consultation are:

- employer contribution rates set at 23.68% of pensionable pay (including a 0.08% administration levy) from 1 April 2024 (contribution rate to 31 March 2024 is 23.68% as set by the 31 March 2019 valuation).
- 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 SCAPE rate, set by HMT, is used to determine the notional investment return. The current SCAPE rate is 1.7% above the rate of CPI.

The employer's pension costs paid to TPS in the year amounted to £2,234,000 (2022 - £2,125,000).

A copy of the valuation report and supporting documentation is on the Teachers' Pensions website (<https://www.teacherspensions.co.uk/members/faqs/valuation.aspx>).

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

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NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
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26. Pension commitments (continued)

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 2023 was £1,348,000 (2022 - £1,273,000), of which employer's contributions totalled £1,080,000 (2022 - £1,036,000) and employees' contributions totalled £ 268,000 (2022 - £237,000). The agreed contribution rates for future years are 5.5 - 12.5 per cent for employers and 24.7 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 when Insolvent, to the extent that there is a shortfall in the company's assets, these 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.

Principal actuarial assumptions

	2023	2022
	%	%
Rate of increase in salaries	4.00	4.05
Rate of increase for pensions in payment/inflation	3.00	3.05
Discount rate for scheme liabilities	5.20	4.25

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

	2023	2022
	Years	Years
Retiring today		
Males	19.40	21.20
Females	23.30	23.60
Retiring in 20 years		
Males	21.20	22.90
Females	24.50	25.40

Sensitivity analysis

	2023	2022
	£000	£000
Discount rate -0.1%	(303)	(318)
Mortality assumption - 1 year increase	(536)	(586)
CPI rate +0.1%	(276)	(276)
Salary Rate + 0.1%	(33)	(45)

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**NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
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26. Pension commitments (continued)

Share of scheme assets

The company's share of the assets in the scheme was:

	At 31 August 2023 £000	At 31 August 2022 £000
Equities	8,507	7,624
Corporate bonds	2,627	2,390
Property	876	910
Cash	500	456
Total market value of assets	12,510	11,380

The actual return on scheme assets was £(22,000) (2022 - £(338,000)).

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

	2023 £000	2022 £000
Current service cost	1,369	(2,322)
Past service cost	-	(23)
Interest income	508	183
Interest cost	(652)	(386)
Total amount recognised in the Statement of Financial Activities	1,225	(2,548)

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

	2023 £000	2022 £000
At 1 September	14,650	22,102
Current service cost	1,369	2,322
Interest cost	652	386
Employee contributions	268	237
Actuarial gains	(3,337)	(10,420)
Benefits paid	(196)	-
Past service costs	-	23
At 31 August	13,406	14,650

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NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
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26. Pension commitments (continued)

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

	2023	2022
	£000	£000
At 1 September	11,380	10,445
Interest income	508	183
Actuarial losses	(530)	(521)
Employer contributions	1,080	1,036
Employee contributions	268	237
Benefits paid	(196)	-
At 31 August	12,510	11,380

27. Operating lease commitments

At 31 August 2023 the company had commitments to make future minimum lease payments under non-cancellable operating leases as follows:

	2023	2022
	£000	£000
Not later than 1 year	54	56
Later than 1 year and not later than 5 years	11	23
	65	79

28. Members' liability

Each member of the 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.

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29. Related party transactions

Owing to the nature of the company and the composition of the Board of Directors being drawn from local public and private sector organisations, transactions may take place with organisations in which the directors have an interest. All transactions involving such organisations are conducted in accordance with the requirements of the Academy Trust Handbook, including notifying the ESFA of all transactions made on or after 1 April 2019 and obtaining their approval where required, and with the company's financial regulations and normal procurement procedures relating to connected and related party transactions.

During the year the Company paid £48,658 (2022: £14,477) to the Birmingham Diocesan Education Service, an organisation in which the Members of the Company are connected to, for charges in relation to the Schools religious and ethical character (£35,658 (2022: £14,477)) and for site license access fees (£13,000 (2022: £Nil)). There were no amounts outstanding at the year end.

These payments are deemed to be at cost for connected party rules.

An amount of £147,000 (2022: £157,000) is recognised in other loans in respect of a balance inherited on conversion owing to the Birmingham Diocesan Education Service, in relation to unpaid School contributions towards property works at Bishop Ullathorne Catholic School. The loan is free of interest, £10,000 was repaid during the year (2022: £Nil). Future repayments will be repayable at a rate of £5,000 per year (with two repayments falling due in the year ended 31 August 2023).

During the year the Company invoiced the Archdioceses of Birmingham, an organisation with the powers to appoint the members / directors, for staff consultancy totalling £1,200 (2022: £Nil). £600 (2022: £Nil) was due to the Company at the year end.

During the year the Company transacted with St John Wall Catholic School, a voluntarily aided school, in which K Marston, Director, is deemed to have significant influence as the headteacher. Services provided under an SLA for School Improvement support provided by St John Wall Catholic School to the Company totalled £3,251 (2022: £7,235). There were no amounts outstanding at the year end.

30. Agency arrangements

The Company distributes 16-19 bursary funds to students as an agent for the ESFA. In the accounting period ending 31 August 2023 the Company received £29,000 (2022: £37,000) and disbursed £27,000 (2022: £33,000) from the fund. An amount of £7,000 (2022: £5,000) is included in other creditors relating to undistributed funds that are repayable to the ESFA.