ORCHARD HILL COLLEGE ACADEMY TRUST

Company Limited by Guarantee

Annual Report and Financial Statements

Year ended 31 August 2025

Company Registration Number: 08476149 (England and Wales)

Orchard Hill College Academy Trust

Contents

Reference and Administrative Details	iii
Trustees' Report (including Strategic Report)	1
Governance Statement	20
Statement on Regularity, Propriety and Compliance	29
Statement of Trustees' Responsibilities	30
Independent Auditor's Report on the Financial Statements	31
Independent Reporting Accountant's Report on Regularity	35
Statement of Financial Activities incorporating Income & Expenditure Account	37
Balance Sheet	38
Statement of Cash Flows	39
Statement of Accounting Policies	41
Other Notes to the Financial Statements	46

Orchard Hill College Academy Trust

Reference and Administrative Details

Members	J Mercer I Pryce M Malcolmson Orchard Hill College R Leclercq (appointed 28.03.2025)
Directors (Trustees)	R Leclercq (Chair) S Lawes B McIntosh H Norris A Chiva M Tikkiwal M Ayoola P Holland V Danz A Aimar J Prior (CEO and Accounting Officer)
Executive Senior Leadership Team	
CEO	J Prior
Deputy CEO	L Cornwell
Chief Finance Officer	C Jenkins
Chief Operating Officer	L Hankin
Executive Director of Development	L Barratt
Executive Director for Quality & Standards	J James
Executive Principal, Orchard Hill College	K Phillips
Principal and Registered Office	Copthall House 9 The Pavement, Grove Road Sutton Surrey SM1 1DA
Independent Auditor	Buzzacott Audit LLP 130 Wood Street London EC2V 6DL
Banker	Lloyds Bank Plc 49/53 High Street Sutton Surrey SM1 1DT
Solicitors	Veale Wasborough Vizards Narrow Quay House Narrow Quay Bristol BS1 4QA
Internal Auditor	MHA 2 London Wall, Barbican London EC2Y 5AU

Orchard Hill College Academy Trust

Trustees' Report

The Trustees present their annual report together with the financial statements and auditor's report of Orchard Hill College Academy Trust (the "Trust" or "OHCAT" or the "charitable company") for the year to 31 August 2025. The annual report serves the purposes of both a trustees' report and a directors' report under company law.

The Trust operated 14 schools during 2024-25: 13 special academies and one alternative provision academy, as follows:

- Carew Academy, in Sutton, for pupils aged 7-19 with additional and complex learning needs.
- The PRIDE Academy, in Hillingdon, for pupils aged 11-19 with social, emotional and mental health needs;
- The Skills Hub, in Hillingdon, an alternative provision for pupils aged 5-19;
- Dysart School, across the main site and two satellite sites in Kingston-upon-Thames, for pupils aged 4-19 with a range of severe and complex learning needs;
- Bedelsford School, in Kingston-upon-Thames, for pupils aged 2-19 with physical and complex learning difficulties and disabilities including complex health needs;
- St Philip's School, in Kingston-upon-Thames, for pupils aged 9-19 with moderate learning needs;
- Nightingale Community Academy, in Wandsworth, for pupils aged 5-19 with social, emotional and mental health needs;
- The Link School, across four sites in Sutton, for pupils aged 4-19 whose primary need is speech, language and communication difficulties;
- St Dominic's School, in Surrey, for pupils aged 7-19 whose primary need is speech, language and communication and/or autism spectrum disorder;
- Grafham Grange School, in Surrey, for pupils aged 10-16 with social, emotional and mental health needs;
- Brantridge School, in West Sussex, for boys aged 6-11 with social, emotional and mental health needs;
- Arbour Vale School, in Slough, for pupils aged 2-19 with severe learning difficulties and/or profound and multiple needs;
- Unified Academy, in Surrey, for pupils aged 9-16 with social, emotional and mental health needs; and
- Addington Valley Academy, in Croydon, for pupils aged 2-19 with autism and complex needs.

The academies' pupil capacity (planned places as stated in the individual academy's supplementary funding agreement) and numbers on roll (as at the January 2025 school census) are shown below.

Academy	**Planned Places**	**Numbers on roll**
Carew Academy	246	243
The PRIDE Academy	110	117
The Skills Hub	120	89
Dysart School	150	173
Bedelsford School	120	133
St Philip's School	185	184
Nightingale Community Academy	120	137
The Link School	160	157
St Dominic's School	150	162
Grafham Grange School	70	70
Brantridge School*	134	77
Arbour Vale School	375	359
Unified Academy	120	85
Addington Valley Academy	150	132
Total	**2,210**	**2,118**

*Brantridge School received DfE approval in 2022 to offer a secondary co-ed provision of up to 80 places which would bring the combined primary and secondary provision to 134. The new secondary offer was dependent on a suitable building being constructed and funded by West Sussex County Council (WSCC). WSCC agreement to fund

Trustees' Report (continued)

the project was later withdrawn and the project paused. In the latter part of 2024/25, WSCC confirmed they will no longer progress a secondary provision at Brantridge School and instead refocus discussions on a larger primary provision. DfE approval will be required to remove the secondary provision and revert to a primary provision.

Structure, Governance and Management

Constitution

Orchard Hill College Academy Trust (OHCAT) is a company limited by guarantee and an exempt charity. The primary governing documents for the Trust are the memorandum and articles of association. The Trustees of OHCAT also act as the Directors of the charitable company for legal purposes. Further details of the Trustees who served during the year can be found in the Reference and Administrative Details section.

Members' liability

Each member of OHCAT undertakes to contribute to the assets of the charitable company in the event of it being wound up while they are a member, with liability limited to £10 for debts incurred prior to their resignation as a member.

Trustees' indemnities

The Trust has an insurance policy in place to protect Trustees and officers from claims related to negligent acts, errors, or omissions made while on Trust business. The policy includes a £10 million Governors' Liability cover.

Method of recruitment and appointment of Trustees and Local Governors

Trustees are appointed by the Members through a robust recruitment process informed by the Trust's skills audit framework. Orchard Hill College, as the sponsor body, retains the right to appoint one Trustee. To address specific skills gaps, the Board may also appoint co-opted Trustees. During the reporting period, the governance structure was further strengthened by the appointment of two additional Trustees, each bringing valuable expertise and contributing to the overall effectiveness and capacity of the Trust Board.

Each academy within the Trust is supported by a Local Governing Body (LGB), which provides local oversight and works closely with the Principal to ensure effective leadership and governance. LGBs are made up of elected parent and staff governors, Trust-appointed governors, and the Principal, who serves as a governor by virtue of their role. Details of each LGB's membership are published on the respective academy's website. Strengthening LGB capacity remained a key focus during 2024–25, with Trustees prioritising the recruitment of skilled and representative governors to support strong local governance.

Policies and procedures adopted for the induction and training of trustees

New Trustees and local governors receive comprehensive induction packages, which include governance handbooks and mandatory training - particularly in safeguarding. Ongoing development is supported through a combination of direct training from the governance team and access to trusted online platforms such as GovernorHub, The Key, and the National Governance Association's Learning Link. The annual Governors' Conference, held in October 2024, was well attended by Trustees, Members, and local governors, providing valuable opportunities for training, networking, and the sharing of effective governance practice.

Organisational structure

The Board of Trustees holds ultimate accountability for the performance, strategic direction, and financial sustainability of the multi-academy trust, ensuring that all schools within the Trust deliver high-quality education and operate in accordance with legal and regulatory requirements. The Board is responsible for setting the Trust's vision and values, overseeing educational outcomes, safeguarding, and ensuring effective use of public funds across all academies.

Trustees' Report (continued)

Whilst the Board of Trustees retains overarching responsibility for strategic leadership, financial stewardship, and educational outcomes across the Trust, Trustees have affirmed the critical role of each academy's Local Governing Body (LGB) within the Trust's governance framework. Operating as formally delegated sub-committees of the Board, LGBs provide essential local oversight, ensuring that each academy aligns with Trust policies, statutory obligations, and the needs of its community. LGBs support Principals in the leadership and management of their academies, monitor educational performance and safeguarding, and contribute to strategic planning and decision-making. Through their understanding of the local context, LGBs help shape school-specific priorities and ensure that each academy remains responsive, inclusive, and focused on delivering high standards of education and care.

Trustees also serve as both charity trustees and company directors, ensuring that the Trust complies with its legal and financial obligations while maintaining high educational standards. Their core responsibilities centre on governance, accountability, and strategic leadership, all of which underpin the Trust's mission to deliver excellent education across its schools.

Key governance developments in the past year

Throughout the year, the Board of Trustees has implemented a series of strategic governance enhancements to strengthen clarity, consistency, and impact across the Trust.

A new Chair of the Board was elected during the year, marking a key leadership transition and bringing renewed focus to strategic oversight and governance development.

Trustees have introduced a dedicated OHCAT Board meeting once per term, designed to provide deeper strategic oversight and ensure consistent, high-level scrutiny across all areas of Trust performance. These meetings enable Trustees to engage in more focused discussions on educational outcomes, financial health, governance effectiveness, and strategic priorities, reinforcing the Board's commitment to strong, transparent leadership and continuous improvement.

Trustees contributed actively to the development of the Trust's 2025–2028 strategy through dedicated away days and structured consultation, helping to shape long-term priorities.

A key focus of the Board's work has been the review and refinement of the Scheme of Delegation, ensuring decision-making responsibilities are clearly defined and effectively distributed. The Terms of Reference for Local Governing Bodies (LGBs) were also revised, supported by additional written guidance to help governors better understand their roles and responsibilities. Local governor link roles were reviewed in detail, with updated guidance developed and prepared for launch in the new academic year, as these roles had not previously been embedded in practice.

Local governor recruitment remains a strategic priority for the Trust. Building on the campaign launched in the previous year, efforts have continued to ensure that each academy's LGB is well-resourced with individuals who bring the skills, experience, and local insight needed to fulfil their governance responsibilities. The focus remains on strengthening community representation, with particular emphasis on increasing the number of elected parent and staff governors. Recruitment activity has been supported by targeted communications and engagement and will continue into the new academic year to ensure all LGBs are fully constituted and equipped to provide effective local oversight.

Trade union facility time

Arbour Vale School approved 3 days for union representatives to attend training sessions at a cost of £432 plus associated on-costs.

Connected organisations, including related party relationships

OHCAT was established in 2013 by Orchard Hill College, in response to a request from the London Borough of Sutton and the DfE to sponsor Carew Manor School (now Carew Academy). The College and the Trust are independent legal entities that form a family of providers, collectively known as Orchard Hill College and Academy Trust (OHC&AT), working for the benefit of students and pupils in local communities.

The Trust and the College operate a collaborated 'joint' Board of Trustees. This model of governance continues to be successful, allowing greater coherence in decision-making and greater clarity of communication while retaining the individuality of each organisation. Risk continues to be managed separately and collaboratively, allowing either

Trustees' Report (continued)

organisation to retract from the collaboration if required while at the same time promoting transparency. Each Board meets each term individually, as well as a collaborated joint Board meeting at the end of each term.

The ESLT manages the business of both the Trust and the College, which promotes responsive cross-organisational working between Trust and College at all levels and offers value for money to the public purse. The ESLT maintains a close working relationship with each academy's Senior Leadership Team and support is provided to the academies by OHCAT Central Teams across a number of areas including Governance, Finance, HR, IT and Facilities.

Engagement with employees

Internal communication and staff engagement channels are in place to provide information organisation-wide, for example regular CEO briefings and Principals' bulletins, INSET/development days and the staff intranet, as well more specifically through induction, development and the performance management process. The organisation's strategic direction, mission and values are conveyed in staff communications, as are case studies on best practice, performance and achievement. Strategic developments such as changes to an academy's provision involve consultation with the school community to seek their views and an equality impact assessment is undertaken. OHCAT works collaboratively with unions to support staff. An in-house occupational health service is provided to support staff wellbeing and enable staff to perform their duties with reasonable adjustments. Additionally, OHCAT offers clinical supervision by experienced psychologists, enabling staff to reflect upon their work and have the opportunity to process information that may be impacting on their emotional and mental health.

During the period under discussion work continued on the People Strategy, intended to support the next strategic phase through improved recruitment, retention, job satisfaction and professional development. Following feedback from Trustees and Principals, more regular opportunities for staff feedback were put in place, with a short pulse survey launching in the autumn term, followed by a second whole organisation staff survey in June 2025. Data from this cycle will inform the People Strategy's direction and underlying operational plan. Survey feedback for each school, the College and Central Teams is presented by HR Business Partners to the respective Principal or Central Team lead for dissemination to the whole staff team. Going forward, the whole organisation survey will run annually.

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

Strategic meetings take place with Local Authorities on commissioning priorities and strategic developments. Regular dialogue and reviews take place with DfE Regional Directors and wider DfE departments.

At a regional and local level, there is attendance at and membership of forums. Planned strategic development involves wide stakeholder consultation including local authorities, staff, parents/families, schools, business and voluntary sector. At a local level there is regular communication and engagement with parents/families and the local community.

Objectives and Activities

Objects and Aims

The charitable objectives for which OHCAT was established are set down in the governing document as follows:

a. to advance for the public benefit education in the United Kingdom, in particular but without prejudice to the generality of the foregoing by:
   - establishing, maintaining, carrying on, managing and developing schools ("the mainstream academies") offering a broad and balanced curriculum
   - educational institutions which are principally concerned with providing full-time or part-time education for children of compulsory school age who, by reason of illness, exclusion from school or otherwise, may not for any period receive suitable education unless alternative provision is made for them ("the alternative provision academies") or;
   - 16 to 19 academies offering a curriculum appropriate to the needs of its students ("the 16 to 19 academies") or;
   - schools specially organised to make special educational provision for pupils with Special Educational Needs ("the Special Academies"); and

Trustees' Report (continued)

b. to promote for the benefit of the inhabitants of the local authority areas (and surrounding areas) in which any of the academies are situated, the provision of facilities for recreation or other leisure time occupation of individuals who have need of such facilities by reason of their youth, age, infirmity or disablement, financial hardship or social and economic circumstances or for the public at large in the interests of social welfare and the object of improving the condition of life of the said inhabitants.

Mission and Vision

Orchard Hill College Academy Trust, together with trust sponsor Orchard Hill College, operates as a collaborative family of specialist providers. Our mission is to support, enable and champion the talents, skills and rights of the most complex and vulnerable people in our society, in order that we can release their potential, promote their wellbeing and transform their lives. As a community of learners, families and colleagues we believe that by working collaboratively, with energy and ambition, we can always effect positive change. At the core of our ethos is the conviction that there should be no limit placed on what is possible and that everyone has the ability to be the very best they can be.

Our learners require and receive a high-quality blended offer within their local context in order to meet their different needs and ambitions. By working together as a family, we are able to maximise the benefits to our pupils and students from having staff, leaders, governance and associates with extensive expertise and experience in both the special and mainstream sectors, from pre-school through to Further Education (FE).

During the period under discussion the Trust operated with 13 academies and one Alternative Provision and central support functions, while Orchard Hill College offered specialist educational programmes for pupils and students aged 16 and over in nine main centres and additional satellite provision in London and Surrey. Provision is organised on a hub model, with schools and college centres clustered around four hubs: Sutton and Croydon, North West London and Slough, South West London, and Surrey and Sussex. The hub model supports effective cross-organisational working and best use of resources to benefit pupils and students.

Each OHCAT Academy defines its individual vision, ethos and aims in line with the Trust's overarching commitment to furthering learning, work and life opportunities to pupils and students with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) in their local communities.

Public Benefit

The Trustees of the Trust have complied with their duty to have due regard to the guidance on public benefit published by the Charity Commission in exercising their powers or duties in defining the strategic direction of OHCAT and its constituent academies.

Strategic Report

Achievements and Performance

1.1 Overview of Development

In keeping with OHCAT's strategic focus on growing the depth, breadth and sustainability of quality throughout the organisation, during the period under discussion Trustees opted to focus on further strengthening of existing academies and free school projects in development rather than expand the Trust through the addition of converter academies. Consequently, no new schools joined the Trust in 2024-25. The Trust was awarded an additional free school project in Merton, due to open in September 2028.

1.2 OHCAT strategy

The period under discussion has seen the drawing to a close of phase two of the organisational strategy, following a very successful five year period of implementation, and consultation across the year with Trustees, senior leaders, staff and other key stakeholders on the next evolution of OHCAT's strategic direction. Building on phase one's rapid growth and expansion and phase two's focus on consolidation and enrichment of quality, phase three of the organisational strategy launches from September 2025, structured around the following key priorities:

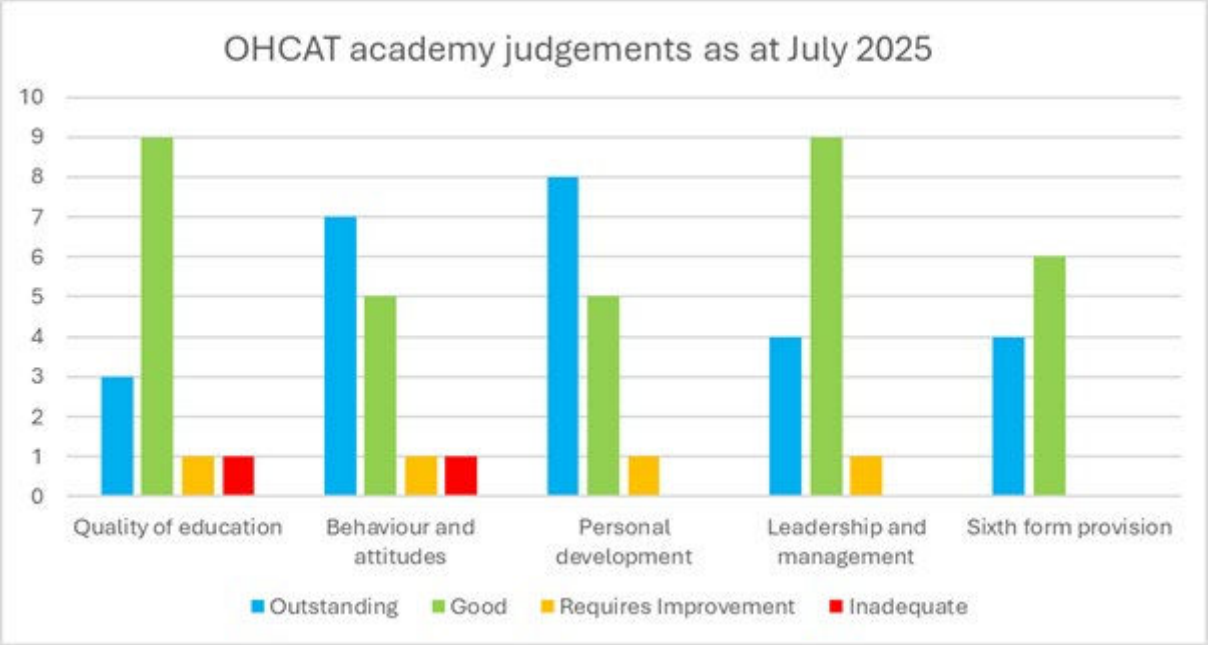
Trustees' Report (continued)

- Quality, standards and reputation: ensuring life-changing and life-enhancing outcomes, meaningful destinations and quality of life for every young person within the Trust, through the delivery of consistently excellent teaching and learning across a rich and relevant curriculum offer;
- Innovation and specialism: growing and developing the existing wealth of specialist knowledge within the Trust through the establishment of internal and external professional networks, robust impact measurement processes that feed into year on year strategic plans, and active engagement in research;
- Development and growth: taking an ambitious, judicious approach to securing the future of the Trust, through capacity building, maximising financial probity and efficiency, and the strategic improvement of Trust estates;
- System leadership: building influence and advocacy, and ensuring compliance and accountability, through a strong organisational culture that promotes responsive governance and leadership at all levels;
- Nurturing talent: future-proofing the organisation through a strategic approach to recruitment and retention, including training and development opportunities and career pathways that enable every staff member to maximise their potential within the Trust.

1.3 Achievements and Performance

Since inception in 2013, all of OHCAT's academies, and its one Alternative Provision, have received at least one post-conversion (or, as a new Free School, initial) Ofsted inspection. This includes the PRIDE Academy and the Skills Hub, which reopened as free schools in 2022 and 2023 respectively and received their first inspections as new schools during the period under discussion.

The overall Ofsted profile of the Trust continues to be exceptionally strong. A breakdown of judgements by category, as it stood at the end of the reporting period, is below (Ofsted no longer awards overall judgements).



Benchmarked against the latest (December 2024) national figures for all schools (mainstream and special), OHCAT academies continue to perform strongly. Against special only benchmarks however, OHCAT data at least consistently matches and sometimes substantially exceeds national averages.

	National average	OHCAT
Quality of education	84%	86%
Behaviour and attitudes	94%	86%
Personal development	97%	93%
Leadership and management	89%	93%

Trustees' Report (continued)

Building on the successes of previous years, summer 2025 results and outcomes show that OHCAT academies at least maintained, and in some cases improved, the standard of GCSE outcomes over the three-year trend. The overall picture is reflective of both our pupils' continuing successes and the year-to-year variation in cohort, with subsequent variation in accreditation offer, that can be expected within a family of special schools and Alternative Provision.

In summer 2025, across all GCSEs, A and AS levels, Functional Skills and Entry Level qualifications, OHCAT pupils achieved an aggregate total point score (TPS) of 1880.25, once more surpassing the previous year's total of 1811.25. Within that, numbers of GCSE passes decreased from summer 2024 (350, down from 408), but with an increase in the number of 4-9 grades (123, up from 107). Alongside this, Functional Skills passes (Level 1 and 2) increased by 54.5% and Entry Level passes (level 1-3) by 46.5% from summer 2024.

Across all academies during 2024-25, OHCAT pupils achieved:

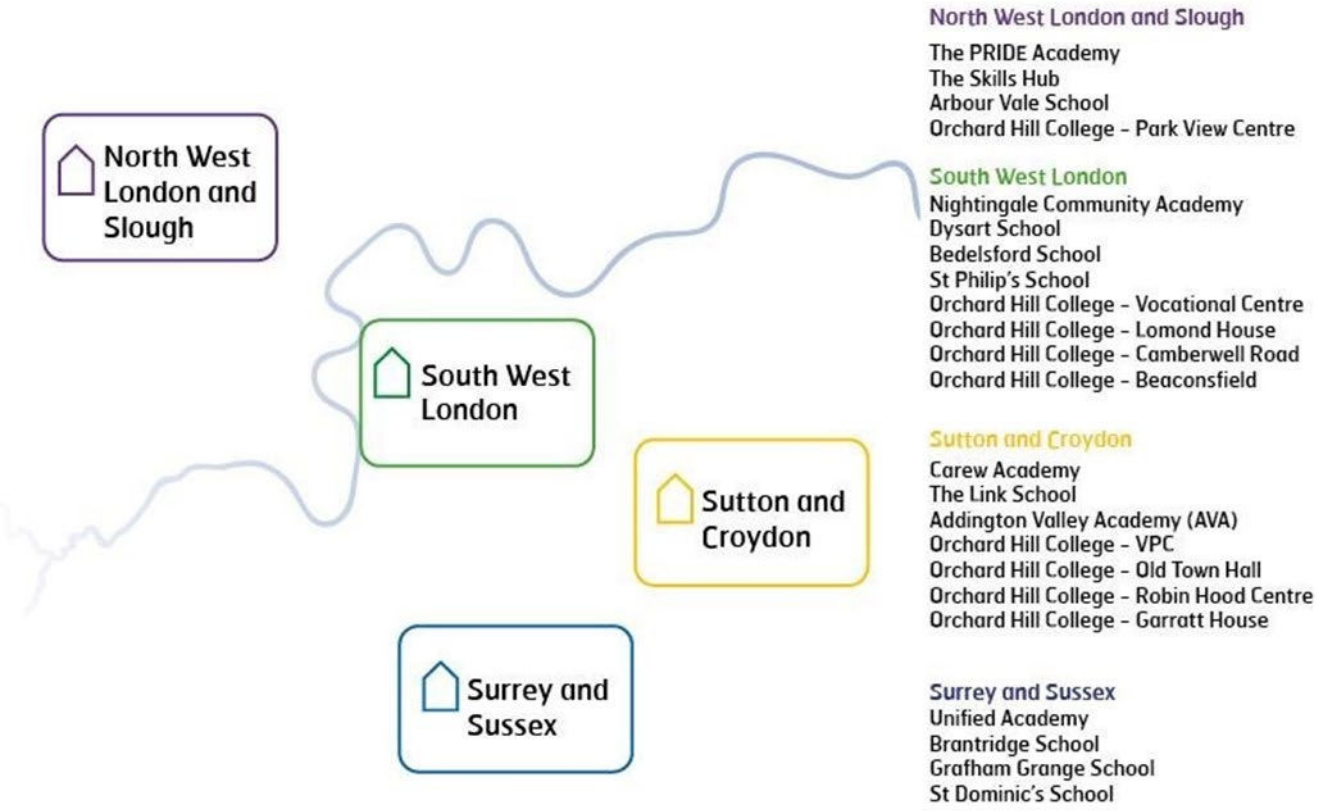
- 350 GCSE grades 1-9 across 16 subjects include English, maths and science
- 123 GCSE grades 4-9, including 20 in English and 27 in maths
- 8 AS / A level grades B-E – exceptional achievement for this cohort
- 136 Functional Skills Level 1-Level 2 passes in English and maths, the highest ever total for OHCAT academies, including Level 2 maths passes (equivalent to a GCSE pass) tripling from summer 2024 (27, up from 9)
- 816 Entry Level passes at Entry 1-Entry 3, again the highest total ever recorded within OHCAT
- 166 vocational qualifications from pre-Entry Level to Level 2, in subjects spanning sports, health and beauty, arts and media, hospitality and catering, employability skills and personal development, construction, and STEM

These results clearly illustrate the rich and diverse curriculum offer provided by OHCAT academies, enabling our pupils to achieve accredited outcomes, sometimes considerably earlier than Y11 (for example, Entry Levels 1-3), which are relevant, meaningful and prepare them well for the next stage of their learning. OHCAT academies that provide for some of our students with the most profound and complex needs and disabilities continued to deliver exemplary outcomes year-on-year for all key stages, including a range of external accreditation at Entry Level and Level 1 set alongside excellent progress measures.

NEET (not in education, employment or training) rates for leavers from Trust schools continue to be very low and compare favourably against national and regional data. National data for 2024 (the latest available data) shows the estimated NEET rate (England) for 16–17-year-olds at 6.2% and for 18-year-olds 14.5%. The latest data for 16-24 year olds (2023) shows a NEET rate of 10.3% for those with identifiable learning difficulties. Destination data for pupils leaving OHCAT provisions in summer 2025 shows a NEET rate of 4% (it should be noted that OHCAT provides for learners up to 19 years old where their nineteenth birthday occurs during their final academic year), with 96% of leavers going on to a confirmed place in education, employment or training.

1.4 Academy updates

OHCAT operates a four-hub regional model which is well embedded within the Trust.



The hub model effectively supports the Trust to offset potential limitations associated with geographical dispersion. By building the specialism alongside College centres, the Trust is enabled to facilitate meaningful and seamless transitions for students, provide additional learning opportunities through shared facilities and resources, and enable staff to build networks and share expertise. The regional model is a key tenet of OHCAT's strategy in order to drive Trust-wide improvements and diversify leadership at both executive and local level.

Alongside the school delivery, a number of key developments took place across OHCAT during the period under discussion, including:

Five DfE Significant change business cases were approved by the DfE Regions Group I to amend the planned places in the Funding Agreement for:

- Nightingale Community Academy from 120 to 164 and to be effective from September 2025.
- The Link School from 148 to 160 and an additional satellite site effective from November 2024
- Bedelsford School from 120 to 200 and a satellite site in Merton and to be effective from September 2025
- Dysart School from 150 to 185 and an additional site to be effective from September 2025
- St Dominic's School from 150 to 184 and to be effective from September 2025

In the period 2021-2022, Brantridge School received approval from the DfE on its business case to expand the school from a small primary provision of 54 places to accommodate a co-ed secondary provision (Year 7 to Year 11) of 80 pupils on the current school site within a new building funded by West Sussex Council. WSCC have recently confirmed that they will not now require the Trust to establish the co-ed secondary provision at Brantridge School and will instead look to increase the current primary provision for boys. This proposal will be developed over the 2025-26 period, to be effective from September 2026..

Carew Academy moved into its new Free School building over easter 2025, nearly nine years after the project was approved by DfE in October 2016. A huge amount of effort has gone into designing, building and progressing the school which provides a nurturing, inclusive environment with exceptional facilities, including:

- **Carew Brew** – a student-led café located beside the school's reception area, which will also serve as the venue for the school's breakfast club

- A dedicated **drama and dance studio**
- A **sensory outdoor garden**
- A **Skills for Life studio flat**, designed to help students build practical independence skills
- A **comfortable library** to encourage a love for reading
- Indoor and outdoor sports courts
- Large, **light-filled classrooms**, each thoughtfully decorated to create a homely and nurturing atmosphere

In the previous period (May 2024), the Trust was successful in its application to establish a new special Free School in Merton, however the earliest opening of this Free School at the time would be September 2027 (now September 2028). Merton Council needed a provision in place prior to the opening of the new Free School and to support the Council, OHCAT sought approval through the DfE Significant Change process, to open a specialist satellite provision under Bedelsford School from September 2025 until the Free School opens. The satellite site is in The Chaucer Centre, a Council owned property, leased to OHCAT on a five year lease at no cost, which has capacity to meet the demand for 40 places in the first year with the potential to increase up to 80 children over a three-year period. As proposed for the new Free school, the provision would be for children who have a range of moderate to severe learning difficulties and complex needs. This is likely to include Speech Language and Communication Needs and may also include Autism Spectrum Conditions and other associated areas of need.

The Trust continues to work with Achieving for Children (AfC), which provides children's services in Kingston, and Kingston Council to progress a proposal for a post-16 SEND campus for the college and the three Kingston Schools. The vocational centre at St Philip's School, towards which the Council contributed £3.1 million, was developed during 2024-25 and will be open from September 2025.

Grafham Grange School was inspected by Ofsted in March 2024 and received a judgement of Inadequate with serious weaknesses. This brings the school into scope for DfE intervention as set out in the "Schools causing concern" guidance (January 2024). Following the Ofsted inspection of Grafham Grange School in March 2024, which resulted in a judgement of Inadequate with serious weakness, the DfE directed that the school be re-brokered to London South East Academies Trust. OHCAT and LSEAT worked closely together to effect a successful transfer, which was completed on 1 September 2025.

The Trust's contribution to the wider field of SEND and 'building the specialism' continues, with a number of our schools providing an outreach service and training to mainstream and special schools. In particular, The Link School Pathological Demand Avoidance (PDA) outreach provision is supporting a number of schools and families across a number of local authorities and Dysart School is providing an outreach offer to Kingston schools. Many of our expert practitioners across the Trust have contributed articles and best practice pieces across specialist and education media. Partnerships with Roehampton, St Mary's and Canterbury Christ Church universities enabled Trust senior leaders to feed into initial teacher education (ITE) provision with respect to SEND specialisms, through speaking at conferences, delivering guest lectures and membership of steering groups/strategic partnership boards.

At the beginning of the reporting period, all academies and college centres transitioned to the same safeguarding reporting system (CPOMS) to allow for greater trust-wide oversight and support. In addition, quality, standards and safeguarding monitoring processes and procedures were enhanced with the introduction of a monthly Quality, Standards and Safeguarding risk and review meeting, attended by key personnel including the CEO, DCEO and EDQS. Alongside this has been the introduction and implementation of a Balanced Score Card, providing trust-wide oversight and narratives on lead and lagged data in a range of key areas including finance and workforce; integral to risk management and strategic intervention.

The Trust continued to refine and develop its CPD offer, in line with stated strategic priorities around developing the specialism and nurturing talent. This includes:

- Termly Principals' away days and biannual away days for Deputies and Senior Leaders, which enable a cross-cutting collegiate approach to key strategic and operational matters. These are led by the CEO, Deputy CEO and Executive Director for Quality & Standards with input from Trust colleagues and external speakers around finance, HR, professional development and legal advice.
- Termly development sessions for OHCAT Central Teams staff, enabling employee participation in strategic conversations on areas including cross-organisational working, staff wellbeing, and equality, diversity and inclusion, as well as focused updates on key compliance matters such as safeguarding, fraud prevention and financial regulations. Each session also includes a SEND focus in order to build staff understanding of OHCAT's specialisms and retain focus on the Trust's core mission, ethos and values.

Trustees' Report (continued)

- OHCAT's annual Safeguarding conference, which this year was held in June 2025, with a keynote presentation from The Molly Rose Foundation on suicide prevention and online safety. Feedback from attendees including DSLs, Principals, senior OHC&AT staff and governors was extremely positive.
- Teacher training routes for staff wishing to become qualified teachers, including Assessment Only and the postgraduate Teacher Apprenticeship programme.
- Staff specialist and professional networks providing vital cross-linking of best practice, resources and information sharing.

The Trust's Mental Health Hub continued to provide a tailored mental health and wellbeing support service for OHCAT pupils and staff during the period under discussion. The Hub provides access to resources and best practice aimed at effectively supporting young people with complex presentations, as well as clinical supervision for staff to counteract the 'cost of caring'.

1.5 Potential Academies

Following the successful opening of four free schools (Addington Valley Academy, The PRIDE Academy, The Skills Hub and Carew Academy), the Trust continues to progress two new DfE approved free schools, working closely with local authorities and other stakeholders:

- Wings Academy, Hounslow: a new 90 place special school for pupils aged 11-19 who have social emotional and mental health difficulties (SEMH). The anticipated opening is September 2027.
- Meadow Brook Academy, Merton: a new co-educational special school scheduled to open in September 2028. Meadow Brook will provide 120 places for children and young people aged 4-16 who have a range of moderate to severe learning difficulties and complex needs.

While the Trust continues to receive interest from schools wishing to join a strong academy chain, no schools joined the Trust during the period under discussion. However, the refreshed five year strategy that launches from September 2025 includes a focus on active growth, with the potential to add to the Trust portfolio via new schools, conversions, further expansion of existing provision or other opportunities, working with commissioners and organisations that are aligned with our organisational ethos and values.

Going Concern

The Board has considered the going concern assessment which includes the principal financial uncertainties facing the Academy Trust between now and December 2026, and feels the Trust has adequately protected its position to continue operating with appropriate reserve levels for at least a 12-month period from the date of approval of this report and there are no material uncertainties in this regard.

After making appropriate enquiries, the Board of Trustees has a reasonable expectation that the Academy Trust has adequate resources to continue in operational existence for the foreseeable future. For this reason, 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.

Financial Review

Financial performance and position

The consolidated operating performance for core delivery was marginally better than planned, primarily due to additional funding that supported increased pay awards and HMRC-related cost pressures. However, ongoing reviews with our Local Authority partners around funding continued to present challenges, along with local recruitment pressures and the limited availability of suitably skilled agency staff to work with our most vulnerable learners. This remains a significant issue across the SEND sector, as the complexity of learners' needs has continued to increase year on year and many of our Local Authorities have Safety Valve agreements or section 114 Notices driving cost saving behaviours.

In response, we are working with leaders to adapt their delivery models throughout the year to mitigate any impact on quality and to maintain high levels of support. We have also introduced ICFP metrics as a tool to better support cost saving efficiencies. We have also developed a OHCAT wide funding framework to provide consistent policy and approaches to navigate LA funding in the absence of a National Funding Framework.

Trustees' Report (continued)

At a local, constituent academy level, before year-end adjustments many settings operated within their planned budgets. Schools of concern, (TSH, NCA, GRA, CAR and Link) during the period where closely monitored and where applicable the trust applied financial intervention. Throughout the period Grafham Grange was subject to a rebrokerage order and OHCAT worked collaboratively with the incoming trust to ensure a transfer date of 1*st* September 2025. There remains ongoing pressure to protect front-line delivery and the learner experience. The Trust continues to support these schools in developing agile budgets to address emerging financial and operational challenges.

Principal risks, key factors and uncertainties

Future significant financial uncertainties and risks affecting the Trust in the next few years have been identified as:

- Introduction of a fair funding formula and the uncertainty of long-term Government funding, including reforms for Alternative Provision. The Trust ensures it keeps abreast of national policy changes and key updates from central government; members of ESLT meet regularly with national, regional and local sector bodies including the DfE, Regional Schools Commissioners, Confederation of School Trusts (CST), London Councils' Young People's Education & Skills, and local authority commissioners, enabling dialogue around the implications of possible funding changes.
- Solvency of Local Authorities and an increase in Safety Valve Agreements with a large proportion of our partners; the Academy Trust has high levels of cash reserves to withstand fluctuations in cash flow and risk is mitigated due to working across 34 local authorities. Cash balances are pooled into hub accounts to maximise stability and balance risk, however the complexity associated with multiple pass-through Grants from Central to Local Government, which are finally passed to providers, is leading to high levels of debt and increased efforts in securing it.
  Increasing frequency of banding reviews and disparity between banding rates offered for SEND provisions between local authorities which has led to several of our commissioners consulting and implementing their own banding structures resulting in reductions in funding. The Trust is at different stages of negotiation with key commissioners and to limit any negative impact on learners and staffing structures, work was conducted in the period involving several stakeholder groups to develop a OHCAT wide Funding Framework, which will help navigate the complexities and disparities between Authorities. Impact of increases to pay scales rising more quickly than increases to income creating funding gaps. The Academy Trust is proactive in adapting agile cost structures and securing funding to deliver balanced budgets for each academic year. However, we expect the next few years to be challenging as the gap between the income and increased costs widens.
- Increasingly, sites are operating at capacity, with some academies experiencing significant waiting lists as demand exceeds places available; resulting in many of our Local Authorities looking to work with us to deliver expansion projects. The estates strategy focuses on identifying opportunities for growth in collaboration with the local authorities while recognising in-house capacity constraints and timescales. Significant investment in Estates capacity and commissioning of net capacity surveys was approved during the period.

Performance and overall financial position

The main sources of funding for the Academy Trust are from:

- the Department for Education, in the form of recurrent grants restricted to delivering the core purpose of education;
- Local Authorities which provide the Element 3 (Top-Up) grants for each pupil in relation to their specialist need in addition to pass-through Grants from Government in relation to pay and pension increases.

The grants receivable from the DfE and Local Authorities (and the associated expenditure) is reflected in the restricted general funds in the Statement of Financial Activities (SOFA) on page 34. These sources of funding are utilised to deliver the five strategic objectives: quality, standards and reputation; Innovation and specialism; development and growth; system leadership; and nurturing talent, as described in greater detail on page 5.

Income for the year to 31 August 2025 (excluding income attributed to the restricted fixed assets fund) was £89.3m (2024: £81.8m) and was derived principally from DfE and local authority funding including amounts to cover pay and pension inflation. but also includes start up grants relating to the opening of the new free schools.

Trustees' Report (continued)

Expenditure (excluding depreciation and other FRS102 pension adjustments) for the year ended 31 August 2025 was £87.1m (2024: £80.2m). The major part of the Academy Trust's expenditure is in relation to its staff costs which (including FRS102 adjustments in respect of current service costs) amounted to £71.5m (2024: £64.9m).

The net position for the year, therefore, was a revenue surplus of £2.2m before transfers to the restricted fixed asset fund (2024: £1.6m).

General reserves
From the revenue surplus, £2.3m (2024: £ 0.7m) was invested in fixed assets and the overall net decrease in general reserves was £0.1m (2024: increase of £0.9m). Total general reserves have decreased slightly from £14.7m to £14.6m during the year to 31 August 2025. Of these, £4.1m is designated to capital projects as detailed on page 13.

As at 31 August 2025 the Academy Trust had unrestricted reserves of £6.5m (2024: £5.6m), being accumulated net funds generated from trading activities outside providing education and surpluses transferred to the Trust on the conversion of new academies.

During the year, the Trustees designated £780k of unrestricted funds to cover potential future dilapidation costs associated with leased properties. While these are not currently recognised as liabilities in the financial statements due to the level of uncertainty in relation to the timing and quantum of such charges, the Trustees consider it prudent to earmark funds in anticipation of obligations that may arise at the end of lease agreements. In addition, the Trustees have designated £3,864k to support strategic estate growth initiatives and other development projects aligned with the Trust's estate strategy and organisational priorities. These designations reflect the Trust's commitment to responsible financial planning, asset stewardship, and investment in future growth.

The Trust will use reserves wisely and will be investing and addressing the immediate needs of the schools. The in-year aim is to continue to invest in quality educational resources and to improve the social facilities for our pupils. The long-term plan is to maintain proportionate reserves to reinvest in capital programmes and development of our buildings.

The Trust produces a 5-year plan to predict the impact of business changes and funding stream uncertainties to enable pro-active decisions to be made to our staff and non-staff resource structure in line with these predictions to enhance the sustainability of all academies within the Trust.

Fixed asset fund
As at 31 August 2025, the net book value of Fixed Assets was £150.3m (2024: £124.2m). This was in the main due to the initial recognition of the new Carew Free School building and disposal of the old site and an excess investment in Fixed Assets over the annual depreciation charge in the period. The building occupied by Arbour Vale School (and all other assets) are part of a Private Finance Initiative (PFI) scheme and the agreement was transferred to OHCAT on conversion of the school. Ownership of the building will transfer to the Academy Trust at the end of the contract in 2035; the current value of the site is approximately £23.7m.

Pension reserve
The Trust had a defined benefit LGPS of £Nil (2024: £ 0.3m) as at 31 August 2025. Although the actuarial valuation identified a surplus, this has not been recognised due to the asset ceiling restriction under FRS102. The pension reserve is under continuous review by independent actuaries and regular adjustments will be made to contribution rates in order to balance the fund.

Reserves Policy

The Trustees review the level of reserves of the Trust annually. This review encompasses the nature of income and expenditure streams, the need to match income with commitments and the nature of the reserves. The policy of the Trustees is to maintain a level of reserves that will be adequate to provide a stable base for the continuing operation of the Trust and to deal with unexpected emergencies. The target level of reserves is set out in the Finance Regulations document and it is a requirement for all academies to hold reserves equivalent to a range of between 45 and 60 days of expenditure (excluding depreciation and other FRS102 pension adjustments). Based on adjusted annual expenditure of £87.1m, this equates to a target range of approximately £10.7m to £14.3m.

The Trust needs to hold reserves for a number of reasons, for example:

- Contingency – to deal with unforeseen events that cannot be covered in the annual approved budget;
- The cost intensive nature of the provision, particularly given the dependency on income from local authorities many of whom are also facing significant financial pressure;
- A planned build-up of funds to pay for some major work, project or replacement programmes as identified in the estates strategy, particularly as the Academy Trust no longer qualifies for the condition improvement fund;
- Funds held from one year to the next to manage variations in funding levels or specifically allocated grants for which carry forward is allowed; and
- To support future education purposes in line with the Improvement Plan of each Academy within the Trust.

The following table details any material requests the trust feels are at different stages of formal commitment and have therefore been classified as "designated" from general reserves for specific medium-term. It should be noted that the Priory Lane expansion cannot be funded by school level reserves, but subject to formal trustee approval in the Summer 2025 Trust-wide reserves will be utilised to fund this growth initiative. Additionally, funding for Motor Mechanics project at TSH and PRI is still being negotiated with the local authority.

Academy	**Plan for reserves**	**£**
The Skills Hub	Mechanics centre contribution & IT Refresh	398,333
Bedelsford	Capex Chaucer Centre	40,000
Dysart	Garden Refurbishment	200,000
St Philips	Sprinkler system	250,000
Nightingale	Priory Lane Expansion	500,000
Brantridge	School capacity conversion	300,000
Grafham Grange	Pitch Replacement	119,000
St Dominics	Driveway Phase 2&3	300,000
Arbour Vale	PFI Contract	388,760
Unified	Canopy Classroom	75,000
Addington Valley	Increased capacity build & IT Refresh	550,000
Pride	Mechanics centre contribution & IT Refresh	393,333
The Link	Secondary PDA	250,000
OHCAT	Heating and Air Con	100,000
	Total Growth & Estate Strategy Projects	**3,864,426**
	Property Dilapidation fund (see below)	780,000
	Total Designated funds	**4,584,426**

ESLT consider these requests are in accordance with key priorities and the strategic aims of the organisation and these plans will be implemented in line with the estate's strategy.

In addition to these strategic growth initiatives, the trustees have also designated funds to cover potential future dilapidation costs relating to leased properties, where lease agreements may give rise to obligations upon exit. No provision has been made in the financial statements due to uncertainty around timing and cost; however, given this possible exposure £780,000 has been designated from unrestricted reserves for this purpose. Together, these designations reflect the trustees' commitment to managing both future estate development and potential property exit obligations in line with the Trust's strategic priorities and financial planning framework.

The LGPS pension reserve is £Nil at the year end. This is an annual accounting valuation and has no bearing on the cashflows or annual budgets the academies have available. For all schools, any liability that may arise is covered by the value of the school site, except for Arbour Vale School, a PFI school, where the asset will not be recognised on the balance sheet until the end of the PFI contract in 2035. Tri-annual valuations do however impact cashflows and the next valuation took place in 2025; employer contribution rates may change in April 2026 as a result. Therefore, to reduce medium-term risk, the Trust committed to lump sum repayments from reserves over three years so that schools eventually pay primary rates only, thereby reducing pressure on operating budgets. These will be

Trustees' Report (continued)

reviewed during the next financial year to ensure best value for money and effective use of reserves to support front-line budgets.

The Trustees are satisfied that the Trust's reserves are sufficient for its current purposes.

The general reserves (excluding fixed assets and pension liability) as at 31 August 2025 amounted to £14.6m (2024: £14.7m), of which £8.1m is held in restricted general funds (2024: £8.8m) and £6.5m is held in unrestricted general funds (2024: £5.6m). Total general reserves of £14.6m are equivalent to approximately 61 days of expenditure (excluding depreciation and other FRS 102 pension adjustments), which is slightly above the reserves policy target range of 45 to 60 days. Trustees consider this level of reserves prudent given economic uncertainty and planned strategic investments. After designating reserves of £4.6m for future projects, remaining free reserves of £10m equate to 42 days of expenditure, which meets the policy range. Designated funds are not legally committed and can be reallocated if necessary, so trustees consider the overall reserves position acceptable and in line with the intent of the reserves policy.

Investment Policy

The Trustees' current policy is to manage, control and track financial exposure and ensure value for money exercising care and skill in all investment decisions and to ensure that security takes precedence over revenue maximisation.

The Trust therefore invests surplus funds in low-risk, short term bank deposit accounts with a range of banks to diversify risk and maximise returns on investment.

Principal Risks and Uncertainties

The following key principles outline the Trust's approach to risk management and internal control:

- The Trustees have responsibility for overseeing risk management within the Trust as a whole.
- An open and receptive approach to risk assessment and mitigation is adopted by the Trustees.
- The ESLT creates, advises on and implements policies approved by the Board that ensure compliance with legislative requirements.
- The Trust makes conservative and prudent recognition and disclosure of the financial and non-financial implications of risks.
- Senior and middle management Academy staff are responsible for enabling good risk management practice within their designated managed area.
- Key risk indicators are identified and closely monitored on a regular basis.

Principal risks are detailed in the risk register, which is reviewed by the Trustees each term. Key risks include:

1. Quality - Academy performance

The Trust currently operates 13 schools. Ensuring the delivery of a transformative, high quality of education by OHCAT schools is the central mission of the Trust and crucial to its continued success and growth. This core focus continues to effect sustained improvement across our academies. The Trust operates a robust internal quality and progression monitoring framework, scaffolded by 'heavy touch' central monitoring, challenge and oversight including external assessment. This enables a deep understanding at executive level of each school's strengths and areas for development to inform targeted improvement initiatives, underpinned by robust quantitative and qualitative data and enhanced where necessary by the pooling of Trust-wide resource. Maintaining strong links to local, regional and national bodies enables OHCAT to respond in an agile manner to sectorial developments potentially impacting on quality, such as changes to the Ofsted framework and the 'known unknowns' of the current administration's education policy.

2. Reputation

The Trust provides transformative learning and pastoral support for vulnerable pupils and students. It is critical that the Trust maintains a reputation for high quality and for sound and responsible practice and is increasingly involved in system leadership and broader advocacy for those with SEND. The Trust has robust and regularly reviewed policies and procedures in place for child protection and safeguarding, and financial and regulatory compliance. OHCAT invests heavily in training and continuing professional development to ensure that staff at all

levels and layers of the organisation develop a deep understanding of complex needs and SEND, as well as an understanding of crucial compliance matters and their role within these, so that we can continue to build the specialism within a secure compliance framework. The Trust maintains strong relationships and engagement with

key stakeholders including the DfE and main commissioners, enabling productive dialogue and solution-seeking where quality and/or viability issues may present.

3. Compliance

The academies within the Trust are geographically dispersed across four regional hubs. In addition, the Trust works to an underlying principle of localism supported by a central function. Such a local and regional focus means that individual academies can be more responsive to the bespoke nature of their context. It also reduces the risk of micro-management from a central function that may be less well informed about the local landscape and impose less efficacious solutions. Overarching this approach is the core role that the Trust plays in the monitoring and assurance of each school and in relation to statutory policies and procedures, key stakeholder engagement and the promotion of OHCAT's broader mission and vision more widely.

The reciprocal risk of this approach is that on matters of compliance, local variations could result in inconsistencies across the organisation as a whole. Our well-developed and established risk assessment processes – particularly, but not exclusively, in relation to safeguarding, financial systems, processes and reporting, recruitment and statutory policies – ensure that the Trust has comprehensive executive oversight of risk and any behaviours that may be sub-optimal in relation to compliance, and is able to intervene appropriately, decisively and in a timely manner. This is further supported by the introduction of Balanced Scorecard reports shared at Committee meetings which capture datasets and metrics at school level on a range of categories with a RAG indication of national benchmarks or targets. These are lagged and show performance trends over time. OHCAT operates a central training matrix covering key compliance areas (safeguarding, health and safety, equality, diversity and inclusion, data protection, human resources, financial regulations) which is enhanced by bespoke CPD delivery from internal and external providers according to identified need.

The Trust continues to invest in the improvement in school estates, including through effective prioritisation of capital funds expenditure. Additional project delivery capacity has been incorporated within the Team to ensure capital projects can be completed in a timely fashion.

4. Infrastructure and Capacity

In order to most effectively meet its strategic aims and objectives, the Trust requires an infrastructure for its business support services that enables it to operate in an efficient, coordinated and reliable way. Systems and processes are well established, appropriately supported and remain under active review by ESLT and Trustees to ensure that they are effective and fit for purpose. Central support services, as well as delivery to pupils and students in the academies, require sufficient capacity (in terms of quality, number of personnel and coherent organisational management) to enable exceptional outcomes.

5. Growth

An established multi-academy trust requires judicious management to ensure that growth is well-planned and resourced, in order to support the ongoing delivery of high-quality education to its pupils. This in turn requires a full and nuanced understanding of growth as it pertains to MAT development in the round: not just adding schools but growing pupil numbers within existing schools to meet demand, and the successful recruitment and retention of skilled staff at all levels to ensure continuity and excellence of provision. OHCAT works with leaders, Trustees and external stakeholders to understand the threats and opportunities relating to all aspects of growth; the refreshed 2025-2030 strategy has a strong focus on preferred opportunities to further enrich the Trust through judicious, well-managed growth, and the ongoing work around the People Strategy is specifically directed at mitigating risk relating to staff turnover, succession planning and loss of knowledge and expertise from the organisation.

Trustees' Report (continued)

6. Business Continuity

Interruptions to typical activity can have a negative impact on the offer provided to OHCAT pupils and students. In a dynamically shifting national, regional and local landscape, threats to normal business continuity are complex and multifaceted; these might represent a physical threat of interruption such as damage to premises or restrictions such as those experienced during the pandemic, or a risk of interruption to crucial Trust operations through malicious acts e.g. cyber-attacks, fraud attempts, deliberate data breaches. OHCAT has a secure ethos, a clearly defined headline mission and vision, and a well-articulated and understood set of values, underpinned by effective and responsive operational practice. These combine to support the Trust to continue to deliver to a high standard even if working practices need to be adapted. Our suite of risk assessment and monitoring supports a detailed understanding of the overall operational picture across OHCAT at any given time. Identified threats to business continuity receive targeted intervention e.g. system security testing, refresher training. Critical Incident Management and Business Continuity training took place ensuring the ESLT are well rehearsed and able to effectively manage such an incident. The training occurred in July 2025 and took the form of a time accelerated scenario.

7. Funding

The Trust is reliant on Government funding to support pupils and students whose additional support needs carry costs that exceed most other forms of ongoing funding. Variations in the funding methodology and levels of resource, as well as changes in eligibility criteria and other uncertainties within the wider landscape, create potential risk. The Trust engages proactively with funding bodies to raise awareness of the potential impact of planned actions and maintains strong working relationships with external agencies such as Local Authorities and Regional Schools Commissioners to ensure that productive dialogue takes place at local, regional and national level.

Risk Management

The Trust reviews the key risks to which its operations are exposed at least termly, together with the operating, financial and compliance controls that have been implemented to mitigate those risks. Risk management is embedded throughout; risk registers are maintained and monitored at all levels of the organisation. The Trustees are of the view that there is a formal ongoing process for identifying, evaluating and managing the Academy Trust's significant risks.

In addition, factors are in place that provide the Trustees with the capacity to deal with issues or problems that occur, for example, calling on an experienced, capable Executive Senior Leadership Team, or other specialists, who are able to act quickly in response to unexpected events through forward planning, policies and insurance and through holding appropriate reserves. Additionally, the Board of Trustees has an established Audit and Risk Committee whose membership is drawn from both OHCAT and OHC Trustees and which reports to the Trustees as a whole. The annual internal audit programme is directed in response to identified risks and included on a rolling programme of work.

Fundraising

The Trust accesses funds for specific projects that will benefit existing and future pupils and students where funds for these projects cannot be accessed via existing channels i.e. government education funding. This includes projects that provide additional opportunities and enhancements to the learning experience and environment such as vocational and sensory projects. The Trust does not use commercial fundraising organisations. There were no complaints concerning the Trust's fundraising activities during the year.
The code of fundraising practice is followed https://www.fundraisingregulator.org.uk/code

Trustees' Report (continued)

Streamlined Energy and Carbon Reporting

The Trust's annual energy usage and associated greenhouse gas emissions for the period 1 September 2024 to 31 August 2025, including the breakdown of energy consumption used to calculate emissions (kWh), is as follows:

Energy type	2024/25 (kWh)	2023/24 (kWh)
Mandatory:		
Gas	5,617,032	6,078,808
Purchased electricity from the grid	2,606,769	2,479,744
Transport fuel	285,229	190,461
Total energy (mandatory)	**8,509,030**	**8,749,013**
Voluntary:	**2024/25 (kWh)**	**2023/24 (kWh)**
Oil	517,313	559,669
Total energy (voluntary)	**517,313**	**559,669**
Total energy (mandatory & voluntary)	9,026,343	9,308,681

Intensity Ratio

Two intensity ratios are reported: emissions (tCO2e) per pupil and per square meter of floor area. Emissions per pupil is the recommended ratio for the sector, ensuring consistency and comparability, with pupil numbers based on the Autumn 2024 Census. Emissions per square meter of floor area are reported to reflect the energy efficiency of the buildings, which are the primary source of emissions.

Intensity ratios	2024/25	2023/24
Mandatory emissions only:		
Tonnes of CO_2e per pupil	0.793	0.963
Tonnes of CO_2e per square meter floor area	0.036	0.038

Breakdown of emissions associated with the reported energy use (tCO_2e):

Emission source	2024/25 (tCO_2e)	2023/24 (tCO_2e)
Mandatory:		
Scope 1		
Gas	1,027.7	1,111.8
Trust-owned vehicles	52.0	49.5
Scope 2		
Purchased electricity (location-based)	461.4	513.4
Scope 3		
Category 6: Business travel (grey fleet)	20.3	10.7
Total gross emissions (mandatory)	**1,561.4**	1,685.4
Voluntary:		
Scope 1		
Oil	132.7	143.6
Total gross emissions (voluntary)	**132.7**	**143.6**
Total gross emissions (mandatory & voluntary)	**1,694.1**	**1,829.0**

Trustees' Report (continued)

Energy efficiency action during current financial year

- The organisation has renewed its energy supply contracts, ensuring that all supplied energy for the next 3 years is sourced from within the UK Renewable Energy Guarantees of Origin (REGO) scheme supporting the use of Renewable Energy sources
- Significant investment has been made in the areas of environmental and sustainability management with the team growing to add both capacity and capability in these areas. Additionally, a new software platform has been introduced enabling the implementation of Sustainability plans and the tracking of associated actions at all settings.
- The phased installation of EV charging points, energy efficient windows and motion sensing LED lighting has continued across the estate.
- A new Estates Strategy has been endorsed by the Board of Trustees, formalising the organisation's commitment to sustainability in Estates Management.

Plans for Future Periods

OHCAT has a clear strategy for growth and development, which includes but is not limited to the following aims:

- Quality and standards: a good or outstanding school for every learner, with life-changing and life-enhancing outcomes and meaningful destinations.
- Innovation and specialism: engaging with the evidence to ensure best practice across the Trust and providing opportunities for staff to share and develop their knowledge and expertise both internally and in the wider education community.
- System leadership: ensuring compliance and accountability at every level through dynamic governance and using our collective influence to advocate for young people with SEND.
- Development and growth: working in partnership with local, regional and national stakeholders to provide high quality education for our students; building capacity within the organisation in order to facilitate targeted expansion.
- Nurturing talent: ensuring that OHCAT attracts and retains the highest quality staff, providing exciting career pathways and a strong staff development offer.

There are detailed Key Performance Indicators against each of the five strands and progress against these is regularly reviewed by Trustees.

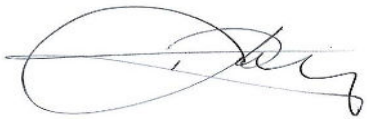
Orchard Hill College Academy Trust

Statement as to Disclosure of Information to Auditors

In so far as each of the Trustees is aware:

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

The Trustees' report, incorporating a Strategic Report, was approved by order of the Board of Trustees, as the company directors, and signed on the board's behalf by:



R Leclercq **Date:** 12 December 2025
Chair

Orchard Hill College Academy Trust

Governance Statement

Scope of Responsibility

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

We have reviewed and taken account of the guidance in DfE's Governance handbook and competency framework for governance.

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

Governance

Through a formal collaboration agreement, Orchard Hill College and Orchard Hill College Academy Trust share a committee structure, enabling Trustees from both organisations to collaborate and contribute their combined knowledge, skills and experiences. This shared approach strengthens the Trust Board by enhancing its decision-making and governance capacity. The shared committees include Finance and Resources Committee, Quality, Standards and Safeguarding Committee, Audit and Risk Committee, and the People Committee. In addition to all committees meeting once a term, the Board of Trustees joins the Orchard Hill College Trustees in a joint Board meeting at the end of each term. Conflicts of interest are managed through a clear and transparent process. All trustees complete an annual declaration of interests, and at the start of every meeting, there is a standing agenda item inviting any new declarations. The register of interests is shared at each meeting for reference. Where a known conflict or a newly declared conflict is likely to impact business for a period of time, the Director of Governance discusses the approach with the trustee, and this is then agreed by the Chairs and trustees**.** The board implements the agreed approach as appropriate

Joint Board of Trustees Attendance:

Trustee	Meetings attended	Out of a possible
Helen Norris	3	3
Barbara McIntosh	3	3
Stephen Lawes	3	3
Anna Chiva	0	3
Raymond Leclercq	3	3
Paul Holland	3	3
Mauli Tikkiwal	3	3
Moses Ayoola	3	3
Vanessa Danz	2	3
Andrea Aimar	2	3
John Prior	3	3

The Trust Board ensures proper oversight of the Trust through its termly Board of Trustees meetings, where strategic priorities, performance, and compliance are reviewed in detail. These meetings provide

Governance Report (continued)

a formal mechanism for accountability and enable Trustees to monitor progress, challenge effectively, and support the Trust's leadership in delivering high-quality outcomes for pupils.

Trust Board Attendance:

Trustee	Meetings attended	Out of a possible
Helen Norris	4	4
Barbara McIntosh	4	4
Stephen Lawes	4	4
Anna Chiva	3	4
Raymond Leclercq	4	4
Paul Holland	4	4
Mauli Tikkiwal	4	4
Moses Ayoola	4	4
Vanessa Danz	1	4
Andrea Aimar	4	4
John Prior	4	4

The Audit and Risk Committee (ARC) is responsible for maintaining oversight of the Trust's financial, governance, risk management, and internal control systems. Its responsibilities include monitoring and making recommendations to the Board on the effectiveness of internal scrutiny, ensuring that identified risks are being appropriately addressed, and reporting findings both regularly and annually to the Boards and the Accounting Officer. During 2024-25, a new internal scrutiny partner was appointed. This has introduced a shift towards deep-dive audits focused on high-risk areas such as cash management, procurement, IT infrastructure, and payroll. This forms a critical part of the Board's annual reporting requirements and provides assurance on the adequacy of the internal control framework, covering governance, financial and non-financial controls, and risk management.

ARC Attendance:

Committee Member	Meetings attended	Out of a possible
Stephen Lawes	4	4
Paul Holland	4	4
Vanessa Danz	3	4
Andrea Aimar	4	4
John Prior	4	4

The Quality, Standards and Safeguarding Committee (QSSC) ensures that the Trust's strategic vision and values are embedded across all aspects of its work. The Committee is responsible for monitoring and making recommendations to the Board on a range of key areas. These include the appropriateness and suitability of the curriculum offer, progress and achievement measures, and the strategic objectives relating to quality and standards, including their impact. The Committee also oversees the quality and effectiveness of pastoral care, wellbeing and welfare support for students, as well as safeguarding and child and adult protection processes and practice. Through this oversight, the QSSC plays a critical role in ensuring that students receive a high-quality, safe and supportive educational experience.

Governance Report (continued)

QSSC Attendance:

Committee Member	Meetings Attended	Out of a possible
Helen Norris	3	3
Anna Chiva	3	3
Barbara McIntosh	3	3
John Prior	2	3
Mauli Tikkiwal	3	3
Vanessa Danz	2	3

The Finance and Resources Committee plays a vital role in overseeing the financial and operational sustainability of the Trust. It monitors income and expenditure, evaluates the financial implications for the College and provides recommendations to the Trustees to support informed decision-making. The Committee also oversees estate management, including health and safety compliance, and the strategic development of IT infrastructure, ensuring that resources are effectively aligned with Trust's priorities.

FRC Attendance:

Committee Member	Meetings attended	Out of a possible
Stephen Lawes	3	3
Ray Leclercq	3	3
Moses Ayoola	2	3
Mauli Tikkiwal	2	3
John Prior	3	3

In addition to its focus on fostering a positive and supportive work environment that enables employees to thrive and contribute effectively, the People Committee also plays a key role in remuneration oversight. It considers salary arrangements for senior post holders, including the key management personnel of the Trust, and makes informed recommendations to the Trust Board for approval. This ensures transparency, fairness, and alignment with organisational values and strategic priorities. The Trustees, except for the CEO who is also a Trustee of the charitable company, did not receive any remuneration for their services to the Trust in the period of report.

People Committee Attendance:

Committee Member	Meetings attended	Out of a possible
Andrea Aimar	3	3
Ray Leclercq	3	3
Helen Norris	2	3
John Prior	2	3
Stephen Lawes	2	3

In addition to the committee structure, most Trustees hold a designated portfolio holder role, which enables them to engage closely with senior leaders across key areas of the Trust. This structure supports strategic alignment and provides Trustees with deeper insight into operational progress, challenges, and outcomes. By maintaining regular dialogue with senior staff, Trustees are well-positioned to offer informed support and scrutiny, contributing to effective governance and continuous

Governance Report (continued)

improvement. To further strengthen their understanding of the Trust, all Trustees visit Trust sites throughout the year, enabling them to see first-hand what is happening on the ground and facilitating more informed and meaningful conversations with senior leaders.

To ensure strengthened governance and deeper engagement at local level, Trustees have facilitated the establishment of two additional non-decision-making forums: the Chairs' Forum and the Safeguarding and Wellbeing Governance Forum.

The Chairs' Forum provides a structured space for dialogue between the Chair of Trustees and Chairs of Local Governing Bodies, promoting shared governance practice, improving communication, and enhancing the Board's understanding of local oversight.

Committee Member	Meetings attended	Out of a possible
Ray Leclercq	3	3

The Safeguarding Governance Forum supports safeguarding portfolio holders by offering peer-to-peer engagement, tailored training, and a safe environment to share practice and feedback, helping to build confidence and consistency in safeguarding governance across the Trust.

Committee Member	Meetings attended	Out of a possible
Barbara McIntosh	3	3

Conflicts of interest

OHCAT operates a set of policies and procedures to maintain oversight of all possible conflicts of interest and enable further scrutiny in the event that such conflicts arise. Both the Staff Code of Conduct and the Conflict of Interest Policy make clear that all staff must complete an annual Declaration of Interest return in order to declare any personal or professional relationships or interests that may have bearing on their work (or a nil return if no such relationships or interests exist), and that all staff are required to declare any familial or close personal relationships with other members of OHCAT staff, either upon appointment or as and when the situation demands. All Trustees and local governors must declare any relevant interests via an annual Declaration of Interest return and whenever a potential conflict of interest arises, such as during an LGB meeting.

All such declarations are recorded in the OHCAT Register of Interests. Where a personal or professional interest is declared, these are scrutinised by the relevant team (e.g. Governance, Finance, HR, Safeguarding) in order to ensure compliance, adequacy of existing controls, assess any potential risk to pupils, staff and the organisation as a whole, and determine any actions necessary to mitigate that risk including seeking formal assurances of arms-length processes. All potential conflict of interest information is reviewed by the Compliance Team and a summary report presented annually to Audit & Risk Committee to provide assurance that robust processes are in place to mitigate risk around potential or actual conflicts of interest.

Declarations or Conflicts of Interest are a standing agenda item at all Committee and Board Meetings.

Review of Value for Money

As Accounting Officer, the CEO has responsibility for ensuring that the Academy Trust delivers good value in the use of public resources. The Accounting Officer understands that value for money refers to the educational and wider societal outcomes, as well as estates safety and management, achieved in return for the taxpayer resources received.

Governance Report (continued)

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

- **Improving Educational Results through Targeted Intervention and Collaboration**

Resources are directed where they are most needed to meet education requirements. As detailed in the Strategic Report section of the Trustees' Report, pupils across OHCAT have continued to make good progress and achieve exciting outcomes. OHCAT academies serve a pupil population characterised by a wide range of additional needs and other barriers to learning; their achievements stand both as testament to their abilities and determination, and as a marker of our continued drive to provide excellent educational opportunities.

The academies have in place a strong system for tracking pupil progress and achievement, coupled with a programme of early and appropriate intervention. In addition, academies provide targeted support such as booster groups, lunchtime and after school revision clubs, and bespoke and highly personalised work with children and families as appropriate. Senior leaders monitor the performance of staff and ensure that appropriate actions are taken to address any weaknesses.

Internal benchmarking has been used across all schools to identify areas of cost inefficiency and to support LA funding discussions. The Trust continues to review the effectiveness and value for money of its centralised model of back-office support to achieve economies of scale and shared expertise whilst retaining local specialisms and protecting front line delivery to ensure support recharges are well managed, fit-for-purpose and can be funded within the budgetary constraints. The Trust engaged with the DfE's School Resource Management Advisory Programme during the period and have also introduced Integrated Curriculum Financial Planning into local level and consolidated financial plans.

- **Effective Prioritisation of Capital Projects**

The Trust has a clear framework in place for prioritising capital projects, in order to both maximise the positive impact of capex budgets and other capital funding streams through effectively targeted investment, and to ensure effective oversight and management of risk associated with capital projects. As set out in the Trust's policies on capital project prioritisation and use of the Schools Condition Allowance fund, OHCAT's approach is informed by DfE condition grades and draws on condition survey data in order to make best use of all available funds to maintain and improve the Trust estate. Projects responding to safeguarding and/or health and safety issues are given highest priority, followed by those that address business continuity (i.e. where a risk of school closure has been identified). Costed bids are submitted to ESLT by Principals and assessed according to prioritisation criteria; ESLT then submits a formal plan of projects, timescales and costings to the Finance & Resources Committee for scrutiny and approval.

- **Financial Governance**

Financial oversight remains a core component of the Trust's governance framework. All Trustees have access to monthly management accounts via GovernorHub, ensuring transparency and regular financial monitoring. The Finance and Resources Committee undertakes detailed scrutiny of these accounts and highlights key issues for the Board's attention. At each termly Board meeting, Trustees are given the opportunity to engage directly with Committee members and the Chief Financial Officer to raise questions and seek clarification. The Board also reviews and approves the Annual Accounts and the external auditors' Findings Report, following detailed consideration by the Finance and Resources Committee and further scrutiny by the Audit and Risk Committee.

The Audit and Risk Committee plays a key role in internal scrutiny, receiving reports from the internal auditors and ensuring robust oversight of risk management and compliance. The Finance and

Governance Statement (continued)

Resources Committee supports financial governance by reviewing monthly management accounts, identifying key issues, and providing strategic insight. Meetings include updates from senior leads, who present concise summaries of current activity, risks, and opportunities. On a rotational basis, deep dives into key strategic resource areas, such as IT, Procurement and Estates are delivered, enabling Trustees to offer informed support and challenge.

The CFO and her team work closely with academy Principals to ensure that any resource requirements to support teaching and learning are adequately met. Financial information and variances are discussed and approved and issues raised on the risk register to ensure senior leaders are aware of any issues in order to remedy promptly. Additionally, a monthly Finance Risk & Review takes place attended by senior leaders which reviews the financial performance at a local and consolidated level and reviews progress against financial targets and objectives. A RAG system is used to indicate both local and consolidated financial performance and medium-term financial viability with formal interventions enforced where provisions are rated high-risk.
This governance work is further supported by the appointment of designated Trustees as portfolio holders for Finance and for Audit & Risk. These roles involve working closely with the Chief Financial Officer (CFO) and Chief Operating Officer (COO), enabling the portfolio holders to maintain a detailed understanding of financial and risk-related matters. Their insight helps inform the wider Board, ensuring that oversight is both rigorous and strategically aligned with the Trust's priorities.

Additionally, the Annual Budget at school level and performance against it during the period is shared with the relevant LGB (Local Governing Body).

The CFO produces data for high level reports which includes financial information in a clear and transparent format to include key performance indicators and benchmarking data, where relevant, and year on year comparatives to assist with achieving value for money.

- **Effective Purchasing and Consolidation**

The Academy Trust has a centralised Procurement Team to ensure compliance with the Public Contract Regulations 2015 and embed processes and procedures for competitive tendering and take responsibility for contract management oversight of key Trust-wide service contracts such as cleaning and catering. When sourcing goods and services the Team routinely analyse public sector buying organisation frameworks first to determine if the need can be met quickly, efficiently and in a compliant way. Major purchases and contracts are always tendered or formal further competitions undertaken against frameworks unless there has been robust justification for a waiver which the Finance Regulations allow for along with stringent processes.

The team offers commercial advice and guidance as well as contract management training to internal stakeholders. Where there are value for money advantages the team will explore Trust-wide arrangements thus exploiting our ability to aggregate spend and then leverage this to secure cost savings and/or synergies. Access to financial data allows the team to interrogate that data to ensure suppliers are competitive and allows benchmarking. Analysis of spend data across the Academy Trust continues to inform the setting of procurement strategies to ensure greater efficiency in the future.

The team has put in place a Master Preferred Supplier List (PSL); this comprises a number of suppliers and contractor who are either listed as DfE 'Deals for Schools', recommended framework suppliers or who have secured a place as a result of the team running an open and competitive tendering process or benchmarking. The Master PSL accounts for most common areas of spend across the Trust, i.e. from office stationery and educational supplies to canine therapy, and estates professional services.

Governance Statement (continued)

The core service contribution applied across all schools to fund the central support teams continues to be reviewed and monitored to ensure schools receive value for money or added value from being part of a multi-academy trust. Costed 'Scopes of Support' are reviewed annually and communicated to budget holders to articulate the support the Academy Trust provides from the central teams which is highly specialised and deep in terms of breadth and scope. The contribution made by schools is benchmarked against other Multi Academy Trusts to evidence value for money and cost-effectiveness.

The team continues to track, realise and report upon cashable savings and have a stretch target to achieve. The team also reviews all waiver requests, recording these and making reports routinely available to the Board for scrutiny. The Procurement Policy has been reviewed, updated to ensure alignment with the needs of the organisation and was approved by The Board.

During the period under discussion the team procured a new procurement system (Proquro), replacing Mytenders. Proquro will go live in January 2026, facilitating improved visibility and management of the supplier spend. Phase one of the project to consolidate the LGPS funds was successful in year generating significant savings for front line services; phase two is underway and remains a key priority during the next financial year. The Trust continue to lobby the MHCLG to process the second direction order application following the outcome of the recent pension review but changes in government office have caused further delays, although these are close to resolution at the point of the signing these accounts.

- **Income generation**

Throughout the year the Trust has worked closely with schools and the Local Authorities to ensure maximisation of income streams. This has been most successful in negotiating Element 3 funding and 1:1 additional support at appropriate levels to allow the schools to deliver the bespoke learning packages required for the individual pupil needs or mitigating the risk to quality where the Trust has experienced significant reductions in funding levels due to LAs responding to funding pressures and disparities in banding levels.

Robust recording systems and reconciliations have been implemented to track funding and secure funds to support operational activity and to ensure prompt settlement of invoices, although this is becoming increasingly challenging in the current landscape, especially with the increasing complexity of pass-through Government grants and the growing funding pressures faced by multiple Local Authorities. The Trust plans to seek out substantial fundraising partners for future planned capital projects and will continue to work in partnership with commissioning bodies to secure funds for growth.

- **Supplier Payment Performance**

In respect of payment practices reporting, supplier payment performance reported 88% (prior year 81%) of invoices were paid within 30 days in the year under review, against a Government-set target of 75%.

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 Academy Trust policies, aims and objectives, to evaluate the likelihood of those risks being realised and the impact should they be realised, and to manage them efficiently, effectively and economically. The system of internal control has been in place in Orchard Hill College Academy Trust for the period 1 September 2024 to 31 August 2025 and up to the date of approval of the annual report and financial statements.

Governance Statement (continued)

Capacity to Handle Risk

The Board of Trustees has reviewed the key risks to which the Academy Trust is exposed together with the operating, financial and compliance controls that have been implemented to mitigate those risks. The Board of Trustees is of the view that there is a formal ongoing process for identifying, evaluating and managing the Academy Trust's significant risks that has been in place for the period 1 September 2024 to 31 August 2025 and up to the date of approval of the annual report and financial statements. This process is regularly reviewed by the Board of Trustees.

The Risk and Control Framework

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

- comprehensive budgeting and monitoring systems with an annual budget and periodic financial reports which are reviewed and agreed by the Board of Trustees;
- comprehensive medium to long term financial planning documents which span a period of five years and include an action plan and owners.
- regular reviews by the finance portfolio holder of reports which indicate financial performance against the forecasts and of major purchase plans, capital works and expenditure programmes;
- setting targets to measure financial and other performance;
- clearly defined purchasing (asset purchase or capital investment) guidelines;
- delegation of authority and segregation of duties; and
- identification and management of risks.

The Trustees considered the need for a specific internal audit function and have appointed MacIntyre Hudson Associates (MHA) to perform an annual planned schedule of works. MHA's role includes giving advice on financial and non-financial matters and performing a range of checks on the Academy Trust's systems and internal controls.During 2024-25 the Internal audit work focused on key financial controls with Risk & Cash Management, Procurement, and Payroll. All audit findings have been reported to the Audit & Risk Committee, and management responses have been incorporated into the action tracking process. No material weaknesses were identified. Other audits or self-assessments performed by other partners during the period included VAT checks by HMRC and VAT specialists Berthold Bauer, quality and standards health-checks by external consultant David Scott Ltd, and health and safety audits by WSP.

On an annual basis, internal audit will report to the Board of Trustees, through the Audit & Risk Committee, on the operation of the systems of control and on the discharge of the Board of Trustees' financial responsibilities.

Review of Effectiveness

As Accounting Officer the CEO has responsibility for reviewing the effectiveness of the system of internal control. During the year in question the review has been performed by:

- the work of the external auditor;
- the work of the internal auditor;
- the financial management and governance self-assessment process;
- the work of executive managers within the Academy Trust who have the responsibility for the development and maintenance of the internal control framework.

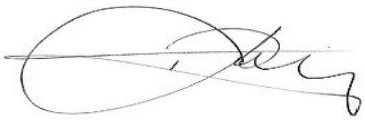
The Accounting Officer has been advised of the implications of the result of their review of the system of internal control by the Audit and Risk Committee and a plan to address weaknesses and ensure continuous improvement of the system is in place.

Governance Report (continued)

Conclusion

Based on the advice of the audit and risk committee and the accounting officer, the board of trustees is of the opinion that the academy trust has an adequate and effective framework for governance, risk management and control.

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



R Leclercq
Trustee
DATE: 12 December 2025

L Cornwell
Accounting Officer (Interim)
DATE: 12 December 2025

Statement on Regularity, Propriety and Compliance

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

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

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

L Cornwell
Accounting Officer (Interim)

Date: 12 December 2025

Orchard Hill College Academy Trust

Statement of Trustees' Responsibilities

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

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

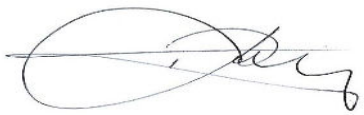
- select suitable accounting policies and then apply them consistently;
- observe the methods and principles in the Charities SORP FRS102 and the Academies Accounts Direction 2024 to 2025;
- make judgments and accounting estimates that are reasonable and prudent; • state whether applicable UK Accounting Standards have been followed, subject to any material departures disclosed and explained in the financial statements;
- prepare the financial statements on the going concern basis unless it is inappropriate to presume that the charitable company will continue in business.

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

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

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

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



R Leclercq **Date:** 12 December 2025
Chair of Trustees

Independent Auditor's Report to the Members of Orchard Hill College Academy Trust

Opinion

We have audited the financial statements of Orchard Hill College Academy Trust (the 'charitable company') for the year ended 31 August 2025 which comprise the statement of financial activities, the balance sheet, the statement of cash flows, the principal accounting policies and the notes to the financial statements. The financial reporting framework that has been applied in their preparation is applicable law, United Kingdom Accounting Standards, including Financial Reporting Standard 102 'The Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland' (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice), 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) (the Charities SORP (FRS102) and the Academies Accounts Direction 2024 to 2025.

In our opinion, the financial statements:

- give a true and fair view of the state of the charitable company's affairs as at 31 August 2025 and of its income and expenditure, for the period then ended;
- have been properly prepared in accordance with United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice;
- have been prepared in accordance with the requirements of the Companies Act 2006; and
- have been prepared in accordance with the Charities SORP (FRS102) and Academies Accounts Direction 2024 to 2025.

Basis for opinion

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

Conclusions relating to going concern

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

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

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

Other information

The trustees are responsible for the other information. The other information comprises the information included in the annual report other than the financial statements and our auditor's report thereon. 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.

In connection with our audit of the financial statements, 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 audit or otherwise appears to be materially misstated. If we identify such material inconsistencies or apparent material misstatements, we are required to determine whether there is a material misstatement in the financial statements or a material misstatement of the other information. If, based on the work we have performed, we conclude that there is a material misstatement of this other information, we are required to report that fact. We have nothing to report in this regard.

Opinions on other matters prescribed by the Companies Act 2006
In our opinion, based on the work undertaken in the course of the audit:

- the information given in the trustees' report, which is also the directors' report for the purposes of company law and includes the strategic report, for the financial year for which the financial statements are prepared is consistent with the financial statements; and

- the trustees' report, which is also the directors' report for the purposes of company law and includes the strategic report, has been prepared in accordance with applicable legal requirements.

Matters on which we are required to report by exception
In the light of the knowledge and understanding of the charitable company and its environment obtained in the course of the audit, we have not identified material misstatements in the trustees report including the strategic report.

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

- adequate accounting records have not been kept, or returns adequate for our audit have not been received from branches not visited by us; or

- the financial statements are not in agreement with the accounting records and returns; or

- certain disclosures of trustees remuneration specified by law are not made; or

- we have not received all the information and explanations we require for our audit.

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

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

Auditor's responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements
Our objectives are to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial statements as a whole are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error, and to issue an auditor's report that includes

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

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

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

- the engagement partner ensured that the engagement team collectively had the appropriate competence, capabilities and skills to identify or recognise non-compliance with applicable laws and regulations;

- we identified the laws and regulations applicable to the charitable company through discussions with management, and from our knowledge of the academy trust sector;

- the identified laws and regulations were communicated within the audit team regularly and the team remained alert to instances of non-compliance throughout the audit;

- we considered the legal and regulatory frameworks that are applicable to the charitable company and determined that the most significant are the Companies Act 2006, the Charities SORP (FRS 102) the Academies Accounts Direction 2024 to 2025, the Academies Trust Handbook 2024, and the academy trust's funding agreement with the Secretary of State for Education as well as legislation pertaining to safeguarding in the UK;

- we understood how the charitable company is complying with those legal and regulatory frameworks by making inquiries to management and those responsible for legal, compliance and governance procedures. We corroborated our inquiries through our review of the minutes of trustees meetings and papers provided to the trustees.

- we planned and carried out a separate limited assurance engagement in respect of regularity, propriety and compliance in accordance with the Framework and Guide for External Auditors and Reporting Accountants of Academy Trusts issued by the Department for Education, as set out in our separate independent reporting accountant's assurance report on regularity.

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

- making enquiries of management and those charged with governance as to where they considered there was susceptibility to fraud, their knowledge of actual, suspected and alleged fraud; and

- considering the internal controls in place to mitigate risks of fraud and non-compliance with laws and regulations.

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

- performed analytical procedures to identify any unusual or unexpected relationships;

- reviewed journal entries to identify unusual transactions;

- tested the authorisation of expenditure as part of our substantive testing thereon;
- assessed whether judgements and assumptions made in determining the accounting estimates set out in the accounting policies were indicative of potential bias; and
- used data analytics to identify any significant or unusual transactions and identify the rationale for them.

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

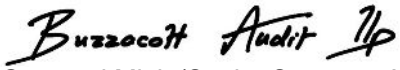
- agreeing financial statement disclosures to underlying supporting documentation;
- reviewing the minutes of trustees' meetings;
- enquiring of management and those charged with governance as to actual and potential litigation and claims;
- reviewing any available correspondence with Ofsted, DfE (formerly ESFA) and HMRC; and
- the work undertaken in relation to the limited assurance engagement in respect of regularity, propriety and compliance in accordance with the Framework and Guide for External Auditors and Reporting Accountants of Academy Trusts issued by the Department for Education, as set out in our separate independent reporting accountant's assurance report on regularity.

There are inherent limitations in our audit procedures described above. The more removed that laws and regulations are from financial transactions, the less likely it is that we would become aware of non-compliance. International Standards on Auditing also limit the audit procedures required to identify non-compliance with laws and regulations to enquiry of the trustees and other management and the inspection of regulatory and legal correspondence, if any.

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.

Use of our report

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



Gumayel Miah (Senior Statutory Auditor)
For and on behalf of Buzzacott Audit LLP, Statutory Auditor
130 Wood Street
London
EC2V 6DL

Date: 16 December 2025

Orchard Hill College Academy Trust

Independent Reporting Accountant's Assurance Report on Regularity to Orchard Hill College Academy Trust and the Secretary of State for Education

In accordance with the terms of our engagement letter dated 20 August 2025 and further to the requirements of the Department for Education (DfE), as included in the extant Framework and Guide for External Auditors and Reporting Accountants of Academy Trusts, we have carried out an engagement to obtain limited assurance about whether anything has come to our attention that would suggest, in all material respects, the expenditure disbursed and income received by Orchard Hill College Academy Trust during the period 1 September 2024 to 31 August 2025 have not been applied to the purposes intended by Parliament and that the financial transactions do not conform to the authorities which govern them.

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

Respective responsibilities of the accounting officer of Orchard Hill College Academy Trust and the reporting accountant

The accounting officer is responsible, under the requirements of Orchard Hill College Academy Trust's funding agreement with the Secretary of State for Education and the Academy Trust Handbook, for ensuring that expenditure disbursed and income received is applied for the purposes intended by Parliament, and that the financial transactions conform to the authorities which govern them. Our responsibilities for this engagement are established in the United Kingdom by our profession's ethical guidance and are to obtain limited assurance and report in accordance with our engagement letter and the requirements of the extant Framework and Guide for External Auditors and Reporting Accountants of Academy Trusts. We report to you whether anything has come to our attention in carrying out our work which suggests that in all material respects, expenditure disbursed and income received during the period from 1 September 2024 to 31 August 2025 have not been applied for the purposes intended by Parliament or that the financial transactions do not conform to the authorities which govern them.

Approach

We conducted our engagement in accordance with the Framework and Guide for External Auditors and Reporting Accountants of Academy Trusts issued by DfE, which requires a limited assurance engagement, as set out in our engagement letter.

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

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

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

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

The work undertaken to draw to our conclusion includes:

- An assessment of the risk of material irregularity and impropriety across all of the academy trust's activities;
- Further testing and review of the areas identified through the risk assessment including enquiry, identification of control processes and examination of supporting evidence across all areas identified as well as additional verification work where considered necessary; and
- Consideration of evidence obtained through the work detailed above and the work completed as part of our financial statements audit in order to support the regularity conclusion.

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

Buzzacott Audit LLP
Chartered Accountants
130 Wood Street
London
EC2V 6DL

Date: 16 December 2025

Orchard Hill College Academy Trust

Statement of Financial Activities
for the year ended 31 August 2025
(including Income and Expenditure Account)

	Notes	Unrestricted Funds £000	Restricted General Funds £000	Restricted Fixed Asset Funds £000	**Total for year ended 2025 £000**	Total for year ended 2024 £000
Income from:						
Donations and capital grants	1	65	-	31,149	**31,214**	2,683
Charitable activities:						
Funding for the Academy Trust's educational operations	2	130	88,420	—	**88,550**	80,914
Other trading activities	3	268	—	—	**268**	304
Investment income	4	444	—	—	**444**	500
Total		**907**	**88,421**	**31,149**	**120,476**	**84,401**
Expenditure on:						
Charitable activities:						
Academy trust educational operations	5,6	—	86,741	7,341	94,082	83,157
Total		—	**86,741**	**7,341**	**94,082**	**83,157**
Net income before transfers		907	1,679	23,808	26,394	1,244
Transfers between funds	15	—	(2,316)	2,316	—	—
Net income / (expenditure)		**907**	**(637)**	**26,124**	**26,394**	**1,244**
Other recognised gains						
Actuarial (losses) / gains on defined benefit pension schemes	21	—	(79)	—	(79)	4,649
Net movement in funds		907	(716)	26,124	26,315	5,893
Reconciliation of funds						
Total funds brought forward		5,576	8,841	124,189	138,606	132,713
Total funds carried forward		**6,483**	**8,125**	**150,313**	**164,921**	**138,606**

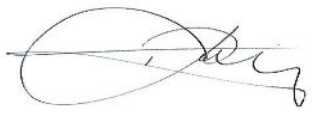
All of the Trust's activities derive from continuing operations in the above two financial periods.

All recognised gains and losses are included in the above Statement of Financial Activities.

Balance Sheet
as at 31 August 2025

	Notes	2025 £000	2025 £000	2024 £000	2024 £000
Fixed assets					
Tangible assets	12		**150,313**		124,189
Current assets					
Debtors	13	**6,457**		9,373	
Short-term deposits		**2,000**		3,500	
Cash at bank and in hand		**18,656**		12,830	
		27,113		25,703	
Liabilities					
Creditors: Amounts falling due within one year	14a	**(12,480)**		(10,958)	
Net current assets			**14,633**		14,745
Total assets less current liabilities			**164,946**		138,934
Creditors: Amounts falling due after more than one year	14b		**(25)**		(36)
Net assets excluding pension liability			**164,921**		138,898
Defined benefit pension scheme liability	21		**-**		(292)
Total net assets			**164,921**		138,606
Funds of the Academy Trust:					
Restricted funds					
Fixed asset fund	15	**150,313**		124,189	
Restricted income fund	15	**8,125**		9,133	
Pension reserve	15	**-**		(292)	
Total restricted funds			**158,438**		133,030
Unrestricted income funds					
Unrestricted general funds	16	**1,839**		5,576	
Designated funds	17	**4,644**		-	-
Total Unrestricted funds			**6,483**		5,576
Total funds			**164,921**		138,606

The financial statements on pages 37 to 67 were approved by the Trustees and authorised for issue on and are signed on their behalf by



R Leclercq
Chair

Date: 12 December 2025

Orchard Hill College Academy Trust

Statement of Cash Flows

for the year ended 31 August 2024

		2025	2024
Cash flows from operating activities		**£000**	£000
Net cash provided by operating activities	A	**6,210**	(3,722)
Cash flows from investing activities	B	**(373)**	(3,740)
Cash flows from financing activities	C	**(11)**	(8)
Change in cash and cash equivalents in the reporting period		**5,826**	(7,470)
Cash and cash equivalents at 1 September 2024		**12,830**	20,300
Cash and cash equivalents at 31 August 2025	D	**18,656**	12,830

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

	2025	2024
	£000	£000
Net income for the reporting period (as per the statement of financial activities):	**26,394**	1,244
Adjusted for:		
Depreciation (note 12)	**3,772**	3,379
Capital grants from DfE and other capital income	**(6,049)**	(2,614)
Assets donated by the DfE	**(25,100)**	–
Loss on disposal of fixed assets	**3,570**	–
Interest receivable (note 5)	**(444)**	(500)
Defined benefit pension scheme service cost credit adjustment (note 20)	**(548)**	(805)
Defined benefit pension scheme finance cost adjustment (note 20)	**177**	420
Decrease/(increase) in debtors (note 13)	**2,916**	(1,162)
Increase/(Decrease) in creditors (note 14)	**1,522**	(3,684)
Net cash provided/(used in) by operating activities	**6,210**	(3,722)

B Cash flows from investing activities

	2025	2024
	£000	£000
Interest received	**444**	500
Purchase of tangible fixed assets	**(8,366)**	(3,354)
Capital grants received from DfE/ESFA	**6,049**	2,614
Transfer (from)/to short-term deposits	**1,500**	(3,500)
Net cash used in investing activities	**(373)**	(3,740)

C Cash flows from financing activities

	2025	2024
	£000	£000
Repayments of borrowing	**(11)**	(8)
Net cash used in financing activities	**(11)**	(8)

Statement of Cash Flows (continued)

D Analysis of cash, cash equivalents and short-term deposits

	2025	2024
	£000	£000
Cash in hand and at bank	**12,180**	3,963
Notice deposits (less than 3 months)	**3,816**	4,310
Other deposit saving accounts (0-3 months)	**2,660**	4,557
Total of Cash and Cash Equivalents	**18,656**	12,830
Other deposit saving accounts (3-12 months) as short-term deposits	**2,000**	3,500
Total of Cash and Short-Term Deposits	**20,656**	16,330

E Analysis of change in net debt

	At 1 September 2024 £000	**Cashflows £000**	**At 31 August 2025 £000**
Cash	12,830	5,826	**18,656**
Loans falling due within one year	(11)	-	**(11)**
Loans falling due after more than one year	(36)	10	**(26)**
Total	12,783	5,836	**18,619**

Orchard Hill College Academy Trust
Notes to the Financial Statements for the year ended 31 August 2025

Statement of Accounting Policies

Orchard Hill College Academy Trust is a charitable company. The address of the Trust's principal place of business is given on page iii. The nature of the Academy Trust's operations are set out in the Trustees' Report.

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

Basis of Preparation

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

Orchard Hill College Academy Trust meets the definition of a public benefit entity under FRS 102.

Going Concern

The Trustees assess whether the use of going concern is appropriate when preparing the financial statements. The trustees make this assessment in respect of a period of at least one year from the date of authorisation for issue of the financial statements, and have concluded that the Academy Trust has adequate resources to continue in operational existence for the foreseeable future and there are no material uncertainties about the Academy Trust's ability to continue as a going concern, thus they continue to adopt the going concern basis of accounting in preparing the financial statements. The financial position, cash flow projections, and available reserves have been reviewed and detailed in the Financial Review of the Trustees' Report, taking into account the expected levels of funding from the Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA), Local Authorities (LAs) and other sources.

In forming this assessment, the Trustees have considered the impact of the current inflationary pressures and increased staff costs on the Academy Trust's activities with a particular focus on its effect on the Academy Trust's financial position including income, expenditure and reserves; the Academy Trust's beneficiaries; and its employees. They have also taken into account any planned strategic initiatives and the Trust's ongoing management of resources. Based on this review, the trustees have concluded that the Academy Trust has sufficient liquid resources to continue for the foreseeable future, despite the current pressures.

Income

All income is recognised when the Academy Trust has entitlement to the funds, the receipt is probable and the amount can be measured reliably.

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

General Annual Grant is recognised in full in the Statement of Financial Activities in the year for which it is receivable and any unspent amount is reflected as a balance in the restricted fund.

- Capital grants are recognised in full when there is an unconditional entitlement to the grant, receipt

is probable, and the amount can be measured reliably. Where capital grants are received in advance of the related expenditure being incurred, and the Trust does not yet have entitlement to the income (e.g. for future capital projects), the income is deferred and recognised as a liability on the balance sheet. Once the conditions of entitlement are met, the income is transferred to the restricted fixed asset fund and recognised in the Statement of Financial Activities.

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

- **Donated fixed assets (excluding transfers on conversion/into the academy trust)**
  Where the donated good is a fixed asset, it is measured at fair value, unless it is impractical to measure this reliably, in which case the cost of the item to the donor is used. The gain is recognised as income from donations and a corresponding amount is included in the appropriate fixed asset category and depreciated over the useful economic life in accordance with the Academy Trust's accounting policies.

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

- **Interest receivable**
  Interest is recognised on a receivable basis where there is certainty of receipt and the amount can be reliably measured.

Expenditure

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

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

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

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.

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

- Freehold Buildings 1.25% (80 years) straight line.
- Leasehold Buildings – to match the length of the lease subject to impairment review.
- Motor Vehicles 25% (4 years) straight line.
- Furniture & Equipment 25% (4 years) straight line.
- Computer Hardware and software 33.33% (3 years) straight line
- Specialist Equipment (inc CCTV) 10% straight line
- Major Works (£50k - £100k) 10%-20% (5-10 years) straight line

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

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

Liabilities

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

Provisions

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

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

Leased Assets

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

Financial Instruments

The Academy Trust holds only basic financial instruments as defined in FRS102. The financial assets and financial liabilities of the Academy Trust and their measurement basis are as follows:

Financial assets – trade and other debtors are basic financial instruments and are debt instruments measured at amortised cost. Prepayments are not financial instruments.

Cash at bank – is classified as a basic financial instrument and is measured at face value. Deposits for more than three months but less than one year have been disclosed as short-term deposits. Cash placed on deposit for more than one year is disclosed as a fixed asset investment.

Financial liabilities – trade creditors, accruals and other creditors are financial instruments, and are measured at amortised cost. Taxation and social security are not included in the financial instruments

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

Taxation

The Academy Trust is considered to pass the tests set out in Paragraph 1 Schedule 6 of the Finance Act 2010 and therefore it meets the definition of a charitable company for UK corporation tax purposes.

Accordingly, the Academy Trust is potentially exempt from taxation in respect of income or capital gains received within categories covered by Part 11, Chapter 3 of the Corporation Tax Act 2010 or Section 256 of the Taxation of Chargeable Gains Act 1992, to the extent that such income or gains are applied exclusively to charitable purposes.

Pensions Benefits

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

The TPS is an unfunded scheme and contributions are calculated so as to spread the cost of pensions over employees' working lives with the Academy Trust in such a way that the pension cost is a substantially level percentage of current and future pensionable payroll. The contributions are determined by the Government Actuary on the basis of quinquennial valuations using a prospective benefit method. The TPS is a multi-employer scheme and there is insufficient information available to use defined benefit accounting. The TPS is therefore treated as a defined contribution scheme for accounting purposes and the contributions recognised in the period to which they relate.

The LGPS is a funded scheme and the assets are held separately from those of the Academy Trust in separate trustee administered funds. Pension scheme assets are measured at fair value and liabilities are measured on an actuarial basis using the projected unit 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.

Where the scheme is estimated to be in a surplus position, under the reporting provisions of FRS 102, the Academy Trust is only able to recognise the surplus as to the extent that it is able to recover the surplus either through reduced contributions in the future or through refunds from the plan. As the Academy Trust does not anticipate being able to recover the surplus in the aforementioned manner, the surplus is not recognised on the balance sheet, and a corresponding adjustment is made within other recognised gains and losses on the statement of financial activities (as an actuarial loss) to bring the net LGPS position to £nil on the balance sheet

Short-term Employment benefits

Short term employment benefits such as salaries and compensated absences are recognised as an expense in the year in which the employees render service to the Academy Trust. The cost of any unused holiday entitlement the Academy Trust expects to pay in future periods is recognised in the period the employees' services are rendered.

Fund Accounting

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

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

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

There may be many reasons to make a transfer between funds but for the Academy Trust, it will often reflect the purchase of fixed assets from GAG.

The Trustees may designate unrestricted funds for specific purposes that do not meet the definition of restricted funds. Designated funds are reviewed annually and adjusted as appropriate. Where a liability is probable but not yet legally binding, a designated fund may be created to reflect the anticipated future cost.

Conversion to Academy from Local Authority or another Trust

The conversion from a state maintained school or non-maintained school to the Academy Trust involved the transfer of identifiable assets and liabilities and the operation of the school for £nil consideration and has been accounted for under the acquisition method.

The assets and liabilities transferred on conversion to Orchard Hill College Academy Trust have been valued at their fair value being a reasonable estimate of the current market value that the trustees would expect to pay in an open market for an equivalent item. Their fair value is in accordance with the accounting policies set out for Orchard Hill College Academy Trust. The amounts have been recognised under the appropriate Balance Sheet categories, with a corresponding amount recognised in voluntary income as appropriate in the Statement of Financial Activities and analysed under restricted general funds, unrestricted funds and restricted fixed asset fund.

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

The present value of the Local Government Pension Scheme defined benefit 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 (income) for pensions include the discount rate. Any changes in these assumptions, will impact the carrying amount of the pension liability. Furthermore a

roll forward approach which projects results from the latest full actuarial valuation performed at 31 March 2022 has been used by the actuary in valuing the pensions liability at 31 August 2025. Any differences between the figures derived from the roll forward approach and a full actuarial valuation would impact on the carrying amount of the pension liability. As noted in the Pension Benefits accounting policy above, where the actuary has estimated the scheme to be in a surplus position, the asset is not recognised on the balance sheet as the it is not expected that this asset will be recovered either through refunds from the scheme or reduced contributions.

The value of assets transferred from the Department for Education or a Local Authority have been estimated by professional surveyors at a fair value based on depreciated replacement cost, and depreciated in accordance with the accounting policy for tangible fixed assets described above.

1 Donations and capital grants

	Unrestricted Funds £000	Restricted Funds £000	**Total 2025 £000**	Total 2024 £000
Capital grants	—	6,049	**6,049**	2,614
Other donations	65	-	**65**	69
Donated fixed assets (note 12)	—	25,100	**25,100**	—
	65	31,149	**31,214**	2,683

2 Funding for the Academy Trust's educational operations

	Unrestricted Funds £000	Restricted Funds £000	**Total 2025 £000**	Total 2024 £000
DfE / ESFA revenue grants				
General Annual Grant (GAG)	—	21,060	**21,060**	20,120
Other DfE / ESFA revenue grants				
Universal Infant Free School Meals	—	134	**134**	133
Pupil Premium	—	1,131	**1,131**	960
PE and sports grant	—	168	**168**	164
Start Up grants	—	100	**100**	146
Teachers pay and pension grants	—	3,809	**3,809**	3,121
Other DfE/ESFA group grants	—	3,116	**3,116**	1,179
	—	29,518	**29,518**	25,823
Other Government grants				
Local authority grants	—	55,910	**55,910**	52,233
Exceptional government funding (non-DfE/ESFA)				
Other funding	—	—	—	32
Other income from the Academy Trust's educational operations	130	2,992	**3,122**	2,826
Total	130	88,420	**88,550**	80,914
Year to 31 August 2024	131	80,783	80,914	

3 Other trading activities

	Unrestricted funds	
	2025	2024
	£000	£000
Hire of facilities	**60**	134
Other income	**208**	170
Total	**268**	304

4 Investment income

	Unrestricted funds	
	2025	2024
	£000	£000
Interest receivable on cash deposits	**444**	500
	444	500

5 Expenditure

	Staff Costs (note 8)	Non-pay Premises	Expenditure Other	**Total 2025**	Total 2024
	£000	£000	£000	**£000**	£000
Academy's educational operations:					
Direct costs	59,223	—	6,181	**65,404**	59,753
Allocated support costs (note 6)	12,272	12,549	3,858	**28,678**	23,404
	71,495	12,549	10,039	**94,082**	83,157

	Total 2025	Total 2024
	£000	£000
Net income / (expenditure) for the year includes:		
Operating lease rentals	**320**	305
Loss on disposal of fixed assets	**3,571**	—
Depreciation (note 12)	**3,772**	3,379
Fees payable to external auditors for:		
Teachers' Pension assurance	**3**	3
Financial statements audit	**24**	32
Regularity assurance	**4**	4
Other services	**21**	8
Total fees payable to external auditors	**52**	47
Cash losses	**-**	87

As reported in the 2023/24 annual report and accounts, the Trust incurred a cash loss of £Nil (2024: £87,000) resulting from fraudulent activity in non-core operations. Appropriate measures have been implemented to mitigate future risks.

6 Charitable activities

	Total 2025 £000	Total 2024 £000
Direct costs – educational operations	**65,404**	59,753
Support costs – educational operations	**28,678**	23,404
Total	**94,082**	83,157
Analysis of support costs		
Support staff costs	**12,272**	11,150
Depreciation	**3,772**	3,379
Loss on disposal of fixed assets	**3,570**	—
Technology costs (note 7)	**1,770**	1,926
Premises costs	**5,208**	4,823
Legal costs	**226**	259
Other support costs	**1,615**	1,384
Governance costs	**245**	483
Total	**28,678**	23,404

7 Analysis of technology costs

	Total 2025 £000	Total 2024 £000
ICT connectivity	**1,207**	1,153
ICT administration software and systems	**476**	667
Laptops, desktops and tablets	**17**	45
Other ICT hardware	**37**	52
IT support	**12**	6
IT learning resources	**21**	3
Total	**1,770**	1,926

8 Staff

a) Staff costs

Staff costs during the period were:	Total 2025 £000	Total 2024 £000
Wages and salaries	**46,391**	42,765
Social security costs	**5,444**	4,470
Pension costs	**9,596**	8,330
	61,431	55,565
Supply staff costs	**9,857**	9,127
Severance payments	**185**	166
Redundancy payments	**22**	7
Total	**71,495**	64,865

b) Severance payments

The academy trust made 10 contractual severance payments in the year, which are disclosed in the following bands:

	2025 No.	2024 No.
£0 - £25,000	**11**	**10**
£25,001 - £50,000	**-**	**3**
£50,001-£100,000	**1**	**-**

c) Non statutory/non-contractual staff severance payments

Included in severance payments are non-contractual payments totalling £56,110 (2024: £22,933). Individually, the payments were: £4,079, £4,218, £19,413, £4,771, £19,796, £3,833.

d) Staff numbers

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

	2025 No.	2024 No.
Teachers	**336**	335
Administration and support staff	**963**	888
Management	**85**	78
	1,384	1,301

The average full time equivalent (FTE) of these employees during the period was as follows:

	2025 No.	2024 No.
Teachers	**315**	317
Administration and support staff	**705**	685
Management	**83**	75
	1,103	1,077

e) Higher paid staff

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

	2025 No.	2024 No.
£60,001 - £70,000	**64**	40
£70,001 - £80,000	**42**	17
£80,001 - £90,000	**17**	12
£90,001 - £100,000	**8**	6
£100,001 - £110,000	**6**	2
£110,001 - £120,000	**3**	4
£120,001 - £130,000	**3**	1
£130,001 - £140,000	**-**	1
£170,001 - £180,000	**1**	1
	144	84

f) Key management personnel

The key management personnel of the Academy Trust comprise the Trustees and the Executive Senior Leadership Team listed on page iii.

The total employee benefits (including employer pension contributions and employer national insurance contributions) received by key management personnel for their services to the Academy Trust for the period from 1 September 2024 to 31 August 2025 was 1,062,000 (2024: £924,000).
Further information regarding transactions with the sponsor is given in note 22.

9 Central services

The Academy Trust has provided the following central services to its academies for the year to 31 August 2025:

- Core services including: Executive Senior Leadership Team, finance, governance and compliance, payroll services, HR. The Academy Trust charges for these services as a percentage of income, being 7.8% for the year under review.

- In addition, academies have the option to buy into various other central support services including: clerking, IT support services and premises.

- In accordance with the reserves policy, the academies also contribute to central reserves based on academy group size. Central general reserves are required to invest in capital or asset replacement of business support services, pressures on the central function to respond to requests from academies for exceptional support in-year and to ease cash flow pressures.

The actual amounts charged during the year were as follows:

	2025	2024
	£000	£000
Carew Academy	**730**	688
The PRIDE Academy	**472**	397
The Skills Hub	**327**	329
Bedelsford School	**586**	544
Dysart School	**601**	570
St Philips School	**499**	492
Nightingale Community Academy	**492**	433
The Link School	**601**	584
Brantridge School	**349**	338
Grafham Grange School	**291**	309
St Dominic's School	**642**	634
Arbour Vale School	**1,079**	795
Unified Academy	**256**	233
Addington Valley Academy	**599**	605
Total	**7,524**	6,951

These transactions have been eliminated on consolidation of the financial statements.

10 Related Party Transactions – Trustees' remuneration and expenses

One trustee has been paid remuneration or has received other benefits from employment with the Academy Trust. The principals and other Staff Trustees only receive remuneration in respect of services they provide undertaking the roles of principal and staff members under their contracts of employment.

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

J Prior (CEO and Trustee):
Remuneration: £185,000 - £190,000 (2024: £180,000 - £185,000)
Employer's pension contributions paid: £50,000 - £55,000 (2024: £45,000 - £50,000)

During the year ended 31 August 2025. four trustees received reimbursement for travel and subsistence expenses £904 (2024: Nil).

Other Related party transactions involving the trustees are set out in Note 22.

11 Trustees' and officers' insurance

The cost to cover trustees' and officers' liability is included as part of the overall Risk Protection Arrangement (RPA) membership fee, rather than being a separate charge. For the 2025 to 2026 academic year, the total cost for joining the RPA is £27 per pupil (2024 £25 per pupil), which provides comprehensive coverage, including trustees' and officers' liability, along with all other areas covered by the RPA. Under the RPA, trustees' and officers' liability is covered for up to £10 million per claim. This coverage protects trustees, governors, and other officers against claims made for wrongful acts, errors, or omissions in the course of their duties. It includes legal costs and any damages that may be awarded against them.

12 Tangible Fixed Assets

	Freehold Land and Buildings £000	Leasehold Land and Buildings £000	Leasehold Improvements £000	Furniture and Equipment £000	IT Connectivity £'000	Computer Hardware £000	Computer Software £000	Motor Vehicles £000	**Total £000**
Cost									
At 1 September 2024	20,196	96,869	11,561	5,228	469	4,612	239	440	**139,614**
Additions	—	3,527	3,670	401	431	280	31	26	**8,366**
Donated assets on acquisition	—	25,100	—	—	—	—	—	—	**25,100**
Disposals		(2,830)	(1,085)	(290)	—	(170)	—	(10)	**(4,385)**
At 31 August 2025	20,196	122,666	14,146	5,339	900	4,722	270	456	**168,695**
Depreciation									
At 1 September 2024	1,536	4,677	2,775	3,459	38	2,442	107	391	**15,425**
Charged in year	210	872	1,294	550	151	644	28	23	**3,772**
Disposals	—	(115)	(360)	(160)	—	(170)	—	(10)	**(815)**
At 31 August 2025	1,746	5,434	3,709	3,849	189	2,916	135	404	**18,382**
Net book value									
At 31 August 2025	**18,450**	**117,232**	**10,437**	**1,490**	**711**	**1,806**	**135**	**52**	**150,313**
At 31 August 2024	18,660	92,192	8,786	1,769	431	2,170	132	49	124,189

During the year, the Trust relinquished control of the former Carew Academy building, returning it to the Department for Education following relocation to a new site. The net book value of the returned asset was £2.74 million. In exchange, the Trust received a new building, which has been recognised as a donated fixed asset at a valuation of £25.1 million, based on Depreciated Replacement Cost (DRC), in accordance with FRS 102 and the Charities SORP.

13 Debtors

	2025 £000	2024 £000
Trade debtors	**3,153**	2,843
VAT recoverable	**1,088**	1,148
Other debtors	**37**	14
Prepayments and accrued income	**2,179**	5,368
	6,457	9,373

14a Creditors: amounts falling due within one year

	2025 £000	2024 £000
Trade creditors	**1,174**	2,485
Taxation and social security	**2,369**	1,907
Other creditors	**850**	533
Accruals	**2,528**	2,584
Deferred income (see below)	**5,559**	3,449
	12,480	10,958

Deferred income	2025 £000	2024 £000
Deferred income at 1 September	**3,449**	4,444
Released from previous years	**(3,449)**	(2,541)
Resources deferred in the year	**5,559**	1,546
	5,559	3,449

At the balance sheet date, the Trust was holding funds received in advance for local authority top-up and SLA grants of £5.4M with material items being:

- £1.97M Pay and Pension Grants: 7 Months Received as part of 12-month payment (Sep 2025 to March 2026)

- £1.54M Top Up Income Received in August but relating specifically to the Autumn Term 25/26 (Sep 26 to Dec 26) from Croydon & Kingston

- £1.23M Capital grant monies which are held for projects that will take place in future years - entitlement to the income is only obtained once these projects are agreed

Included in other creditors are Salix loans of £11k (2024: £11k) which are provided interest free.

14b Creditors: amounts falling due after more than one year

	2025 £000	2024 £000
Other creditors	**25**	36

Included in other creditors are Salix loans of £36k (2024: £47k), interest free loans provided as part of the condition improvement funding received. The loans will be repaid as follows:

	2025 £000	2024 £000
Amounts due within one year	**11**	11
Amounts due between one and five years	**24**	31
Amounts after more than five years	**1**	5
	36	47

Orchard Hill College Academy Trust
Notes to the Financial Statements for the year ended 31 August 2025

15 Funds

	Balance at 1 September 2024 £000	Income £000	Expenditure £000	Gains, Losses and Transfers £000	Balance at 31 August 2025 £000
Restricted general funds					
General Annual Grant (GAG)	9,088	21,060	(19,752)	(2,316)	**8,0809**
UIFSM	—	134	(134)	—	—
Pupil Premium	—	1,131	(1,131)	—	—
PE and Sports grant	—	168	(168)	—	—
Teachers pay and pension grants	—	3,809	(3,809)	—	—
Student support	—	39	(39)	—	—
Other Funding	—			—	—
Start Up Grant	45	—	—	—	**45**
Other grants	—	59,087	(59,087)	—	—
Other income	—	2,992	(2,994)	—	—
Pension reserve	(292)	—	371	(79)	—
	8,841	**88,420**	**(86,741)**	**(2,396)**	**8,125**
Restricted fixed asset funds					
Transferred on conversion/donated	112,500	25,100	(3,569)	—	**134,031**
DfE/ESFA capital grants	2,411	6,049	(1,114)	—	**7,346**
Capital expenditure from GAG	8,299	—	(2,658)	2,316	**7,957**
Other capital funding	979	—	—	—	**979**
	124,189	**31,149**	**(7,341)**	**2,316**	**150,313**
Total restricted funds	**133,030**	**119,569**	**(94,082)**	**(79)**	**158,438**
Unrestricted funds					
Unrestricted funds	**5,576**	**907**	**—**	**(4,644)**	**1,839**
Designated funds	**—**	**—**	**—**	**4,644**	**4,644**
Total Unrestricted funds	**5,576**	**907**	**—**	**-**	**6,483**
Total funds	**138,606**	**120,476**	**(94,082)**	**(79)**	**164,921**

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

GAG funds:

Under the funding agreement with the Secretary of State, the Trust was not subject to a limit on the amount of GAG that it could carry forward at 31 August 2025. £2,316k was transferred to restricted fixed asset funds for the purchase of Fixed Assets (2024: £740k).

Start-up funds:

In year no further start-up funds were received (2024: nil) in relation to the new free schools and academy conversion for use in set-up and Shared Services. Start-up grants of £45k were brought forward from 2023-24. The balance at the year-end will be utilised to continue to progress the Carew free school in the next financial year.

Unrestricted funds:

The Trust earned net income of £907k (2024: £989k) in relation to academy activities such as lettings and parent contributions to pupil events; these accumulated funds will be used to further generate income for the academy and to continue to provide IT equipment and enrichment activities for pupils. The trustees have designated £780k (2024: £nil) as a Property Dilapidation fund to cover potential future lease exit obligations, and £3,864k (2024: £nil) for Estate Growth Initiatives in line with the Trust's strategic priorities.

Restricted fixed asset funds:

Capital income received in the year was £6.0m (2024: £2.6m) and comprised of School Condition Allocation (SCA) grants covering a range of works including safeguarding, roof replacement, boilers and heating, water safety, fire safety, window and doors. In addition, the Trust recognised £25.1m of donated fixed assets during the year, reflecting assets received at no cost and brought into the accounts at fair value in accordance with FRS 102 and the Charities SORP

During the year, £2,316k (2024: £740k) was transferred from restricted general funds to support capital purchases.

Other restricted funds:

The Trust received other restricted funds in the year to use for the purpose of carrying out educational services.

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

	Balance at 1 September 2023 £000	Income £000	Expenditure £000	Gains, Losses and Transfers £000	Balance at 31 August 2024 £000
Restricted general funds					
General Annual Grant (GAG)	9,194	20,120	(19,486)	(740)	**9,088**
UIFSM	—	133	(133)	—	—
Pupil Premium	—	960	(960)	—	—
PE and Sports grant	—	164	(164)	—	—
Teachers pay and pension grants	—	3,121	(3,121)	—	—
Student support	—	21	(21)	—	—
Other Funding	—	32	(32)	—	—
Start Up Grant	45	—	—	—	**45**
Other grants	—	53,537	(53,537)	—	—
Other income	—	2,710	(2,710)	—	—
Pension reserve	(5,327)	—	386	4,649	**(292)**
	3,912	**80,798**	**(79,778)**	**3,909**	**8,841**
Restricted fixed asset funds					
Transferred on conversion/donated	112,500	—	—	—	**112,500**
DfE/ESFA capital grants	3,176	2,614	(3,379)	—	**2,411**
Capital expenditure from GAG	7,559	—	—	740	**8,299**
Other capital funding	979	—	—	—	**979**
	124,214	**2,614**	**(3,379)**	**740**	**124,189**
Total restricted funds	**128,126**	**83,412**	**(83,157)**	**4,649**	**133,030**
Unrestricted funds					
Transferred to MAT on conversion	2,769	—	—	—	**2,769**
Unrestricted funds	1,818	989	—	—	**2,807**
Total unrestricted funds	**4,587**	**989**	—	—	**5,576**
Total funds	**132,713**	**84,401**	**(83,157)**	**4,649**	**138,606**

Analysis of fund balance by academy:

Fund balances at 31 August 2025 were as follows:	**Total 2025 £'000**	Total 2024 £'000
Carew Academy	1,217	1,219
The PRIDE Academy	959	662
The Skills Hub	444	949
Bedelsford School	1,702	1,782
Dysart School	812	865
St Philips School	1,019	1,270
Nightingale Community Academy	(27)	125
The Link Primary School	1,070	1,820
Brantridge School	485	477
Grafham Grange School	308	413
St Dominic's School	816	1,436
Arbour Vale School	3,023	1,424
Unified Academy	81	19
Addington Valley Academy	2,047	1,696
Central Services	652	552
Total before fixed assets and pension reserve	**14,608**	**14,709**
Restricted fixed asset fund	150,313	124,189
Pension reserve	-	(292)
TOTAL	**164,921**	**138,606**

As at 31 August 2025, Nightingale Community Academy is reporting a deficit on its individual funds. A recovery plan is in place, supported by increased High Needs Funding from the local authority (rising from 125 to 150 places by September 2025), and a review of staffing structures to ensure financial sustainability. The Trust's three-year forecast projects an improving position.

It should be noted that some school level reserves have accumulated purposefully to deliver on capital priorities shown on page 13.

16 Analysis of net assets between funds

Fund balances at 31 August 2025 are represented by:

	Unrestricted funds				
	Unrestricted general funds £'000	**Designated funds £'000**	**Restricted Funds £'000**	**Restricted Fixed Asset Funds £'000**	**Total Funds £'000**
Tangible fixed assets	—	—	—	150,313	**150,313**
Current assets	1,839	4,644	20,630	—	**27,113**
Current liabilities	—	—	(12,480)	—	**(12,480)**
Non-current liabilities	—	—	(25)	—	**(25)**
Total net assets	**1,839**	**4,644**	**8,125**	**150,313**	**164,921**

Comparative information in respect of the preceding period 2024 is as follows:

	Unrestricted funds				
	Unrestricted general funds £'000	Designated funds £'000	Restricted Funds £'000	Restricted Fixed Asset Funds £'000	Total Funds £'000
Tangible fixed assets	—	—	—	124,189	**124,189**
Current assets	5,576	—	20,127	—	**25,703**
Current liabilities	—	—	(10,958)	—	**(10,958)**
Non-current liabilities	—	—	(36)	—	**(36)**
Pension scheme liability	—	—	(292)	—	**(292)**
Total net assets	**5,576**	—	**8,841**	**124,189**	**138,606**

17 Designated funds

Orchard Hill College Academy Trust has designated a portion of its unrestricted funds for specific purposes:

Property Dilapidation Reserve-£780,000 (2024: -£nil)

To cover potential future dilapidation costs relating to leased properties where lease agreements may give rise to obligations upon exit. No provision has been made in the financial statements due to uncertainty around timing and cost. The amount designated has been informed by an assessment from the Estates Team.

Estate Growth Initiatives-£3,864,000 (2024: £nil)

To support strategic estate projects and other development initiatives, in line with the Trust's estate strategy and organisational priorities. These plans are subject to formal trustee approval and are expected to be implemented over the medium term.

These designations do not impact the reported surplus, brought forward reserves, or the Trust's financial health grading. They represent internal allocations of unrestricted funds and are shown separately within the funds note.

Designated funds allocation	Amount £'000
Growth & Estate Strategy Projects	3,864
Property Dilapidation fund	780
Total Designated funds	**4,644**

18 Capital commitments

	2025 £000	2024 £000
Contracted for, but not provided in the financial statements	**1,287**	1,185

A total of £Nil (2024: £473,000) was allocated to the Trust-wide IT refresh project. During the year, £1,012,000 (2024: £632,000) was committed to building improvements, and £275,000 (2024: £80,000) was allocated for furniture and equipment across eight schools. The furniture allocation includes the sprinkler system installed at St. Philip's School. The £1,012,000 building improvements comprise £389,000 related to the PFI contract at Arbour Vale School and £623,000 for capacity building at Addington Valley Academy.

19 Commitments under operating leases

At 31 August 2025 the total of the future minimum lease payments under non-cancellable operating leases was:

	2025 £000	2024 £000
Amounts due within one year	**279**	334
Amounts due between one and five years	**317**	370
Amounts due after five years	**253**	321
	849	1,025

Premises held under service concession arrangements

On conversion of Arbour Vale School, a PFI arrangement transferred from the predecessor local authority to the Academy Trust. The agreement expires on 31 August 2035 when ownership of the property will transfer to the Academy Trust under a long-term lease. The latest available valuation of the site is £23.66m. The total of the future repayments 31 August 2025 was:

	2025 £000	2024 £000
Amounts due within one year	**768**	750
Amounts due between one and five years	**3,266**	3,188
Amounts after more than five years	**3,596**	4,442
	7,630	8,380

20 Members' liability

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

21 Pension and similar obligations

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

The pension costs are assessed in accordance with the advice of independent qualified actuaries. The latest actuarial valuation of the Teachers' Pension Scheme was carried out as at 31 March 2020. The

valuation report was published in 2023 and sets the employer contribution rate payable from 1 April 2024. The LGPS is valued every three years, with the latest valuation as at 31 March 2022.

Contributions amounting to £1,087,000 were payable to the schemes on 31 August 2025 (2024: £1,118,000) 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 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' Pensions Scheme

The Government Actuary, using normal actuarial principles, conducts a formal actuarial review of the TPS in accordance with the Public Service Pensions (Valuations and Employer Cost Cap) Directions 2014 published by HM Treasury every 4 years. The aim of the review is to specify the level of future contributions. Actuarial scheme valuations are dependent on assumptions about the value of future costs, design of benefits and many other factors. The actuarial valuation of the TPS which applied during the year ended 31 August 2025 was carried out as at 31 March 2020. The valuation report, published by the Department for Education in October 2023, confirms an increase in the employer contribution rate by to 28.68% effective from 1 April 2025 (2024: 28.68% of pensionable pay, including a 0.08% administration levy). However, individual employee contribution rates remain unchanged until 1 April 2026.

The key elements of the valuation and subsequent consultation are:

- 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.

Other financial assumptions and the comparison of 2016 and 2020 assumptions are outlined on page 14 of the valuation report. A full copy of the valuation report and supporting documentation can be found on the Teachers' Pension Scheme website.

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

The employer's pension costs paid to TPS in the year amounted to £5,283,000 (2024: £4,060,000).

Local Government Pension Scheme

The LGPS is a funded defined benefit scheme, with assets held in separately administered trustee funds. During the accounting year, the first stage of a major project to consolidate pension liabilities within the London Pensions Fund Authority (LPFA) pension fund was completed. This process involved the transfers of all pension scheme members from three former funds – Berkshire, Hillingdon and Surrey, thus reducing the number of LGPS funds from seven to four.

During the accounting year, the total contribution made for the year ended 31 August 2025 was £5,399,000 (2024: £5,182,000), of which employer's contributions totalled £3,888,000 (2024: £3,776,000) and employees' contributions totalled £1,511,000 (2024: £1,406,000).

The various LGPS schemes and agreed deficit repayments are summarised as follows:

School	Managed by:	Lump sum deficit repayment
Carew Academy	London Borough of Sutton (LBS)	-
The PRIDE Academy	London Pensions Fund Authority (LPFA)	£27,500 in the year to Mar-24
The Skills Hub	London Pensions Fund Authority (LPFA)	£27,500 in the year to Mar-24
Dysart School	Royal Borough of Kingston upon Thames (RBK)	£70,500 in prior year to Mar-26
St Philip's School	Royal Borough of Kingston upon Thames (RBK)	£183,300 in prior year to Mar-26
Bedelsford School	Royal Borough of Kingston upon Thames (RBK)	£169,200 in prior year to Mar-26
Nightingale Community Academy	London Borough of Wandsworth (LBW)	-
The Link Primary School	London Borough of Sutton (LBS)	-
The Link Secondary School	London Borough of Sutton (LBS)	-
Brantridge School	London Pensions Fund Authority (LPFA)	-
Grafham Grange School	London Pensions Fund Authority (LPFA)	-
St Dominic's School	London Pensions Fund Authority (LPFA)	-
Arbour Vale School	London Pensions Fund Authority (LPFA)	-
Unified Academy	London Pensions Fund Authority (LPFA)	-
Addington Valley Academy	London Borough of Sutton (LBS)	-
Central Services	London Borough of Sutton (LBS)	£345,000 over 3 years to Mar-26

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

LGPS principal actuarial assumptions

	At 31 August 2025	At 31 August 2024
Rate of increase in salaries	**3.65%**	3.65%
Rate of increase for pensions in payment/inflation	**2.65%**	2.65%
Discount rate for scheme liabilities	**5.95%**	5.00%
Inflation assumption (CPI)	**2.65%**	2.65%

Commutation and all other demographic assumptions are consistent with those used in the statutory valuations of the relevant LGPS funds

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

	At 31 August 2025	At 31 August 2024
Retiring today		
Males	**21.4**	21.1
Females	**24.0**	23.9
Retiring in 20 years		
Males	**22.2**	21.8
Females	**25.4**	25.2

LGPS sensitivity analysis

The follow table illustrates the effect a change in the various assumptions may have on the pension liability:

	2025 £000	2024 £000
Discount rate +0.1%	**(1,035)**	(1,161)
Discount rate -0.1%	**1,062**	1,192
Mortality assumption – 1 year increase	**1,052**	1,278
Mortality assumption – 1 year decrease	**(961)**	(1,160)
CPI rate +0.1%	**1,096**	1,219
CPI rate -0.1%	**(1,069)**	(1,188)

21 Pension and similar obligations (continues)

LGPS assets and liabilities

The Academy Trust's share of the assets in the schemes were:

	2025 £000	2024 £000
Equities	**36,270**	35,272
Gilts	**4,814**	2,370
Corporate bonds	**15,992**	14,592
Property	**5,186**	5,186
Cash and other liquid assets	**3,611**	2,847
Other	**1,745**	181
Total market value of assets	**67,618**	**60,448**
Defined benefit obligation	**(52,816)**	(57,289)
Effect of asset ceiling (recognised within actuarial gains)	**(14,802)**	(3,451)
Deficit in the scheme	**-**	**(292)**

LGPS amount recognised in the statement of financial activities

	2025 £000	2024 £000
Current service cost (net of employer contributions)	**3,340**	2,969
Past service cost	**-**	2
Interest income	**(2,963)**	(2,655)
Interest cost	**2,886**	2,848
Administration expenses	**254**	227
Total amount recognised in the SOFA	**3,517**	**3,391**

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

	2025 £000	2024 £000
At 1 September	**57,289**	54,537
Current service cost	**3,340**	2,969
Interest cost	**2,886**	2,848
Employee contributions	**1,511**	1,406
Actuarial gain	**(11,604)**	(3,889)
Benefits paid net of transfers in	**(606)**	(584)
Other costs (past service, plan introductions, benefit changes and settlements)	**-**	2
At 31 August	**52,816**	**57,289**

LGPS changes in the fair value of the Academy Trust's share of scheme assets:

	2025 £000	2024 £000
At 1 September	**60,448**	51,525
Interest income	**2,963**	2,655
Actuarial (loss) / gain	**(332)**	1,896
Employer contributions	**3,888**	3,776
Employee contributions	**1,511**	1,406
Benefits paid	**(606)**	(583)
Administration expenses	**(254)**	(227)
At 31 August	**67,618**	**60,448**

Summary of LGPS Position at 31 August:

	2025 £000	2024 £000
Fair value of scheme assets	**67,618**	60,448
Present value of defined benefit obligations	**(52,816)**	(57,289)
Subtotal (asset before adjustments)	**14,802**	3,159
Effect of asset ceiling (FRS102 28.22)	**(14,802)**	(3,451)
Net pension asset/(liability) recognised at 31 August	**-**	**(292)**

22 Related Party Transactions

Owing to the nature of the Trust's operations and the composition of the Board of Trustees being drawn from local public and private sector organisations, transactions may take place with organisations in which the trust has an interest. All transactions involving such organisations are conducted at arm's length and in accordance with the trust's financial regulations and normal procurement procedures. The following related party transactions took place in the period of account.

Related party Transactions (continued)

Expenditure Related Party Transactions

Orchard Hill College (College) – Academy Sponsor

Under the service level agreements, the College provided support services 'at cost' during the accounting period. In entering into the original transactions, the Trust has complied with the requirements of DfE's Academy Trust Handbook.
The support services include learning support, and other related IT and premises support. They have been assessed where possible, against similar services available externally at current market value. The Trust considers the service level agreements to offer value for money both in terms of pricing and in terms of the bespoke services offered, however the breadth and depth of support will be reviewed in the next financial period to ensure sufficiency and affordability. In all service areas, the Academy Trust has a wider range of skills available, greater capacity and more flexibility.

During the year, the Trust incurred £86,443 (2024: £242,00) of chargeable services from the Sponsor. A payment on account of £45,000 was made to college, resulting in a receivable balance of £10,654 at 31 August 2025 (payable 2024: £46,000).

Silica Associates – a company in which Mr Rama Venchard (Trustee of the Sponsor, Orchard Hill College) has a majority interest. during the period, the Trust purchased project management services from Silica Associates totalling £21,600 (2024: £4,300) net of VAT. There was an outstanding balance of £7,800 at 31 August 2025 (2024: £nil).

West Sussex Council – Mr J Mercer (Member of Orchard Hill College Academy Trust,) is a local councillor at West Sussex Council. During the year ending 31 August 2025, OHCAT purchased safeguarding and assessment training from West Sussex Council for a value of £1,169 (2024: £2,649) net of VAT. There were no outstanding amounts at 31 August 2025 (2024: £nil).

Cygnet IT CIC – Mr R Mills (Member of the Sponsor, Orchard Hill College) is a non-executive Director of Cygnet IT CIC. During the year, OHCAT purchased Management Information support services from Cygnet IT CIC, totalling £3,150 (2024: £5,513) net of VAT. There were no outstanding amounts at 31 August 2025 (2024: £nil).

YMCA St Paul's Group – Mr David Dangana (Trustee of the Sponsor, Orchard Hill College) is a trustee of YMCA St Paul's Group. During the year, OHCAT purchased gym group session fees for students totalling £875 (2024: £1,010) net of VAT. There were no outstanding amounts at 31 August 2025 (2024: £nil)

Society for Education & Training – Mr David Dangana (Trustee of the Sponsor, Orchard Hill College) is a member of the Society for Education & Training. During the year, OHCAT purchased professional registration for teaching staff totalling £1,560 (2024: £1,609) net of VAT. There were no outstanding amounts at 31 August 2025 (2024: £nil).

London Southeast Academies Trust – Mr Rama Venchard (Trustee of the Sponsor, Orchard Hill College) is a director of London South East Academies Trust. During the year, OHCAT incurred costs relating to a headteacher secondment arrangement, totalling £85,795 (2024: £nil) net of VAT. There were no outstanding amounts at 31 August 2025 (2024: £nil). Further details of the transfer of Grafham Grange School to London South East Academies Trust after the year-end are disclosed in Note 24 Events After the Balance Sheet Date.

Strictly Education Ltd – Mr Douglas Glenday (Trustee of the Sponsor, Orchard Hill College) is a director of Strictly Education Ltd. During the year, OHCAT incurred costs relating to assessment and preparation services, including remote assessment, online preparation, and literacy testing, totalling £3,930 (2024: £Nil) net of VAT. The balance outstanding at 31 August 2025 was £Nil (2024: £Nil).

Protocol Education Ltd – Douglas Glenday (Trustee of the Sponsor, Orchard Hill College) was a director of Protocol Education Ltd (PSL) until 21 July 2025. During the year ended 31 August 2025, OHCAT incurred costs relating to agency staffing services for teachers and teaching assistants, totalling £581,821 (2024: £601,489) net of VAT. The balance outstanding at 31 August 2025 was £Nil (2024: £Nil).

Judicium Consulting Limited - Douglas Glenday (Trustee of the Sponsor, Orchard Hill College) was a director of Judicium Consulting Limited until 21 July 2025. During the year ended 31 August 2025, OHCAT incurred costs relating to safeguarding training services for staff, including advanced and all-staff sessions, totalling £809 (2024: £25) net of VAT. The balance outstanding at the year-end was £Nil (2024: £Nil).

Teaching Personnel Ltd - Douglas Glenday (Trustee of the Sponsor, Orchard Hill College) was a director of Teaching Personnel Ltd (PSL) until 21 July 2025. During the year ended 31 August 2025, OHCAT purchased supply teacher services at agreed booking rates. totalling £196,302 (2024: £327,216) net of VAT. The balance outstanding at the year-end was £Nil (2024: £Nil).

The Thrive Approach- Douglas Glenday (Trustee of the Sponsor, Orchard Hill College) was a director of The Thrive Approach until 21 July 2025. During the year ended 31 August 2025, OHCAT purchased educational support services totalling £690.00 (2024: £Nil). The balance outstanding at the year-end was £Nil (2024: £Nil).

The Auriga Academy Trust - Ivan Pryce (Member of the Sponsor, Orchard Hill College) is the CEO of The Auriga Academy Trust t/a Strathmore School. During the year ended 31 August 2025, OHCAT incurred no cost (2024: £265 net of VAT) relating to agency cover for staff transition day. The balance outstanding on 31 August 2025 was £Nil (2024: £Nil).

In entering into all of the above transactions, the Trust has complied with the requirements of DfE's Academy Trust Handbook.

Income Related Party Transaction

West Sussex Council – Mr J Mercer (Member of Orchard Hill College) is a local councillor at West Sussex Council. During the year ending 31 August 2025, OHCAT received income for pupil top up fees from West Sussex Council for a value of £2,419,823 (2024: £2,206,654). £11,841 was outstanding at 31 August 2025 (2024 £103,563).
During the year, the Academy Trust received income of £2,611,222 (2024: £2,524,381) under service level agreements with the Sponsor (Orchard Hill College). This included recharges of leadership and support staffing costs, IT support, MIS, marketing services, finance, governance, training, safeguarding, legal, procurement and occupational health services.

During the year two academies received income from the Sponsor, Orchard Hill College:

- Nightingale Community Academy received £101,389 (2024: £100,892) being: rental income from letting an area of the building to the College for the Wandsworth centre; and for providing vocational courses to College students;
- The Link Primary School received £11,744 (2024: £11,744) under a service level agreement to for costs incurred in relation to Garratt House, a property.

Included in debtors is £246,434 due from Orchard Hill College on 31 August 2025 (2024: £930,309).

23 New schools

There have been no academy conversions during the year. Two new special Free Schools are scheduled to open, one in Hounslow in September 2027 and one in Merton in September 2028.

24 Events after the balance sheet date

Grafham Grange School transferred out of the Trust on 1 September 2025. This followed an Ofsted inspection in March 2024 which resulted in a judgement of "Inadequate with serious weaknesses." In line with the Department for Education's Schools Causing Concern guidance (January 2024), the DfE directed that the school be re-brokered to London South East Academies Trust, a related party as disclosed in Note 22. OHCAT worked closely with LSEAT to ensure a smooth transition. OHCAT worked closely with LSEAT to ensure a smooth transition. There were no other events after the balance sheet date that would require adjustment to these financial statements in accordance with FRS 102 (Events after the balance sheet date).

25 Comparative information

Statement of Financial Activities for the year to 31 August 2024

	Unrestricted Funds £000	Restricted General Funds £000	Restricted Fixed Asset Funds £000	**Total for year ended 2024 £000**
Income from:				
Donations and capital grants	54	15	2,614	**2,683**
Charitable activities:				
Funding for the Academy Trust's educational operations	131	80,783	—	**80,914**
Other trading activities	304	—	—	**304**
Investment income	500	—	—	**500**
Total	**989**	**80,798**	**2,614**	**84,401**
Expenditure on:				
Charitable activities:				
Academy trust educational operations	—	79,778	3,379	83,157
Total	—	**79,778**	**3,379**	**83,157**
Net income before transfers	989	1,020	(765)	1,244
Transfers between funds	—	(740)	740	—
Net income / (expenditure)	**989**	**280**	**(25)**	**1,244**
Other recognised gains				
Actuarial gains on defined benefit pension schemes	—	4,649	—	4,649
Net movement in funds	989	4,929	(25)	5,893
Reconciliation of funds				
Total funds brought forward	4,587	3,912	124,214	132,713
Total funds carried forward	**5,576**	**8,841**	**124,189**	**138,606**